CHAPTER - IV

PART A : A BRIEF HISTORIOGRAPHIC INTRODUCTION TO INDIAN MEGALITHS

The majority of writers on Indian megaliths have perceived of the Indian megalithic tradition as constituting 'a culture'. A certain homogeneity of funerary artefacts (Black-and-Red ware and distinctive iron tools and weapons) and a shared mode of fractional burial over a delimited geographical zone came to imply 'a megalith culture'.

Many scholars have also attempted to relate this particular 'culture' to a linguistic grouping (i.e. the Dravidian) without clearly demonstrating how they reached this conclusion. Another interrelated hypotheses is the introduction of megaliths from the north-west (of course by Dravidian speakers, either singly or together). The hypotheses of the Dravidian identity of the people who built the megaliths continues to be a conclusion of a majority of writers on this subject, though it is in no way supported by either linguistic or archaeological evidence.

Haimendorf (1953) was amongst the first to advocate the theory of megalithic builders being Dravidian speakers who came from the north-west. Gordon (1955) by and large agreed with Haimendorf. Wheeler too, though he did not claim to be linguist and did not suppose that the evidence was adequate to support anything more than speculation, did admit to accepting the megalith builders as Dravidian speakers (1959 : 170).

1 C. Haimendorf 1953 : 127-35

But it goes to Wheelers credit that it was he who conducted the first planned, large scale excavation of a megalithic site\footnote{A sequence of three 'cultures' was uncovered, viz. the Neolithic (i.e. 'Polished stone axe'), the Megalithic and the Early Historical (i.e. the 'Andhra') cultures, with distinct overlaps between them. The overlaps between them were methodically investigated by Wheeler.} in India. It was also the first attempt to relate megaliths (cist and pit circles) to the corresponding habitational strata\footnote{The 1947 excavations at Brahmagiri at both the habitation and the nearby megaliths unambiguously established that the Iron Age Black-and-Red ware strata of the habitation site was coeval or contemporary with nearby megaliths.}. Wheeler's analysis of the megalithic problem concludes:

(1) Certain common diagnostic traits in the assemblage of funerary customs defined the 'megalithic culture'. These were the distinctive Black-and-Red ware (which Wheeler traced to the dying phase of the Chalcolithic culture) and distinctive iron tools and weapons.

(2) The Megalith burial complex could be traced to an unknown source, possibly lying outside India, in the west.

Banerjee (1965) presents a lengthy hypotheses on the introduction of iron and megaliths in India\footnote{Due to the association of a technologically advanced iron industry with the south Indian megaliths, Banerjee based his arguments around the antiquity of iron in India.}. Banerjee's argument, in short runs like this: The Indo-European Speakers of Sialk B (They were identified as the 'Aryans') immigrated to India bringing with them their knowledge of iron technology and cist burials; they eventually transferred their knowledge of iron technology and burial forms to the 'Dravidians' whom they encountered in the north. The Dravidians were then forced out of their homelands in the north and migrated southward, adding to their stock en route by also adopting the urn burial practices and pottery techniques of Chalcolithic people (whom they subjucated). Thus equipped they settled in the South before the Mauryan period.
Banerjee’s thesis was thus based on the assumption that there was ‘a’ monolithic megalith culture transferred from one group of people speaking a particular language and belonging to a particular racial group (‘Aryan’) to another speaking a different language and belonging to a different racial group (Dravidian). But Banerjee’s hypotheses of migration of the ‘Dravidians’ from the north to the south is not supported by archaeological, linguistic or philological evidence.

Subbarao in his Personality of India (1962) very specifically relates this culture to "...a burial complex varying from simple pit and urn burials up to the most elaborate cists and circles with orthostats and clinostats" (p. 118). The one unifying factor in the burial complex, according to Subbarao is the Black-and-Red ware (This ware according to him prevails not only in South India but in central and western India as well). Though Subbarao put forward a few suggestions for consideration, for scholars regarding the Black-and-Red ware, for example, to look for the possibility of a megalithic burial complex in the south without this particular ware or the necessity of separating the pottery and "megalithic idea or ritual" (ibid. : 122); yet in Subbarao’s writings we evidence Black-and-Red ware serving as an indicator of the megalithic culture, thus almost subsuming the entity of ‘culture’. Besides Subbarao too correlated this culture with Dravidian speaking people (ibid.).

The Allchins (1968; 1982) when considering the megalithic culture of South India again hark back to its introduction and spread as a result of a "culture contact" situation (1982 : 342) even though they do not refute the influence of local burial practices. They associate the introduction of the principle elements of the megalithic culture (including iron) with the later waves of Indo-European speaking invaders around 1000 BC.

The Allchins also refer to the prevalence of some sort of a Shiva cult. According to them "among the grave goods, iron is almost universal, and the
occasional iron spears and tridents (trisūlas) suggest an association with the God Śiva" (1982 : 339). The claim seems to be bit far fetched. How can the mere presence of a few iron spears amongst grave goods lead to the assumption of the prevalence of a cult of Shiva? There has to be more tangible evidence to support this theory.

Asko Parpola's (1973) argument also runs along similar lines. According to him the harbingers of the megalith tradition were pre-Vedic Aryans (Vratyas) — some sort of a nomadic tribe and adherents of a Rudra cult. They helped rapidly diffuse the megalithic cultural traits over large areas uniformly.

Gururaja Rao's The Megalithic Culture of South India (1972) is a comprehensive survey of the distribution of megalithic sites in India (as well as a systematic analysis of the grave goods at the burial sites)¹. But, yet again (as the title itself indicates) the notion of 'a megalithic culture is firmly held. Besides, the Binfordian understanding of 'culture as an adaptation to the environment' (Binford 1965 : 210; 1972 : 105) seems to have influenced him. In the introduction he writes,

Therefore it is essential for a student of the cultural history of the sub-continent to bear in mind that it is not the inherent character of the culture alone, but its response to the particular environment that was responsible for its development or otherwise in a locality.

(1972 : 2)

The megalithic 'culture' is thus viewed as an adaptative mechanism by Rao (though he is not very specific about how this is so).

¹ Unfortunatly there is no reference to contemporary habitation sites by Gururaja Rao.
On the question of origin and authorship, Rao too parroted the Dravadian authorship line; and as usual co-related the 'Dravadians' with a particular ceramic ware. Rao also hypothesized that the megalithic 'culture' was the earliest known culture responsible for the introduction of a full fledged agricultural economy based on irrigation (He argues that the presence of iron presupposed irrigated agriculture).

Sundara's *The Early Chamber Tombs of South India* (1975) is an extensive work dealing with megalithic sites and tombs in north Karnataka, in their several aspects: environmental situations, types and morphology, distributional patterns, modes of burial, certain common features among the types and their mutual relationships, comparisons and finally the problem of chronology. The monograph is based on the field survey in more than fifty localities of Karnataka. Sundara's surface survey and his comparative structural features as well as the known contents among these monuments is very detailed and extensive. However, he does not go into the reasons or the causes behind regional and sub-regional differences of megalithic 'types'.

Sundara in his 1988 article attempts to reconstruct the "cultural ecology" of the megalithic period in South India. He talks about two distinct social groups/peoples. One, the small, nomadic groups of "incoming" megalith builders with distinct megalithic architectural tradition and empirical knowledge of iron technology (prospecting, smelting and manufacturing iron objects) who found south India ecologically the most favourable (in terms of mineral bearing areas and the natural availability of suitable rock material).

---

1. It is to-date the most comprehensive, well researched scholarly work available on the megaliths of Karnataka.

And the other the peoples of Peninsular India who were in the Mesolithic/Chalcolithic stage and who were "...so strikingly influenced that their material life and burial practices were respectively improved resulting in the total use of iron objects for day-to-day works; in ending the manufacture and use of stone tools and in the emergence of local megalithic types" (p. 13).

Narasimhaih's in *Neolithic and Megalithic Cultures in Tamil Nadu* (1980) tried to establish the morphological, distributional and chronological sequence of several types of megaliths in Tamil Nadu very much along the line of Sundara's work in North Karnatak (1975). Narasimhaih tried to prove that certain 'types' of burial originated outside Tamil Nadu whereas others developed 'indigenously'¹. It may be pointed out here that both Narasimhaiah and Sundara imply that megalithic types 'evolved' and that one form grew out of another. It is as if these megalith forms had a separate existence independent of the people who built them.

An important point that Narasimhaiah makes is that the Black- and- Red ware which is supposed to be an intrinsic cultural component of megalithic culture, may, in fact have nothing to do with it. Quoting him: "The Black-and-Red ware is independent of megalithism and the megalithic people were nomadic tribal folks who used pottery and other material used by the people of the iron Age culture of the time and the region" (p. 205). Here Narasimhaiah is clearly following Soundara Rajan, according to whom Megaliths and Black-and-Red ware had "no incipient co-existence in India" (1969 : 87).

At this stage it would be appropriate to discuss Singh's study on the Black-and-Red ware (1982). It must be noted that Black-and-Red ware

¹ According to Narasimhaiah all types of burials except the dolmenoid cist with multi-orthostats and the sarcophagus type originated outside Tamil Nadu and entered the region through different routes at different periods (1980 : 205).
in India has been found in different periods and varied archaeological contexts. It has been associated over time with divergent material items. Singh (1982: p. xxi) rightly observes that:

The authorship of this ware, distinguished by a diverse cultural personality, cannot be attributed to any particular form of race or group of people in all times and places. The ware, noted for its ebullient but changing type-technological personality, seems to have been patronized by different peoples from time to time and place to place...

Leshnik (1972; 1974; 1975) brought in interesting lines of inquiry regarding the South Indian Megalithic burials. His theory is that an indigenous origin in India cannot be claimed for the megalithic complex because "it appears too suddenly in the archaeological record, in too elaborate a form, and throws out too many detailed similarities with burials elsewhere to support such a notion" (1975: 61). However the "Pandukal assemblage" according to Leshnik "appears to be an indigenous one, even though the mortuary practices are foreign" (ibid.). According to Leshnik semi-nomadic pastoralist groups, moving eastwards from Persia brought megalithism to India. And according to him in these "cattle Keepers we have the ethnogenesis of the Dravidian peoples" (ibid.).

Leshnik's entire argument on the basis of archaeological evidence and physical location is that the megalithic people were pastoral nomads. He cites the following evidence in defense of his theory. One, burials of the Pandukal complex do not necessarily conform to land-use patterns, associated with agriculture. Two, the size and form of ploughshares imply the use of light ploughs which only scratch the surface of the soil. Thus the practice of agriculture within the Pandukal complex is not very likely, though not
implausible. Three, the presence of Black-and-Red ware in both habitation and nearby burial sites does not show any further connection between the two. Four, burial patterns indicate that there were relatively few burials at cemeteries on an average, thereby indicating the existence of small groups. Five, horse remains are suggestive of mobile, nomadic people. Six, the absence of tools or other artefacts relating to any of the crafts. And last, the whole assemblage is particularly homogenous in that no specialized division of labour is discernible. On the basis of the amount and nature of grave goods in different burials he also suggests an egalitarian society.

Leshnik is important amongst the various writers on Indian megalithism in the sense that he has, on the basis of a very detailed study of megalithic sites, given us a different interpretation to the megalithic tradition in South India. I will attempt to test, in a small way some of Leshnik's criteria in my case in Part-B of this chapter.

Deo carried on extensive work in connection with the Vidarbha megaliths for over two decades. Unlike many other scholars, investigating the megalithic phenomenon, Deo in none of his writings (1973a; 1985; 1988; 1990; 1991) hypothesized about the origin and authorship of the Indian megaliths. Thankfully, he concentrated on writing detailed excavation reports (1970; 1973b; 1982); and working on the typology of the Vidarbha megaliths, as well as trying to reconstruct the "cultural ecology" of the megalithic period (1985).

Deo's hypothesis too, is that the megalithic groups in Vidarbha were not settled agriculturists but mostly a pastoral community, practicing small scale agriculture. According to him the megaliths are concentrated in hilly, forested regions rather than well watered tracts fit for agriculture. He further points to the negligible number of agricultural tools found (and the absence of ploughshares) and the large percentage of cattlebones. According to him the practise of constructing circular huts, the near or total absence of civilian
architecture of stone or bricks at almost all habitation sites, and the paucity of storage jars, confirm an itinerant way of life. Also the small percentage of socio-technic objects and the large incidence of objects of offense indicate according to Deo, a "non-agricultural, mobile way of life" (1985 : 94).

But in later articles (1990; 1991) Deo suggested that the view which proposes that the megalithic people were essentially nomadic or migrating from place to place, requires a careful analysis in the light of recent evidence in terms of actual grain remains recovered, the percentage of bones of cattle recovered in the excavations, size of habitation sites so far discovered and the typology of the ceramic industries associated with the Vidarbha megaliths. According to him, this recent evidence suggests that even though some section of the megalithic community may have been nomadic or migratory, a large section were sedentary agriculturists.

Moorti (1994) too concludes that in the megalithic period there was a mixed economy based on agro-pastoral production. "The present analysis suggests", writes Moorti "that a combination of specialised strategies, i.e. agriculture and cattle pastoralism were adopted at the societal scale of production" (p. 44).

Jane Mc Intosh (1983), is one of the very few writers on Indian megalithism who recognized the fact that subsistence strategies can change over time. Most of the writers on the megalithic period in South India assume there to be only one form (either pastoralism or agriculture), unchanged through the entire megalithic time-span. Mc Intosh has instead considered the changing subsistence strategies of South Indian megaliths from the "early" to the "late" phase. When discussing Maharashtra she concludes that an initial phase of pastoral nomadism was followed by the emergence of settled communities. Even if she does not appreciate the dimension of continuous flux she has atleast recognized the dynamics of this period.
The brief survey of the historiography of Indian megaliths has revealed that for a majority of scholars, the Indian megalithic tradition constituted 'a' culture -- defined in monothetic terms on the basis of presence or absence of certain artefactual types (Black-and-Red ware, distinctive iron tools and weapons and burial forms) known to be contemporary and occupying a continuous geographical area, regardless of their context, i.e., whether the artefact-types were found in burials or habitation sites.

Therefore megalithic 'culture' has been viewed as an area of uniformity on a map\(^1\). But as Shennan (1978) rightly pointed out, different artefact types though seemingly converging in one area on the map, on close examination may be found to have their own frequency distributions over the map. David Clarke (1968 : 265) was amongst the first to emphasize that the boundaries of a culture area only occasionally coincide with the boundaries of specific artefact - type or a group of artefact - types. But he also points out that even the boundary assemblages of very intermixed neighbouring cultures will necessarily contain a greater number of types from one cultural set and lesser numbers from the others (ibid.).

A polythetic model for artefactual types thus needs to be followed. Variations of artefact types as suggested by Clarke (as discussed in Chapter-II Part-A) amongst burial sites and between burial and habitation sites need to be considered.

It may be pointed out that one of the major drawbacks of the study of Indian megaliths has been that very few scholars\(^2\) have tried to analyze the contemporary habitation sites. However any research into the megalithic

---

1 Unfortunatly reality is much more heterogenous and untidy than such a culture concept acknowledges. Human behaviour (after all it is people who produce the artefactual record) is not always bound in time and space and is not neatly packaged into type-units.

2 Leshnik (1974); Deo (1985; 1990; 1991) and Moorti (1994) are some exceptions. Other attempts, if made at all, were carried on only to check their association with burial sites.
period is incomplete without doing so. After all we cannot just resume that the people/s who buried their dead in the stone circles, of say Khapa and Gangapur (in Vidarbha) did not live at the nearby habitation site of Takalghat (and that the burial and habitation sites indicated different sets of people and therefore different cultures). One needs to go beyond the simple level of presence-absence of funerary goods or features alone to interpret the phenomena of megaliths. Spatial patterns produced by artefact distributions at megalithic burial and habitation sites are complex and varied; and this complexity needs to be understood and probed in order to better understand the phenomena of megaliths in India.

There has also been a great deal of often quite unwarranted discussion of the origin¹ of Indian Megaliths (what remains unsaid though is how these archaeologists conceive of the phenomenon of culture when they write of megalithic origins, for example, are they implying that megalith building is a single social phenomenon?); And the attempt to correlate the so-called culture to homogenous ethnic, racial (Aryan or non-Aryan) and linguistic groupings (Aryan or Dravidian) without clearly implying how the conclusions were arrived at.

However, as has been pointed out in chapter III (Part-C), a one-to-one equation between differently based entities like language, ethnic groups and archaeological 'culture' is not so easy because the boundaries of any given body of material culture residue and an ethnic, racial or language group need not necessarily coincide.

¹ According to Shennan (1978 : 114) the "very imposition of "culture" entities on spatial trends in artefact distributions which do exist not only restricts the amount of information these distributions can provide, but actually creates spurious problems, such as having to look for the origins of the (non-existent) "culture"..."
The Vidarbha plain comprises the northernmost limit of the 'Pandukal Complex' (Leshnik 1974) of megalithic burials in Peninsular India. The region has a large number of megalithic sites. In fact out of the 91 known sites recorded in Maharashtra, 86 occur in Vidarbha (Mohanty and Walimbe 1993 : 93). Within this region the maximum number of sites lie in the Nagpur district, followed by Chanda¹, Garchirol, Bhandara and Wardha districts. All these districts account for 67 burials and 4 habitation-site (ibid.).

A spatial analysis of the region has been undertaken first, to explain the heavy concentration of megalithic sites (particularly in Nagpur district). Second, to work out the distribution patterns of megalithic burials vis-a-vis habitation sites. Third, I thought it would be useful to look at individual sites in their immediate setting.

I have conducted the study of the Vidarbha region at two levels, macro and micro. The macro study includes a brief exploration of the physiography, drainage system, catchment areas, soil types, flora and fauna and geology of Vidarbha. The latter study involved plotting a large number of megalithic habitation and burial sites on topographic maps (on the scale of 1 : 50,000) to work out their locations in terms of topography, soils, vegetation, surface drainage and mineral resources.

The micro-level analysis is also based on observations made in the course of my field work in Nagpur and Wardha districts. In Nagpur district I explored three habitation-cum-burial sites of Naikund, Takalghat and Bhagi Mahari and numerous burial sites, like Mahurjhari, Junapani, Gangapur, Raipur-Hingna and Deolimet. In Wardha, a visit was made to Khairwada, a habitation-cum-burial site. This visit gave me a good first-hand knowledge of the landscapes of the region in which these megalithic sites are set.

¹ The present name of Chanda is Chandrapur.
Vidarbha: General

The region of Vidarbha, comprising nine districts, form the eastern and north-eastern parts of the state of Maharashtra. The Vidarbha region is enclosed on "three sides by higher lands that carve out for it a distinct regional entity" (Singh 1969 : 735). It is separated from the hilly Satpura on the north, the Maharashtra plateau on the west, and the Chattisgarh highland on the east. Vidarbha emerges as a natural region in that it differs in several geographical features from regions around it, lending to it a unique character. But this is not to say that there are no regional variations within. This region does share certain common geographical traits but there are also sub-regional variations.

Let us take a brief look at the geography of Vidarbha.

Geology and structure

A major part of Vidarbha is underlain by rocks of Volcanic origin. Dikshit (1986 : 16) rightly calls the region a museum of a whole sequence of rocks from the Archaean to Cambrian. The Deccan Trap formation (basaltic and volcanic rocks) cover the western part of Vidarbha. The rocky beds of the Deccan Trap provide the raw material - boulders and pebbles for the erection and filling of megalithic cairn stone circles of Vidarbha. However the trap thins out towards the east, and finally ends near Nagpur with the result that it exposed geologically the most ancient rocks of diverse origin (ibid. : 16-17). Therefore west of Nagpur much of the topography is typically Deccan Trap, with undulating plains, divided from each other by flat-topped and terraced hills. Distinguishing features of the trap area are the prevalence of long grass and the paucity of tall trees and the circumstances that almost all bushes and trees are deciduous.

To the north and east of Nagpur the landscape changes because of the change in underlying rocks. The rocks consist chiefly of coarse sandstone and conglomerate, marked with ferruginous bands (these rocks are important today because of their coal and manganese deposits). They present a low
rolling topography with poor soil cover and vegetation\(^1\). To the east of Nagpur, there is the prevalence of granite gneisses.

All the above soils allow the growth of "forest trees" (Dunbar-Brander 1914 : 6). The most marked change in the distribution of species owing to variation in geological formations is the preponderance of teak in the trap areas and its comparative scarcity on the metamorphic formations.

**Drainage**

Two major rivers, the Wardha and Wainganga flow in the central and eastern parts of Vidarbha respectively. The former rises in the hills of Madhya Pradesh and then goes on to flow through Nagpur district. Thence its forms a boundary between the districts of Wardha, Amravati and Yeotmal, before entering Chanda district. After flowing through the western part of Chanda district it meets the Wainganga. The river formed by these two rivers is known as Pranahita. This river, a tributary of the Godavri, forms the administrative border of Maharashtra with Andhra Pradesh till its confluence with the Godavri. Amongst some of the tributaries of the Wardha are the Bor, Wunna or Vena, Jam and Kar.

The Wainganga rises in the Satpura plateau in Madhya Pradesh and flows in the wide half-circle, bending and winding among the spurs of the hills. When emerging from the hills it runs through the western half of Nagpur district and then enters the Bhandara district from where it goes to Chanda and Garchiroli districts.

Among the major tributaries of the Wainganga are the Pench and the Kanhan, both of which meet near Kamptee where they are also joined by the Kolar (this river rises in the north-east corner of Katol tahsil and flows till Saoner plain. At Patansaongi, it receives the Chandrabhaga, which brings in the drainage of the Kalmeshwar plain). The **doab** of Parseoni between the

---

\(^1\) But further up north of Nagpur, in Parseoni and Ramtek tahsils there are extensive forest covers in the hilly terrain.
Pench and the Kanhan, and the doab of Patansaongi, on the narrow strip of land enclosed between the Kolar and Kanhan, are the most fertile and highly cultivated portions of Nagpur district (Nagpur Gazz. 1966 : 5). It is worth nothing that in the doab of Parseoni is located the famous megalithic habitation-cum-burial site of Naikund as well as the burial sites of Chicholi, Amgaon, and Sonegaon; And in the doab of Patansaongi is located another habitation-cum-burial site of Bhagi Mahari.

A characteristic feature of all the rivers mentioned above is their seasonal regime. The flow of the rivers is the maximum in July-August and the minimum in March-June. The rivers become swift torrents in the monsoon months. But in the hot weather they are mere rivulets, with deep pools here and there where the bed is rocky, hollow among the rocks have been formed by the action of rapid streams when in flood. Navigation, even in the largest of them can only be carried on during and shortly after the rains.

All the four megalithic habitation sites in our region of study are located near rivers. Most of the burial sites too are located near rivers or their tributaries or else have some other source of water supply nearby (for example, tanks or talavs).

While on the topic of surface water we need to mention tanks. As is evident from the topographic sheets, the eastern margin of the Vidarbha plain abounds in tanks. Most of the tanks are situated close to megalithic habitation and burial sites and are marked as perennial on the topographic maps.

**Hills and Ridges**

There are hilly tracts in the northern part of Vidarbha. They are all regarded as offshoots of the Satpura range. The Mahadeo range, commencing with the extreme westernmost point of Satpuras, continues in a straight line eastwards to the river Kanhan. Between the Kanhan and Pench rivers, the hills are well wooded and picturesque. The old Gond fort of Bhivagad stands on this range. And Naikund, an important habitation-cum-burial site lies close to the south of Bhivagad, at the foothills of this range. Immediately to the south
stretch the Ambagad hills (separating Nagpur from Bhandara district). These hills enter the Bhandara district from west and loop in a north-easterly direction, cutting off the valley of the Bawanthari river from the rest of the district.

The second main hill tract stretches from the vicinity of Nagpur towards the Wardha river and separates the valley of the Kar from that of the Jam upto Kondhali. Further south-east it forms the watershed between the river Jam and the Bor. Near Bori they become the Kauras plateau and here terminate to afford a passage for the Wardha river, continuing thence southeastwards towards Umrer tahsil of Nagpur district and then the Chanda district. An important habitation site, Takalghat, and adjoining burial sites of Khapa and Gangapur are located within 10 Km. of the west of Bori, on the gently rising ground of the Kauras plateau. The above sites are located on the Krishna river, a tributary of the Wunna and are "prettily wooded" (Grant 1870: 484). To the west of Wunna river the range is covered with picturesque valleys. But towards the east, i.e., Umrer, the range has lower levels and is uninteresting. It consists of low bare hills which are grass covered and boulder strewn, except where, overlooking the Nand valley, some excellent teak is grown (Nagpur Gazz. 1966: 3).

A third hill range runs northwards through the Katol tahsil, of Nagpur district, from Kondhali to Kelod. The hills are generally bare, with "dreary stone-covered downs which shut in the city of Nagpur from the west" (ibid. : 4). And it is in these dreary downs that some of our important megalithic sites are located, for example, Bhagi Mahari, a habitation-cum-burial site and purely burial sites like Borgaon, Umri, Pipla, Kohli, Wathoda, Ghorad etc.

Further to the south and south-east, in district Chanda, the Wainganga and Wardha rivers are separated by a watershed composed of two main ranges, the Chimur and the Mul. The Chimur hills commence in the north of Warora tahsil and run southwards till Moharli. In the basin of these hills lies the famous Taroba lake. The Mul hills lie further to the south. East of and
parallel to the Chimur hills runs a range known as Pharasgarh hills which forms part of the boundary between Warora and Brahmapuri tahsil of Chanda district. East of the Wainganga in the northern Garhchiroli district, stretches a tangle of highlands, forming a tableland. Numerous hills rise out of this tableland.

A look at the location of megalithic sites of Chanda and Garchiroli indicate that they were either concentrated in the extreme north-west part of Chanda which is similar to adjoining Wardha and Nagpur districts or along the east of Wainganga and not so much in the high, hilly forested tracts of the Chimur and Mul ranges.

**Climate**

A remarkable feature of the rainfall of Maharashtra is its rapid decrease to the east of the Sahyedri and the rainshadow area, comprising most of the districts of central Maharashtra. However, further eastward the annual precipitation shows some increase, partly due to the later rains.

In Vidarbha there is a significant rise in precipitation which increases as one goes eastward. Thus there is the relatively moist eastern and the dry western sector in Vidarbha.

The map of distribution of mean annual rainfall in Land Resource Atlas of Nagpur District (Plate 5 : 15) shows that our region falls under three rainfall zones -

1. Low rainfall zone (annual figures less than 1000 mm) comprising the western part of Nagpur (including Katol and Narkher tahsils). Very few megalithic sites are noticed in this zone.

I would like to point out here that the exact location of the megalithic sites in the above two districts cannot be gauged because the concerned IAR reports are not very specific about their locations. Therefore I have had to rely solely on a map of megalithic sites given in Deo and Jamkhedkar's Naikund Report (1982 : Figure 1). Unfortunately, the map does not indicate any physical features; it only gives the boundaries of the districts of Vidarbha. Therefore my idea of the location of sites in this district is approximate.
2. Medium rainfall zone (total ranging between 1000-1200 mm a year) comprising the central, northern and south eastern parts of the district. The maximum density of megalithic sites lies in this zone, including the three habitation-cum-burial sites of Takalghat, Bhagi Mahari, Naikund.

3. Moderately high rainfall zone (total more than 1200 mm) comprising the eastern and south eastern parts of the district.

A few megalithic sites are situated in this zone too, mostly those located in Umrer and Bhiwapur tahsils. For example, Dongar Mauda, Wag and Umrer.

Soils

Much of the Maharashtra plateau is covered by different shades and thickness of black cotton soil or regur. The hill tops in the heavy rainfall area on the western margin are covered with red or lateritic soils. The plateau proper and the basins of the Tapi, and the Wardha - Wainganga are covered with black soils of varying thickness. The megalithic sites in Vidarbha were mostly located in areas of moderately deep to shallow black soil and a few in areas of deep red and black soil.

Black cotton soil is highly hygroscopic, i.e., it absorbs much moisture and also has the ability to retain it (Mishra 1953 : 6). This aspect of the soil needs to be specifically noted as it would help explain the cultivation of a wide range of grains recovered in the Vidarbha habitation sites and stone circles. Black cotton soil absorbs water during the rainy season and swells so that the whole surface is raised. It continues to retain this moisture even during the dry seasons, which is of great value as rabi crops, or later jowar can thus be sown. It therefore enables cultivation without irrigation. In the dry weather, the soil loses moisture and shrinks; in consequence wide cracks are formed. By the use of a simple hoe-harrow the cracks can be filled and closed with material on the surface, and by this means regular circulation of soils is
also established. The cracks further fulfill the function of ploughing by admitting air freely into the body of the soil (ibid.).

According to the Imperial Gazetteer of the Central Provinces, Vol. X (1908 : 35) cultivation as practised in areas of black soil also required little permanent labour, particularly wheat cultivation. Not much of ploughing is required and "the cultivator would sometimes content himself with putting the seed into the furrows made by the 'bakhar' as he sows without previous preparation of the ground. Again the crop was neither manured, irrigated or weeded. Moreover, the only considerable labour connected with it after sowing was at harvest time when, during the month of March there was a temporary influx of labourers from the hilly regions on both sides to cut the crops" (The Central Provinces Report, 1917 : 13 as quoted in Awasthi 1993 : 6).

Going by the self ploughing capacity of the black cotton soil and the absence of ploughshares recovered in the context of megalithic Vidarbha, it is possible that cultivation without deep ploughing was practiced in the megalithic phase of Vidarbha.

The information given on a detailed soil map of the Nagpur district, prepared by the National Bureau of Soil Survey and Land Use Planning (Plate 11 : 29) is extremely useful. This map clearly indicates that the black soil in the megalithic habitation areas of Vidarbha was very deep and well drained. However, the same is not true of the burial sites. For example, Mahurjhari and Junapani are located in areas where there is shallow or very shallow, excessively drained gravelly clay loam's or gravelly sandy loam soils. The soil cover at many other burial sites is also very thin and rocky (murrum as it is called) with scrub like vegetation, like the soil at Umrer and around is often stony, and is, as a rule poor and shallow. My visit to the above sites confirmed this. Thus the megalithic habitation areas seem to have a much better soil cover than the non-habitation areas.
Amongst the food crops of this region the most important are jowar, bajra, wheat and rice. But R.L. Singh (1970: 733) notes that in Maharashtra region despite large areas under cultivation, agricultural efficiency is low. Also the problem of soil erosion and limiting soil depth (Land Resource Atlas 1994: 48) is common in the Nagpur area. The terrain and inadequate rainfall impose limitations. Also the rivers flowing on the plateau rely on heavy rainfall in their source region, but once the monsoon is over their beds have a mere trickle of water. In Vidarbha even in the fertile regions like the Patansaongi doab and the doab of Parseoni, the agricultural output is not as much as say the Raichur doab of Karnataka.

Two of our important megalithic habitation sites, i.e., Bhagi Mahari and Naikund, both of which fall in the above mentioned fertile strips of eastern Vidarbha have yielded evidence of cultivated and wild plant species. For example, at Bhagi Mahari we have evidence of 10 cultivated and 4 wild plant species (see Table-1).

Among the cultivated species, wheat, barley, lentil, common pea and grass pea are the winter crops while rice, common bean, horse gram and black gram the monsoon (summer) crops, suggesting that the people of megalithic Vidarbha carried out their farming operations during both the summer ('kharif') and winter ('rabi') seasons. Thus it seems that at least a part of the population of megalithic Vidarbha was composed of regular agriculturists, enjoying sedentism during the major part of the year to carry out farming operations during summer and winter seasons.

In recent past water erosion due to exposed surface soils (as a result of increasing elimination of the protective plant covers because of increasing agricultural operation) has led to shallow soil depth with low to medium water retention capability.
TABLE I

GRAIN FINDINGS FROM THREE HABITATION SITES OF VIDARBHA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLANT SPECIES</th>
<th>Bhagi Mahari</th>
<th>Naikund</th>
<th>Khairwada*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RICE (Oryza of Sativa L. type)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BARLEY (Hordeum vulgare. L.)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHEAT (Triticum spp.)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOB’S TEARS (Coix lachryma jobi L.)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMON PEA (Pisum arvense Linn.)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LENTIL (Lens esculenta Moench.)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRASS PEA (Lathyrus Sativus Linn.)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HORSE GRAM (Dolichos biflorus Linn.)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HYACINTH BEAN (Dolichos tablab Linn.)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RED GRAM (Cajanus cajan Millsp)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Pigeon Pea)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLACK GRAM (Reprtd. as Vigna Mungo(L) Hepper (L) or Phaseolus mungo Roxb.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BELERIC MYRABONA (Terminalia beberica Roxs.)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUCURBITACEOUS SEED</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOOSE FOOT (Chenopodium cfalbun Linn. type)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDIAN JUJUBE (Zizyphus)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Since the Khairwada excavation report is not available, the information is limited.
Minerals

The districts of Chanda, Bhandara and Nagpur comprise some of the mineral producing zones of Maharashtra, rich in iron, copper, manganese and mica ores.

The upper Wainganga valley and the lower part of Wainganga basin, corresponding to the districts of Chanda, Bhandara and Nagpur, are rich in iron ores. Large quantity of rich grades of iron ore are particularly evident in Chanda district. The ores, mainly haematite, occur in the northern part of Chanda where they rise in the form of hillocks. The principal localities are Lohara, Pipalgaon, Asola and Dewalgaon. A hill named Khandeshwar near Dewalgaon is about 250 feet high and its entire mass is laden with ore (Chakrabarti 1992: 28). The Lohara deposits are also very large "... the Lohara hill, 3 furlongs long, 200 yards broad, and 120 feet high, is described as consisting of compact crystalline haematite with some magnetic oxide, and the ore is believed to be traceable for a considerable distance" (The Imperial Gazz. of India Vol. X : 51). The percentage of iron found in the ores of Chanda district is quite high ranging from 61 to 71 (Elwin 1942: 36). There are traces of pre-industrial smelting in this district. According to Elwin (ibid.) there were 23 furnaces at work in Chanda district in 1897. In fact the Lohara deposits estimated to be in the order of 21 m. tons capacity are now being worked (Krishnaswamy 1972: 195).

Iron ore deposits have been found in Bhandara district also. A.J. Lawrence in the earliest settlement report of this district writes that "the best iron-ores are found near Chandpore, Lanjee and Pertabgurh. That of Chandpore is generally considered to be the best" (Elwin: 32). A.J.Watts in 1890 adds that the ore was lateritic and that excellent iron was obtained from the mines of Agri and Ambhajhari (ibid.). Evidence of pre-industrial smelting operations are reported from this district as well. In the middle of the last century there were 162 furnaces. In 1897 there were 14 furnaces in the Tirora tahsil alone where superior quality of iron ore existed in several villages (ibid.).
The iron ore deposits from Nagpur district are not rich like the ores from the Chanda and Bhandara districts. They are reported from Korali and also Bhivapur in the extreme south-east of the district (Umre tahsil). And there is a small magnaferrous belt in Ramtek tahsil i.e., Parshivni (the Parshivni open cast iron mines lie 3 Km. from the megalithic sites of Naikund).

It would be worth mentioning that the districts adjoining our area of study, particularly towards the east, have some of the richest iron ore reserves in India. For example, Bastar and Drug districts of Madhya Pradesh which border Chanda and Bhandara on the east. Had it not been for the shortage of coal and water it would have been in Drug and Chanda that the Tatas would have built their iron industry, because in 1903 it was to Chanda district that Sir Dorabji Tata first went on "a romantic and thrilling voyage of discovery. Later, the chance discovery of an old map in the Nagpur museum led Sir Dorabji to Drug and the wonderful reserves of ore at Dalli and Rajhara, even more remarkable than the entire hill of pure specular iron at Lohara in Chanda" (Elwin : xxiv).

Ethnographic accounts particularly of the British period refer to the nomadic iron smelters of the central province of India, the Agaria. According to Elwin their movements were "...controlled by two chief factors -- a supply of ore and a forest of sarai trees, from which charcoal suitable for use in the furnaces can best be made" (1942 : 13). Incidentally, Sarai grows densely in the Dry Deciduous forests of the Nagpur and adjoining regions of the Central Provinces, as also other good sources of charcoal like Saj, Khair, Baval, mahua, tendu and teak.

As regards the placement of megalithic sites vis-a-vis the source centers of iron ores Joshi (1993 : 84) writes that among the to iron ore deposits in Garchiroli and Chanda districts four sources, i.e., Pimpalgaon, Lohara, Devalgaon and Asola are within a 15 Km. radius from nine 'purely' megalithic sites (he however does not specify which ones). But he adds that the iron ore deposits of Bhandara district are far off, nearly 70 Km. north of a
group of three megalithic sites of Pimpalgarh, Tirlonta-Khairi and Brahmi. In the Nagpur district where a majority of the Vidarbhan megalithic sites are found, there are no appreciable sources of iron, as we have pointed out. Only Naikund lies near an iron source (At Naikund an iron smelting furnace of the megalithic period has also been found). At the other two habitation-cum-burial sites in Nagpur district, i.e. Bhagi Mahari and Takalghat there are no nearby sources of iron though at both the sites a substantial evidence of iron tools and weapons has been recorded. The same can be said about the many burial sites in the region. Near Khairwada too, the largest habitation-cum-burial site and located in Wardha district, there is no source of iron ore. In fact Wardha district in terms of all kinds of minerals is one of the poorest in Vidarbha. Yet it is here that the largest of the megalithic sites of the region with a vast repertoire of metal objects occurs!

Assessing the above facts we can infer that either Naikund (which was both close to an iron source and where the evidence of the only iron smelting furnace of any megalithic site has been unearthed) was a major iron-good producing center supplying iron artefacts to the megalithic sites of the region or else there was a wandering tribe(s) of smelters much like the Agarias or Lohar's who stay for short seasons at a particular place.

A variety of copper objects have been recovered from a number of Vidarbhan megalithic sites (particularly burials). A few instances of gold objects have also been recovered from stone circle sites. Copper ores have been recorded from eastern Vidarbha. I was lucky to get access to some maps based on satellite pictures at the Geological Survey of India, Nagpur which clearly indicated three copper belts in this region as well as one copper-gold belt. The three copper belts in the region are:

1. Copper belt at Rang Mangli village (20°48' : 79°27') in the Bhiwapur tahsil of Nagpur. It is located on state highway 7 B connecting Nagpur-Chanda, 58 Km. south east of Nagpur¹.

¹ A number of important megalithic sites are located in this section like Umrer and Pauni.
(2) Copper belt at Thutanbori-Khapri area (79°35' : 20°51'). The area is about 10 Km. south east of Dongar Mauda\(^1\)(which in turn is about 50 Km. south east of Nagpur). An old copper working site i.e., Tambakheri is located close by. Even though the precise date of ancient trenches and pits found here have not been ascertained, perhaps it would not be wrong to presume that the copper reserves here were also exploited by the megalith builders in the iron age.

(3) Copper-gold belt at Pular-Parsori area, in the Bhiwapur tahsil situated about 5-10 Km. south east of Dongarmauda. The belt lies just a little above the town of Khapri and Mokhabardi on the banks of the Maru Nadi. The area is approachable by motorable road from Bhiwapur and Pauni, the two nearest tahsil head-quarters.

(4) Copper-Baryte belt at Thanewasna-Phutna in the eastern part of Chanda district and adjoining Garchiroli district. It is situated on the west bank of the Wainganga and is approachable by the Nagpur-Umrer-Chanda highway. The belt lies 35 Km. south of Mul, a small town located 160 Km. south-east of Nagpur.

Besides, The Imperial Gazz. of India Vol. X : 52 refers to the sites of Mahali and Mandari where copper ores were found in small quantities. Interestingly the former source occurs close to the burial-cum-habitation site of Naikund [According to The Nagpur Gazetteer 1966 : 12 the site lies only 4 miles north-east of Parseoni and Parseoni in turn is fairly close to the megalithic site of Naikund].

The only source of gold specifically in the Vidarbha region has been reported in the copper-gold belt in the Pular Parsori area in the Bhiwapur tahsil, about 45 Km. south-east of Nagpur. The Wainganga and the eastern streams of Chanda also contain minute practicles of gold. Small quantities of

\(^1\) It is interesting that stone circles have been found at Dongar Mauda and around, in the vicinity of this copper belt.
gold are reported from the nearby Balaghat district. It was also found on the Itarsi-Betul road (Mehta 1984: 93). And according to Jenkins (1827: 15) very small quantities of gold are also procurable in some rivers of Chattisgarh.

Nodules of Chalcedony, agate and carnelian are available on the slopes of Kalari hills at Gangapur (Deo 1970: 43). The sites of Gangapur and adjoining Khapa and Takalghat are some of the most important Vidarbhan megalithic sites. These minerals are also found in the streams draining the Nagpur trap and are particularly abundant in the bed of the Narmada river. The megalithic site of Mahurjhari has produced evidence of a large number of finished and unfinished beads.

Pottery clays are worked around Shemda, Chorkhairi, Khairi and Bazargaon in Nagpur district. They all have medium to good elasticity and little shrinkage. The presence of mica in the potteries particularly the micaceous red ware recovered at the megalithic sites of Vidarbha suggests the use of local clay for pottery making, as there are abundant quantities of mica in the clays of Vidarbha (Deo and Jankhedkar 1982: 14-15).

The topographic maps of Nagpur district testify to the prevalence of a large number of stone quarries. Interestingly, stone quarries are located close to many of the sites we propose to study. For example, at the burial sites of Raipur there are quarries 3 Km. to the north west; at Mahurjhari extensive stone deposits lie to the north-east and also to the south, less than a Km. away, and at Borgaon there lie stone quarries 7 Km. to the south-east indicating that extensive material was present for the construction of cairn circles. But we should not put too much emphasis on this. It might be purely incidental.

As pointed out above, mineral resources are concentrated in the districts of Chanda, Garchiroli, Bhandara and Nagpur of Vidharbha. The other districts of Vidarbha have fewer minerals. It has also been noticed that the sites are not always in the immediate vicinity of metallic ores.

---

Jenkins also mentions the Sonjhares', a small occupational caste of wandering gold washers here who all "gain a poor livelihood" (1827: 15).
For example, Nagpur district, far poorer than Chanda or Bhandara districts in
terms of iron ores, happens to have the maximum sites yielding evidence of
iron artefacts. Khairwada, as mentioned, is in neither of the mineral-rich
regions. Thus no correlation between site location and mineral resource
distribution appears to exist.

**Natural Vegetation:**

**Forests:** The forest cover occupied a larger part of the region in the past
than it did today. The historical background of forest development reveals
centuries of neglect and ruthless and unintelligent exploitation (which
continues to date) leading to a shrinkage of forested areas. As Gadgil (1991 :
15) has rightly pointed out, the root cause of the on-going disaster of
deforestation lies in the radical transformation of the social system of resource
use that took place under the British regime, and became all the more firmly
entrenched after independence. A comparison with previous land use records
reveals that the forest area of Nagpur district has decreased considerably and
cultivation has extended to marginal lands. The sparse forests and scrublands
manifest degradation in the biota of the region and are usually associated with
eroded hills, ridges, tablelands and their foot slopes.

Today, in most of the areas in the plains of Nagpur and around one
finds forests that are open and poorly stocked because of centuries of
exploitation of the forests for large-sized timber¹. Till the end of the
nineteenth century fellings were allowed to take place indiscriminately
(According to *The Chanda District Gaz.* 1909 : 271, contractors were
allowed to enter the best teak areas and cut as many first-class trees they could
obtain). Alarmed by the dwindling forest covers, conservation measures were
sought to be adopted by the British. By 1899, the forests in each range of the

¹ The practice of *dahya* also contributed to an extent to the damage to large tracts of forests.
Central Provinces had been brought under regular working plans\(^1\). But the system of forest conservancy has not yet had time to repair the ravages of centuries.

E.P. Stebbing (1921: 30), referring to the once vast forest cover of the region, wrote:

> The great mass of forest-covered hills occupying central India was unknown to the British officials in 1860, as also to the surrounding Indian dwellers in the plains. The best map at that time showed great tracts in this region as unexplored.

The Vidarbha region of Maharashtra has been rich in forests. Even today, half of the forests of Maharashtra are in its eastern districts comprising Vidarbha. Though Nagpur and Wardha are not half as rich as the adjoining Chanda and Bhandara districts. Chanda has the maximum forest cover amongst all the twenty-seven districts of Maharashtra today (The State Forest Report 1995:10). It alone occupies thirty percent of the forest cover of the state. It is closely followed by Bhandara district at number three (ibid.).

Vidarbha has two types of forests based on the classification of Champion and Seth (1968: i), Tropical Moist Deciduous and Tropical Dry Deciduous. The former type occurs in areas with relatively high rainfall i.e., between 1000-2500 mm and at relatively lower altitudes, in parts of Chanda, Garchiroli, Bhandara and the Melghat division of Amaravati district. Dry Deciduous forests grow in areas with relatively less rainfall and occupy the largest forest area in the state of Maharashtra. The Dry Deciduous forests have been further subdivided into a) Dry teak-bearing forests and b) Dry Mixed Deciduous forests. Our region is mostly dominated by the Tropical Dry Mixed Deciduous type.

\(^1\) Under these working-plans, each range was divided into twenty or thirty coupes; one coupe was opened annually and after being worked was closed to grazing for a limited period.
The above forest type is relevant to us because a study of the topographic sheets of the Eastern Vidarbha region has revealed that a majority of the megalithic sites are either situated in near proximity to forest areas or in forests itself. Amongst those located in the midst of "thick jungle" are a few stone circles of Naikund (Deo and Jamkhedkar 1982 : 1); And one sector of stone circles at Khairwada. According to the IAR Report (1981-82 : 51) these stone circles were situated in the reserved forest to the north of the habitation site.

The Dry Deciduous forests in the Vidarbha region (particularly in the eastern Vidarbha region) comprise (i) a narrow almost continous central belt and several isolated blocks on low trap hills, west of Nagpur forming parts of Kondhali, Arvi and Hingni ranges (ii) Several scattered blocks in the south-east of Nagpur forming the Umrer range (iii) a more or less compact block known as the Pench range (divided into east and west range), situated on the rugged granite hills to the north-east of Nagpur and contiguous with the forests of Chindwara, Seoni and Bhandara divisions (iv) the north and western parts of Chanda district, which in description is very similar to the adjoining Nagpur, Wardha and Bhandara districts though more covered with jungle.

The distribution of such forests is of course much scattered today. Even the hilly regions of the Kondhali and Arvi ranges have small isolated blocks rather than a vast continous forest cover. Instead of the once vast forest covers today there are mostly scrub jungles. And some portions have very little tree cover particularly just around the city of Nagpur. This does not have to do solely with the growth of Nagpur as a big industrial centre because even in the very early reports of the early British travellers and officials this has been reported. Jenkins in the early nineteenth century wrote that:

The rest of Deogurh, situated between the Wardha and Wyne Gunga, and extending to the southward as far as the confines of the Chandah district, with the exception of an extensive hilly tract stretching from the vicinity of Nagpur to
the Wurdha and from Katol to Anjhee, is generally open and undulating, watered by detached hills and low ridges. In the immediate vicinity of Nagpur, the absence of trees and enclosures gives the country a bare appearance; but in other parts, particularly in the vicinity of the hills, plantations of tamarind, mango and other fruit trees, surrounding the villages with detached patches of jungle, and numbers of mowah trees, render its aspect less sterile and uncompromising.

(1827 : 6)

The Dry Deciduous forest type is characterized by a mixture of a few species, most of which are bare during the dry season and some for several months. Some of the species tend to predominate over select areas but most are non-gregarious. They are a closed forest type though uneven and not particularly dense, containing an undergrowth of shrubs, often with a luxuriant spread of grass. Enough light reaches the forest floor through the upper canopy to permit the growth of grass. This is important for us because we wish to know whether such forests afforded good grazing for large and small stock. Bamboo is also present but not too luxuriant. The characteristic species of the Mixed Deciduous forest type are teak (Tectona Grandis), Sal or Sarai (Shorea robusta), Saj (Terminalia tomentosa), bijasal (Perocarpus marsupium), tendu (Diospyros melanoxylon), lendia (lagerstroemia parviflora), dhaura (Anogeissus latifolia), mahua (Madhuca indica), baval (Butea frondose), Khair (Acacia catechu), babul (Acacia arabica).

1 The reference here is to the Kondhali forest range.

2 The Sal shuns the trap rocks altogether whereas teak thrives best on trap formations.
dhaura (Anogeissus latifolia), salai or sarai (Boswellia serrata), desi-baval (Acacia leucopholea), tinsa (Ougenia dalbergiodes), Indian jujube (Zizyphus jujube) and ghatbor (Zizyphus xylopyre).

Most of the above trees give good building wood. And the wood of many of these is an excellent fuel and makes good charcoal. Many of them also have medicinal properties.

Teak (Tectona grandis) is not very exclusive in its habit of growth (unlike the sal) and appears generally in the form of scattered clumps among other forms than as a sole occupant of large areas. Unfortunately it is the easiest of all timbers to fell and makes better firewood and charcoal than any other (Forsyth 1889 : 31). Teak wood is in fact full of oil and burns easily. It also makes good building material. In fact teak forests of western and south India were at first ruthlessly destroyed by the British for their ship-building and rail industries. Later some teak plantations were set up by the British to make up for the heavy fellings, and to raise supplies for the future.

The Salai or Sarai (Boswellia serrata) is a large, gregarious tree, never quite leafless. It is found growing mostly to the east of Nagpur, in areas where there are usually no trap rocks. The wood of this tree is valueless for building purposes (because its timber is too soft) and firewood (its gravity being so low that a great bulk has to be used to produce a given effect); yet it produces excellent charcoal. As mentioned earlier, Elwin in his study of the nomadic Agaria iron-smelting community (1942) of the Central Provinces points out that these people always looked for places with Sarai trees because they provided the best charcoal suitable for use in the furnaces (p.13). The tree is useful in other ways too and Gamble (1902 : 80) points out that the seed is eaten by the Santhals in times of scarcity, usually roasted and eaten mixed with the flowers of the mahua (another tree which is commonly found in this region).

The Saj (Terminalia tomentosa) is a large deciduous tree which is easily cultivated and reproduced. Gamble (1902 : 342-3) points out that it is perhaps the most widely distributed of all important Indian trees and that its
wood is employed for building village houses (it is also preferred for house posts), making carts, rice-pounders, ship and boat-building. Gamble goes on to say that it makes excellent fuel and good charcoal. V. Elwin also makes this point in his study of the Agarias. He writes that sometimes the Saj and dhamini are used by the Agaria iron smiths for making charcoal though their first preference is always Sarai (1942 : 12). The Saj tree is sacred for the Gonds (the largest prevailing tribe in Central India today) and the sacredness of the tree is mentioned in their legends. Mehta mentions that amongst the Gonds the 'Hanalkot' i.e., stones representing the dead are always kept under a Saj tree in all parts of Central India (1984 : 316). Elwin (1950: 166) elaborates that amongst the Maria Gonds of Bastar, when a man dies, the priest picks up two stones, using the name of the dead, and takes them to the "Hanalkot" and puts them under a Saj tree saying "they will go down into the ground with their own accord". It is interesting to note the association of this tree with death rituals (involving stones) amongst the present day tribes of Central India.

Bijasal (Plerocarpus marsupiam) also known as bastard teak yields timber of value as building wood. The red gum from its bark is used as an astringent.

Tendu (Diospyros melanoxylon) according to Mehta (1984 : 695) is very popular with the Gonds and its leaves are collected to be smoked with tabacco. And according to the Chanda district Gazz. 1909 (p. 19) its wood is not extensively used, as the fruit finds much favour as an article of diet.

Lendia (Lagerstroemia praviflora) is a large deciduous non-gregarious tree, and except the Saj, the most important and useful associate of the Sal (Gamble 1902 : 371). It is an important tree economically and sylviculturally. It is an excellent fuel tree and gives very good charcoal (ibid. 372). It is also in demand by the local populace for house-posts, beams and rafters, frame for doors and windows, parts of agricultural implements etc.
The dhaura (*Angeissus latifolia*) according to Gamble in his *A Manual of Indian Timbers* (ibid. 346) "... is in great demand for country-house building and agricultural purposes. It also gives good fuel and is an excellent charcoal. It gives a gum which is eaten and extensively sold and is used in cloth printing".

The mahua (*Bassia latifolia*) is one of the most useful wild trees in this part of India. Forsyth extolling the virtues of this tree in his *The Highlands of Central India* (1889 : 74) wrote that it is not cut down like other forest trees in clearing the land for tillage because of its great value (p. 74) and Gadgil (1991: 15) writes that "most of our tribal groups venerated mahua, and traditionally used only its usufruct in a regulated fashion". Quoting Forsyth (1889 : 80-81) on its many virtues:

The value of the Mhowa consists of the fleshy corolla of its flowers, and in its seeds. The flower is highly deciduous, ripening and falling in the months of March and April. It possesses considerable substance, and a sweet but sickly taste and smell. It is a favourite article of food with all the wild tribes, and the lower classes of the Hindus; but its main use is the distillation of ardent spirits, most of which consumed being made from Mhowa. The spirit, when well made and mellowed by age, is by no means of despicable quality, resembling in some degree Irish whisky. The luscious flowers are no less a favourite food of brute creation than of man. Every vegetable-eating animal and bird incessantly endeavours to fill itself with Mhowa during its flowering season ... and its nuts, which form in bunches after the dropping of the flowers, yield a thick oil ...
The oil is used for cooking purposes by the tribals of this belt. Its wood is also used for making charcoal. Grigson in his classic ethnographical study of the Maria Gonds of Bastar (1938) pointed out that they make mahau charcoal by burning the heaps of dry logs and pouring water over the glowing embers and that this charcoal could be collected overnight. Mahau is also valued for its medicinal properties (according to the Ayurvedic materia medica it is valuable for the treatment of ailments relating to gas and phlegm). The tree is held sacred and has ritualistic significance. For example, amongst the Gonds, a bride and bridegroom go around a post of mahua wood during their marriage ceremony (Mehta 1984: 317).

Baval (Butea Frondosa), a medium-sized deciduous tree found scattered in mixed forests is used for fuelwood (it gives an excellent fuel [Gamble 1902: 242-3]), poles, planks and frames in the construction of houses, furniture and farm implements. It is also used in native medicine.

Khair (Acacia catechu) and babul (Acacia arabica) are the thorny species of the Dry Deciduous forests. Forsyth has rightly pointed out how these species "... which are best armed to resist destruction, have thus won the race for life in such tracts". Today, most of our megalithic sites in Vidarbha are left surrounded by only such thorny species. Gamble (1902: 297-98) has pointed out that Khairwood is an excellent fuel and very good charcoal. In fact it yields heavy charcoal of the best quality. Its wood is also extremely durable and is used for agricultural implements, rice-pestlers, oil and sugarcane crushers, bows and spears and wheelwrights work (ibid.). The chief product of the tree is Catechu an important catechol tan. It is used in the form of "Kath", which is valued as an astringent for chewing with betel.

Such is the importance of this tree that the migratory pattern of many-a-tribe of Central India and the Deccan was determined by the mahau season. Furer-Haimendorf in this study of the hunter-gatherer tribe of the Chenchus of the Hyderabad region writes that: "Towards the end of March when the corollae of the mahau tree provided ample food and raw material for distilling liquor, the Chenchus seek out places where these trees are plentiful and move from the valleys up to the plateau, either back to their permanent village or to other temporary settlement on the hills" (1943: 44).
Babul (Acacia arabica) is gregarious in habit and a typical xerophyte of open fields and grazing grounds outside actual forest areas (Maitland 1926 : 12). According to Mishra (1953 : 22) its timber is in demand for making agricultural implements like plough-shares.

Desi-baval (Acacia Leucopholea) is a common tree in most dry forests. Its wood is good, strong and tough, but is often eaten by insects. It gives an excellent fuel (Gamble 1902 : 295). Its timber like that of babul is in demand for making ploughshares (Mishra 1953 : 22). Its bark is eaten in times of scarcity. The young pods and seeds are eaten too and the gum is used in native medicine.

Tinsa (Ougenia dalbergiodes), a valuable tree and a typical teak associate (Maitland 1926 : 8) is hard and durable and in great request for agricultural implements, for example ploughshares (ibid.). Its cut bark gives a red gum used locally as an astringent, fish poison etc. It suffers much from grazing and browsing.

Indian jujube (Zizyphus jujube), another extensively found thorny species in the central belt gives good fuel for burning particularly lime burning and good charcoal (Gamble 1902 : 181). Although the wood of Ghat-bor (Zizyphus Xylopyra) is not as good as that of Indian jujube it is used for carts, agricultural implements, firewood and charcoal (ibid. 183).

Therefore we find that most of the trees of the forest ranges of Vidarbha make good building material (for houses and agricultural implements). And the wood of most of these makes good fuel and charcoal. Many of them are also important from the medicinal point of view. Trees like the saj and the mahua are held sacred and venerated by the tribals of this region till today because of their extreme value. (Moreover some trees like the mahua have determined the migratory patterns of hunter-gatherers of Central India again because of its value).

Although we do not have direct archaeological evidence regarding the use of these trees, a large number of tools, particularly of iron (for example,
iron axes with or without cross ring fasteners) point to the use of these forest resources. Another important point to be remembered here is the requirement of wood for smelting operations and domestic purposes (like cooking and building huts etc.). Timber must also have used as subsidiary supports such as halves for agricultural and craft implements (and maybe also for weapons).

Grassland: Another point we need to highlight pertains to the highland and tableland regions of the Satpura mountains which contain some very fine grasslands. The natural grass wealth of this region is immense. The grasslands of Central India have been extensively used by the Ahirs, Dhangars, Gaolis and other tribes. And cattle breeding has existed for centuries in the region between Bhopal, Nagpur and Indore (Mehta 1984: 739). Today this belt is occupied by pastoral nomadic tribes who follow a migratory route beginning from the region of Bhopal and the lower reaches of the Narmada over the ghat of the Tamia, Parasia and Chhindwara, to descend eventually into the plains of Nagpur (ibid. 567).

According to The Nagpur Gaz. of 1908 (p. 205) this region (particularly the central and southern portions of Umrer) have a large residue of rich, sheltered grazing lands which according to the gazetteer would have been clothed with forest trees "but for the improvidence of former generations" (even Kondhali, Arvi and Hingni ranges are mentioned to have vast grasslands). Therefore besides the natural grasslands there were also those formed as a result of deforestation. But even before the process of deforestation had begun excellent grasses are known to have grown in most of the forests of the Central Provinces1 (The Gaz. of the Central Provinces of India 1870).

1 The best grazing grass in the Central Provinces is the darbh or dib (Cynodon dactylon), "sacred to Ganesh but which is scarce on black soil" (Imp. Gaz. of India. Vol. X 1908: 8). Therefore the Nagpur region would not have had this grass growing.
It would be relevant to point out here that animals favoured for a pastoral way of life dominate faunal remains at the megalithic sites of Vidarbha region. The table below helps to highlight this point:

**TABLE - II**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Takalghat (Habitation site)</th>
<th>Naikund (Habitation-cum-Burial site)</th>
<th>Borgaon (Burial site)</th>
<th>Bhagi Mahari (Habitation-cum-Burial site)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>63.88%</td>
<td>70.07%</td>
<td>54.04%</td>
<td>61.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffalo</td>
<td>6.98%</td>
<td>2.06%</td>
<td>1.98%</td>
<td>3.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goat</td>
<td>14.96%</td>
<td>9.06%</td>
<td>13.67%</td>
<td>16.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>3.10%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2.08%</td>
<td>4.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pig</td>
<td>6.23%</td>
<td>3.89%</td>
<td>2.27%</td>
<td>3.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse</td>
<td>0.34%</td>
<td>4.00%</td>
<td>1.28%</td>
<td>1.23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is clear that cattle and sheep/goat form the dominant species among animal remains. It is not possible to arrive at such percentages for the megalithic sites of south India as not many details are available, for example, at Brahmagiri. At Maski, the limited amount of cattle bones was taken to suggest that no large animals were raised (Thapar 1957 : 14-15). But Deo (1985 : 91) rightly says that it is difficult to agree with the excavator and more so when he further remarks that the megalithic inhabitants of the site practised a "settled agricultural economy with a bias for urban life" (ibid.). The number of agricultural tools (one sickle and blade fragment) and evidence of six varieties of pollen grains according to Deo (1985 : 91) hardly justifies the argument for a fully settled agricultural economy.
Fauna:

The fauna of the Vidarbha region is quite varied in nature. However, according to The Central Provinces Land Revenue Settlement Report (1890-1895), wild animals of every description are much rarer in Nagpur district than in any other district of the Central Provinces (p. 11). According to the 1908 Nagpur District Gazz., at one time the district was famous for its big game, "and in military circles Kamptee was one of the most popular stations. It is not twenty years since a bison was shot on the Kamptee rifle range. But the clearance of forests ... have rendered Nagpur probably the worst district in the province for shooting" (p.17).

The big game species found in the eastern Vidarbha region include tiger (found in the upper Pench range and in the forested areas of Chanda district), panther, sloth bear, gaur, chital, sambhar, barasingha, barking deer, black buck, chinkara or Indian gazelle, four-horned antelope, nilgai, wild pig, wild boar, hyaena, jackal etc.

Amongst the remains of wild species recovered at the megalithic sites are those of sambar, chital, four-horned antelope, mouse deer, gaur and wild sheep/goat. There is a possibility of some bones of black buck at Naikund but in view of the scanty nature of the material these could not be properly identified. Remains of the hare, fowl, turtle, crab and reptiles have also been recovered. At Bhagi Mahari habitation site a fair number of bird bones have been recovered (IAR 1983-84 : 57-58) but the IAR report does not specify which birds the bones recovered represent.
Thus the macro level spatial study of the region points out that:

(1) Most of Vidarbha, particularly the eastern portion is a plain with some hills and plateau. The majority of the habitation and burial sites are located on the upper plateau (gently to moderately sloping)\(^1\) or the moderately undulating alluvial plain\(^2\). The upper plateau is "an area abruptly rising above the surrounding landscape ranging in elevation from 400 to 518 msl. The characteristic landscape of the region is rugged, covered with pebbles and boulders\(^3\)" (Land Resource Atlas: 22). The burial sites of Mahurjhari and Junapani are found here. The majority of the sites however are situated in the moderately undulating alluvial plain. The habitation-cum-burial sites of Khairwada is an exception. It is situated in a hilly region. The hills here form a smaller range of the Kondhali range.

(2) A large part of Vidarbha is covered by the Deccan Trap, particularly the area to the west of Nagpur, and black cotton soil is the chief type of the Deccan Trap area.

(3) The entire region is drained by the Wardha and Wainganga rivers and their tributaries: the Pench, Kanhan, Bor, Wunna, Jam and Kar. The rivers in the hot months are reduced to mere rivulets. They can be forded in all seasons except the monsoon months. All the four major habitation sites are located near rivers: Takalghat on the bank of the Krishna river; Bhagi Mahari on the bank of the Kolar; Naikund on the left bank of the Pench; and Khairwada on the right bank of the Dham. Most of the burial sites, too are located near rivers or their tributaries or another source of water supply nearby (for example, tanks or talavs).


\(^2\) ibid.

\(^3\) This is the picture it presents today because the massive deforestation process and soil erosion have taken their toll. But centuries ago it would not have been so harsh a landscape.
(4) Chanda, Bhandara and Nagpur districts of Vidarbha are rich in minerals like iron. However, site location pattern indicates that the choice of the site was not always determined by the near availability of mineral resources. Nagpur district which is not half as rich as Chanda and Bhandara districts in terms of iron ores has the maximum sites yielding evidence of iron artefacts. In this district, with the exception of the site of Naikund (which has also yielded the only evidence of an iron smelting furnace) which has an iron source supply nearby, no other site has such a major source in its immediate vicinity going by present day surveys. Similarity the megalithic sites as a whole do not lie near any appreciable gold or silver reserves. Though the presence of 4 copper ore belts has been seen on recent maps based on satellite picture imagery, at the GSI, Nagpur (which I was lucky enough to get access to). The ores are concentrated in Umrer and Bhiwapur tahsils of Nagpur close to certain megalithic burial sites like Dongarmauda, Udasa, Wag and Mandhal.

(5) Agriculturally, the Vidarbha region is not very rich because of the terrain and inadequate water supply. As pointed out earlier the rivers are dependent on rainfall alone and once the monsoons are over the river beds become quite dry.

(6) The considered area has a rich though scattered forest cover. The Nagpur and Wardha districts are not as rich as Chanda and Bhandara in terms of forests. As discussed earlier, at one time, prior to deforestation these districts too must have had a much thicker forest cover (nevertheless even today Nagpur and Wardha districts have a fair amount of reserved and protected forests). And even many of the grasslands of this region might at one time have been under forest cover. The majority of the megalithic sites are not found in heavily forested zones but rather on their periphery and in mostly plain areas.
The plains of the Nagpur region have some good grasslands. Till today, the grasslands of this region are an important destination on the itinerary of the nomadic pastoral tribes of Central India. As pointed out, the remains of animals favoured for a pastoral way of life (particularly cattle and sheep/goat) are found in majority at the various megalithic sites.

**Site Distribution Analysis**

Let us now take a micro-look at some of our Vidarbhan megalithic sites. Location analysis charts of twenty four sites in Nagpur and Wardha district (Table 1.1 to 7) have been prepared on the basis of a personal visit to the megalithic sites as well as an intensive study of the concerned topographic sheets.

The districts of Bhandara, Chanda and Garchiroli are also, no doubt have megalithic stone circles but I was unable to undertake a detailed analysis of these sites because the IAR reports on them were not very informative. In fact, as far as their location is concerned, as pointed out earlier, I have had to rely solely on a map of megalithic sites given in Deo and Jamkhedkar's *Naikund Report* (1982 : Fig. 1). But the little I could gather is that: the sites of Bhandara district like Brambi, Pimpalgaon and Trilonta Khairi are located in the south-west part of the district, adjoining the Umrer tahsil of Nagpur district. In Chanda district the stone circle sites of Aturdi, Khemjai, Waganath and Hirapur are located in the extreme north-west, adjoining the Nagpur and Wardha districts. The other sites of Chanda district like Chak-Vithalwada, Umri, Chakalpet, Sidhla, Chamurshi, Kelzar and Ranaparsodi and the sites of Dongargaon and Ravi of Garchiroli districts are situated along the Wainganga (mostly along its right bank) rather than in the hilly, densely, forested regions of the interior.
According to Jenkins (1827: 6) the country just east of the Wainganga has low and rocky hills with extensive valleys and some open and cultivated plains between. This country, according to Jenkins is more open than to the eastward where the hills are higher and more abrupt, and covered with large and lofty trees. The cartographic analysis of the Chanda upland (Census of India 1988) confirms this. The upland region of Chanda consists of mainly granite gneisses; and the general soil type is deep black having the characteristics of shallow black, brown and alluvial soils. The Chanda upland attains a height of between 200-300 m. But this upland is dotted with residual hillocks which rise to more than 300 m. Except these residual hillocks, the surface is relatively smooth. The uplands have their general slope to the south and south-east. It is fairly covered with vegetation. The rivers Mul (a tributary of Andhari river) and the Erari river (a tributary of the Wardha river) originate from this upland. Natural and artificial tanks, number of above 80, are also found in the north-eastern parts of the region (in the area of megalithic sites like Aturdi, Khemjai Waganakh and Hirapur). Transport and communication networks run through this area. One narrow guage railway (Chanda-Umrer) passes through this region. Yavatmal-Bhandara state highway and other metalled roads also pass through this region. But according to the Census of India 1988 report only 1/6th of the total villages of the region are connected by pucca roads. However the topographic sheets show a number of cart-tracks connecting the various villages in the region. The villages in the region are medium--small and the population density is rather low.
Going back to the megalithic sites of Nagpur and Wardha districts, the highlights of the detailed analysis of the 25 megalithic sites (see also Tables 1.1—7) in this region are as following:

(1) The majority of the sites are located in the Wainganga plain or Nagpur plain. In fact all the sites, but one were located in this plain. But even that one i.e., Khairwada is not far from the Nagpur plain.

(2) All the sites taken up for study, be they habitation or sites were located on the banks of major or minor rivers or their tridutaries. Besides water tanks were located near a vast majority of the sites.

(3) The majority of the sites in this region are located near low hill ranges and some in fact are located on such hills (Khairwada). The hill ranges in this area are all regarded as off-shoots of the mighty Satpura range in the north. The hill regions of the Nagpur and Wardha districts are not densely forested today (except the Pench range of hills in the north-west, north of the habitation-cum-burial site of Naikund) but have patches of open mixed jungle and scrub. All the megalithic sites under consideration are either located at the edge of jungle area (the site of Khairwada too is situated in a clearing in the jungle area though some of the stone circles are situated in the reserved forest itself) or some distance away from them. As the topographic sheets indicate that almost all the sites have reserved forests within a 10-20 Km. radius. As mentioned earlier, the forest area of this region has decreased due to excessive human interference. The sparse forests and scrublands manifest degradation in the biota of the region. But these

---

1 It has been suggested by some scholars like Banerjee (1965 : 120) that the megalithic people were responsible for the construction of tanks and the introduction of tank irrigation system in South India.
areas of open and dense scrub provide good grazing grounds for large herds of cattle (but this does not mean that there were no grazing areas in the past). Moreover, being not too far from the hill regions and the jungle areas, they also have access to the grass-covers of the hills (which usually get covered after the monsoons) and the jungles. The numbers of grazing areas around Khairwada -- Sindi Vihiri, Dahigaon, Chandini and Phepervada grazing areas and around Takalghat -- Mandva, Junapani, Dongargaon, Degma, Wargaon etc. are worth mentioning.

(4) In terms of agricultural output the Vidarbha region does not have much to boast about. A late sixteenth century travelogue of a European traveler, Leckie, when referring to the Raja of Nagpur's territory states "... notwithstanding the great extent of it, it does not contain a proportionable quantity of cultivated land to that which is waste and occupied by forests" (1924 : 73). Among the fertile regions of this region are the Patasaongi doab and the Parseoni doab. Bhagi Mahari, Borgaon, Wathora, Kohli etc. fall within the former zone and Naikund, Chicholi etc. in the latter zone. Another fertile zone lies to the west of Katol1. However no megalithic sites are noticed here. Therefore except very few megalithic sites (including the habitation sites of Bhagi Mahari and Naikund) the others do not necessarily conform to land-use patterns inherent to agriculture. For instance, the stone circles of Raipur-Hingna are strewn over a fallow-lying rocky plain.

(5) Preference is shown towards occupying the black soil (moderately deep to shallow) and at a few places red loamy soil. A majority of the

1 According to Grant (ed.) The Gazz. of the Central Provinces of India (1870 : 327) the most valuable crops are grown in the north-west corner of Katol tahsil.
sites are located in the black cotton belt. But as pointed out earlier, that though the black soil at the megalithic habitation areas is deep and well drained and is fit for cultivation (particularly wheat; and it also does not require much irrigation and permanent labour) but this is not so in the case of the burial sites. For example, the sites of Dongar Mauda, Umrer, Udasa, Wag and Mandhal are located in areas where the soil cover is poor and shallow.

There are few instances of mineral resources being available in the immediate vicinity of the sites. Sites like Takalghat, Gangapur and Khapa (near which semi-precious stones are found on the Kalari hills) and Naikund (which is close to the Parshivni iron mine) are exceptions. Megalithic sites like Dongar Mauda, Wag, Mandhal, Udasa and Umrer also have iron sources nearby but not in the immediate vicinity¹ but they do have a number of copper resources in the near vicinity. The copper deposits of Bhiwapur tahsil are within a 10 Km. radius of the above sites. Many stone and mud quarries are visible near many of the sites. For example, Mahurjhari, Chikki-Khapa, Seminary Hills, Raipur-Hingna², Kinhi, Sukli-Takli etc.

Despite the fact that a majority of the sites are located near hilly regions and not far from forested regions (or some in the jungle regions like the stone circles of Khairwada or some of the stone circle of Naikund) the sites do not appear to be very isolated. Modern roads (metalled and unmetalled) and rail lines are evidenced at most of the

¹The Bhiwapur iron deposits are located 20 Km. away and the rich iron deposits of Lohara in Chanda district even further beyond.

²In fact there are big boulders available around here. According to Lad and Deglurkar (1991 : 2) this may be responsible for the advance preparation of some stone circles for burials as noticed in locality IV of Raipur.
sites. The topographic sheets show that many of the ancient megalithic sites of an area, for example, sites around Raipur-Hingna or the sites around Bhagi Mahari or the sites in the Umrer tahsil like Wag, Mandhal and Dongar Mauda are well linked if not by roads then by cart-tracks. Even a site like Khairwada, which is surrounded by forest region is not inaccessible.

Many old routes of communication traverse this region. For example, the major routes from Bombay and Berar to the Deccan pass through the Wardha and Nagpur districts. And interestingly the roads in these districts passed by many of the megalithic site clusters. For example, one very frequently used route to the Deccan entered Wardha district at Nachengaon (south-west of the district, at the border with Amravati), and traversing the present district from west-east, entered Nagpur district by the villages of Takalghat and Gumgaon. Another route (the old Nagpur-Amravti route) entered the Wardha district at Bhishnur (at the border with Amravati) and crossing Kondhali and Bazargaon entered Nagpur city. Between Bazargaon and Nagpur is the stretch which has sites like Vyahad, Nildoh, Sangam, Nagalwari, Sonegaon, Drugdhamma and Deolimet (in fact all the sites north of Raipur-Hingna on topographic sheet K/16 ). According to Grant (ed.) The Gazz. of the Central Provinces of India (1870 : 335) it was by this route that the bulk of the export trade of cloth and silk fabrics was conveyed to the distant cities of the Deccan in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The third route cut through the Katol tahsil to enter Nagpur at Takli passing nearby the sites of Borgaon, Wathora, Kohli, Ghorar, Mahurjhari, Junapani etc. Therefore
all the megalithic sites considered so far are easily accessible being well connected by various routes

(8) Annual fairs and weekly markets have been pinpointed around all the twenty-five burial and habitation sites studied. Even a site like Khairwada which is surrounded by forests has an annual fair 3 Km. to the north, in the midst of a hilly, forested region, attended by many thousands of adivasis of the region.

Most of the annual fairs in this region are held in February/March—particularly those in hilly, forested regions of the north, the sites of Naikund and Khairwada. I wonder if there is a connection between the holding of fairs in this season with the movements of pastoral tribes. This is the time of the year, after the winters are over, that migratory movement commences and are over there is a move to the grass covers of the hilly and forested regions. Almost everywhere pastoral nomadism takes place within definite limits, and brings the herds and their guardians to definite places at fixed times. "In pastoral nomadism the fair appears as an element of permanence. Accustomed to pass at fixed intervals in the neighbourhood of the same points, the driver of the herd knows that he will meet the drivers of the neighbouring herds. The meeting provides a temporary arrest of nomadism. It permits the exchange of animals, the making of contracts for the engagement of herdsmen, for the combination and composition of herds, and for the sale of pastoral produce" (Allix 1922: 548). March is also the time of the year when the corolle of the mahua tree provides ample food and raw material for distilling liquor (many of the tribes of the Central Provinces till today move up to the hills & forest regions where these trees are plentiful).

---

1 At the megalithic sites we have abundant evidence of horse remains. Horse at the site means immigrants. These routes hint at where the immigrants came from.
The reason for talking about annual fairs and weekly markets is to highlight the fact that some of the excavated megalithic sites are places where people from the villages and towns around converge at a certain period of the year or a certain day of the week (to purchase daily requisites or purchase livestock). All this seems to indicate that our sites were by no means isolated or inaccessible. A periodic market/fair will be located only on nodes which have routes feeding them on many sides.

(9) The present day habitation in the radius of megalithic habitation and burial sites is not very high. I tried to locate on the topographic sheets, the number of towns/villages within a 5 Km. radius of the megalithic sites. Most of them do not have too many towns/villages around them (The average is about 7-15 villages/towns within a 5 Km. radius). There are a few sites, however which record a higher number like Raipur, Junapani and Mahurjhari -- sites in proximity to Nagpur city. This might, in fact, explain the high incidence of towns/village around them. On the whole, looking at the present day habitation around the megalithic habitation-cum-burial sites one comes to the conclusion that they are not heavily inhabited till date\(^1\). My visit to the megalithic sites of Nagpur and Wardha districts confirmed this. The population chart in the Land Resource Atlas of Nagpur district (p.7) also confirms the above conclusion. There are on the average only 0-3 persons/hectare in the area under consideration\(^2\), which is a rather low figure by Indian standards.

\(^1\) For example, Khairwada records only 7 towns or villages in a 5 Km. radius, Takalghat 15, Bhagi Mahari 10-12 and Naikund 15.

\(^2\) The area in the immediate vicinity of Nagpur city records a higher figure, for obvious reasons.
Megalithic Sites in Vidarbha


* H Abitation Site
** H Abitation-cum-Burial Site
Megalithic Sites in Vidarbha

** 51. Ravi
* 52. Ranaparsodi

* Habitation Site
** Habitation-cum-Burial Site
Megalithic Sites in Vidarbha

1. Takalghat
2. Khapa
3. Ganganpur
4. Devlipet
5. Dadha
6. Raipur
7. Hingna
8. Kinki
9. Sukali Takali
10. Wananongri
11. Seminary Hill
12. Kambiec
13. Chikki Khapa
14. Drugdhamma
15. Naikund
16. Amgaon
17. Chicholi
18. Bhagi Mahari
19. Pipla
20. Umri
21. Borgaon
22. Kohli
23. Wathoda
24. Ghorar
25. Nildoh
26. Vybad
27. Mahurjhari
28. Junapani
29. Udana
30. Umrei/Umred
31. Wag
32. Mandhal
33. Dongar Mauda
34. Khairwada
35. Bramhi
36. Pimpalgaon
37. Trilonta Khairi
38. Aturdi
39. Khemjai
40. Waganakh
41. Hirapur
42. Chakh-Vihalwada
43. Umri
44. Chakalpet
45. Chamursbi
46. Kolzar
47. Jhiri
48. Sindhla
49. Dongargaon
50. Garchiroli
51. Ravi
52. Ranaparsodi

* Habitation Site

** Habitation-cum-Burial Site
**LEGEND**

1. Hill Ranges
2. Residual Hills
3. Upper Plateau
4. Lower Plateau
5. Dissected Plain
6. Gently Sloping Plain
7. Flood Plains

**Megalithic Sites in Vidarbha**

*1. Takalghat 11. Seminary Hill
5. Dudha **15. Naikund
6. Raipur 16. Amgaon
7. Hingna 17. Chicholi
8. Kinhi **18. Bhagi Mahari
10. Wanadongri 20. Umri
22. Kohli 32. Mandhal
23. Watlodha 33. Dongar Maoda
24. Ghorar **34. Khairwada
25. Nildh 35. Bambli
26. Vyadha 36. Pinpalgaon
27. Mahurjari 37. Trilonta Khairi
28. Junapani 38. Atardi
29. Udasa 39. Khemjai
30. Umredi/Umred 40. Waganakh
41. Hirapur
42. Chak-Vithalwada
43. Umri
44. Chakalpet
45. Chamurshi
46. Kelzar
47. Atardi
48. Sinhla
49. Dongargaon
50. Garchiroli
51. Ravi
52. Ranaapuradi

*Habitation Site

**Habitation-cum-Burial Site
Vidarbhá
Mineral Resources

Megalithic Sites in Vidarbha

* 1. Takalghat 11. Seminary Hill
  2. Khapa 12. Kampice
  5. Dudha **15. Naikund
  6. Raipur 16. Angaon
  7. Hingna 17. Chicholi
  8. Kinhi **18. Bhagi Mahari
 10. Wanadongri 20. Umri
 22. Kohli 32. Mandhal
 23. Wahoda 33. Dongar Mauda
 24. Ghorar **34. Khairwada
 25. Nildoh 35. Brambi
 26. Vyadhd 36. Pinpalgaon
 27. Mahurjari 37. Trilonta Khairi
 28. Junapani 38. Aturdi
 29. Udasa 39. Khemjai
 30. Umred/Umred 40. Waganakh
 41. Hirapur
 42. Chak-Visitalwada
 43. Umri
 44. Chakalpet
 45. Chamurshi
 46. Kelsar
 47. Aturdi
 48. Sindha
 49. Dongargaon
 50. Garchiroli
 51. Ravi
 52. Ranaparsodi

* Habitation Site
** Habitation-cum-Burial Site
Megalithic Sites in Vidarbha

1. Takalghat
2. Khapa
3. Gantapur
4. Devlipet
5. Dudha
6. Raipur
7. Hingna
8. Kinhi
9. Sukali Takali
10. Wanadongri
11. Seminary Hill
12. Kaptoor
13. Chikki Khapa
14. Drugdhamma
15. Naikkund
16. Angaon
17. Chicholi
18. Bhagi Mahari
19. Pipla
20. Umri
21. Borgao
22. Kohli
23. Watoda
24. Ghorar
25. Nildoh
26. Vyahad
27. Mahurjari
28. Junapani
29. Udasa
30. Umred/Umred
31. Wag
32. Mandhal
33. Dongar Mauda
34. Khairwada
35. Brambi
36. Pinpalgaon
37. Trilonta Khairi
38. Aturdí
39. Khemjaí
40. Dongargaon
41. Hirapur
42. Chak-Vithalwada
43. Umri
44. Chakalpet
45. Chamurshí
46. Kelzar
47. Sindhla
48. Aturdí
49. Dongargaon
50. Garchiroli
51. Ravi
52. Ranaparsodi

* Habitation site
** Habitation-cum-Burial site
**Discussion:**

An overview of the megalithic sites of Virdarbha indicates that the maximum concentration of sites is around the modern city of Nagpur. There are about 40-45 sites in a 50 Km. radius around Nagpur; and within a 100-150 Km. radius are covered almost all the sites of the Vidarbha region (including Khairwada in Wardha district and the sites of the Chanda and Bhandara districts). Therefore geographically there is a kind of compactness and homogeneity. Could the sites then represent 'a culture'?

An analysis of the sites within this geographical zone, particularly the distances between them (Table III and IV) reveal that though the stone circles might be close to each other, the habitation sites do not appear to be. For example, the habitation site closest Khairwada is nearly 60 Km. away. We do not therefore expect constant daily interaction between the people of these four villages. We may bear this in mind when talking about the agrarian 'society' of the iron age.

Some settlements may have been occupied by people doing slash-and-burn cultivation in forest patches. This would mean shifting a village every few years as patches of soil become exhausted. This in turn would mean that mound formation would be severely retarded. By this logic, the few mounds that we have may represent the exceptional villages that saw sustained occupation over the generations.

The nearest distance between any two stone circles is 1–5 Km., a distance that could be traveled on foot within an hour (1 Km. = 12 minutes). The farthest distance between any two stone circles is 14-15 Km. The distance again is not much. Cluster of stone circles are observed at some places. The cluster around Raipur - Hingna is fairly big. Within a 5 Km.

---

1 Sites like Naikund and Bhagi Mahari have an uninterrupted habitation deposit ranging from 2 to 2.5 m. and were probably occupied for no less than 400-500 years (Deo 1991, 1993; Deo and Jamkhedkar 1982).
radius of Raipur - Hingna there are about 5-6 sites; And within a 10 Km. radius there are as many as 12 sites. So is the cluster around Mahurjhari and Junapani. There are almost 8 stone circles within a 10 Km. radius of Mahurjhari; And within a 20 Km. radius I counted as many as 25 sites (including the habitation site of Naikund). Another cluster is noticed in the Umrer tahsil of Nagpur district (topographic sheet No. 55 P/6). In the cluster are included Dongarmauda, Kuhi, Mandhal, Udasa, Umrer and Wag. The above cluster is located miles from the nearest habitation site. Over 50 Km. separate Wag, Mandhal and Dongarmauda from the nearest megalithic habitation sites. How does one explain the existence of such stone circle sites? Either there was a habitation site(s) near abouts which has not been discovered or they were cemeteries of people who did not live in the iron age villages known to us.

**TABLE - III**

**DISTANCE CHART - I**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitation Sites</th>
<th>Nearest Habitation Site</th>
<th>Nearest Burial Site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Khairwada</td>
<td>Takalghat-59-60 Km.</td>
<td>Khapa-61 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takalghat</td>
<td>Bhagi Mahari-55 Km.</td>
<td>Khapa &amp; Gangapur 1-2 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naikund</td>
<td>Bhagi Mahari-32.5 Km.</td>
<td>Pipla-2 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhagi Mahari</td>
<td>Naikund-32.5 Km.</td>
<td>Amgaon 9-10 Km.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Distance between various sites measured using the measurements given on the topographic sheets of the scale of 1.50000.
# TABLE - IV

## DISTANCE CHART - II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burial Site</th>
<th>Nearest Habitation Site</th>
<th>Nearest Burial Site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raipur-Hingna</td>
<td>Takalghat- 18 Km.</td>
<td>Sukli-1 Km., HingnA-1 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanadongri</td>
<td>Takalghat- 20 Km.</td>
<td>Raipur-2.5 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinhi</td>
<td>Takalghat- 18 Km.</td>
<td>Raipur-3.5-4 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sukli</td>
<td>Takalghat- 17 Km.</td>
<td>Takli 1.5 Km., Raipur 1Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takli</td>
<td>Takalghat- 16 Km.</td>
<td>Sukli 1-1.5 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagalwari</td>
<td>Takalghat- 23 Km.</td>
<td>Sangam 2 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sangam</td>
<td>Takalghat- 21 Km.</td>
<td>Nagalwari 2 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugdhamma</td>
<td>Takalghat- 28-30 Km.</td>
<td>Deolimet 1-1.5 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deolimet</td>
<td>Takalghat- 28 Km.</td>
<td>Drugdhamma 1.5 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vyahad</td>
<td>Takalghat- 22 Km.</td>
<td>Nildoh 2.5 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nildoh</td>
<td>Takalghat- 20 Km.</td>
<td>Vyahad 2.5 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khapa</td>
<td>Takalghat- 2 Km.</td>
<td>Gangapur 1-1.5 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gangapur</td>
<td>Takalghat- 1.5 Km.</td>
<td>Khapa 1-1.5 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borgaon</td>
<td>Bhagi Mahari-10 Km.</td>
<td>Ghorar 9-10 Km., Wathora 10 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghorar</td>
<td>Bhagi Mahari-17.5 Km.</td>
<td>Kohli 5-6 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wathora</td>
<td>Bhagi Mahari-13 Km.</td>
<td>Kohli 3 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kohli</td>
<td>Bhagi Mahari-15 Km.</td>
<td>Wathora 3 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pipla</td>
<td>Bhagi Mahari- 2 Km.</td>
<td>Umri 3 Km.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**DISTANCE CHART - II**

Contd.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burial Site</th>
<th>Nearest Habitation Site</th>
<th>Nearest Burial Site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Umri</td>
<td>Bhagi Mahari-5-6 Km.</td>
<td>Pipla 3 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahurjhari</td>
<td>Naikund- 20 Km.</td>
<td>Chikki Khapa 3 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chikki Khapa</td>
<td>Naikund- 16.5 Km.</td>
<td>Mahurjhari 3 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junapani</td>
<td>Naikund- 22 Km.</td>
<td>Mahurjhari 3-4 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamptee</td>
<td>Naikund- 13.5 Km.</td>
<td>Takli 14 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminary Hills</td>
<td>Naikund- 21 Km.</td>
<td>Takli 1 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takli</td>
<td>Naikund- 20 Km.</td>
<td>Seminary Hills 1 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Udasa</td>
<td>Takalghat- 35 Km.</td>
<td>Umred 7 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umrer</td>
<td>Takalghat- 41 Km.</td>
<td>Udasa 7 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dongar Mauda</td>
<td>Takalghat- 56 Km.</td>
<td>Wag 4 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandhal</td>
<td>Naikund- 50 Km.</td>
<td>Wag 2 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wag</td>
<td>Takalghat- 53.5 Km.</td>
<td>Mandhal 2 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amgaon</td>
<td>Naikund- 9 Km.</td>
<td>Naikund 9 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicholi</td>
<td>Naikund-12.5 Km.</td>
<td>Naikund 12.5 Km.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is possible to therefore tentatively conclude that the locations of iron age cemeteries in our region were not determined by the location of contemporary villages. The locational variables appear to be independent of each other. And this makes us ask the various sites represent what we call "a society" or tribe? or Were there many small, disparate social groups involved in the building of stone circles and agricultural villages?

I think we seriously need to consider agro-pastoralism as a factor. It would not be right, in the light of the growing archaeological evidence and on the basis of locational patterning of habitation and burial sites, to make a clear-cut demarcation between agriculturalists and pastoralists (Leshnik 1974; Deo 1985; Sankalia 1979). The idea of "cultivating pastoralists" (Anderson 1980) seems to fit in well with our data. The mode of production of megalithic Vidarbha, at least where extensive habitation was found, was not nomadic. At least, some section of the population at that time would have been regular agriculturists with some kind of a symbiotic relationship with the pastoralists; and metal smiths who may have been either an itinerant group settling for only some parts of the year near a habitation site, like for example the Agarias; or more permanently settled as may be, in the case of Naikund.

1. Myres (1941: 20-21) proposed a three-fold classification of pastoralism into:
   (a) Sedentary pastoralism, i.e., when the stock or flock and the cowherd, shepherd etc. always belong to the same agricultural community; and whose movements are limited to customary grazing grounds, beyond the cultivated areas.
   (b) Transhumance. Under this heading, Myres refers to the nomadism of these pastoralists who have "always somewhere a permanent home, such as the surrounding villages, to which they and their cattle return seasonally" (p. 21)
   (c) Pastoral nomadism, which in the strict sense, occurs where a pastoral community habitually or intermittently moves with its herds over a wide area of "essentially similar and continuous pasture" (p. 21).

2. Activation analysis of iron objects from Naikund and other sites and the presence of a clay furnace at Naikund has pointed to Naikund being a manufacturing site of iron goods found at a majority of the Vidarbhan megalithic sites (Bhoraskar, Mahajan, Jayanth Kumar, Gogate 1985: 73-79).
In this connection, I would like to draw attention to Andersons\textsuperscript{1} work on the "cultivating pastoralists" of East Africa, which refers to the dynamic, ever-changing relationship between the Maasai-speaking cultivators and Maasai herders in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. These two groups were historically linked by "networks of exchange and social contact, including marriage and livestock bonding" (p.248) as a result of the occupation of a similar ecological niche i.e., the area around lake Baringo, in Kenya. In times of hardship (severe drought, cattle plague or warfare) Maasai agriculturists" absorbed the destitute herders". But they "... released population back into pastoralism" when individuals had rebuilt their flocks and environmental conditions had recovered.

If we assume that in Vidarbha too, there was an agro-postoral economy then we have to consider the relationship between the agriculturists and pastoralists as not static but dynamic and changing through time\textsuperscript{2}, with one sector being archaeologically invisible.


\textsuperscript{2} Jane McIntosh (1983) is one of the very few writers on Indian Megalithism, who recognizes the fact that subsistence strategies can change over time. Most of the writers on the megalith period in south India assume there to be only one (either pastoralism or agriculture), unchanged through the entire megalithic time-span.
**TABLE** 1.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Takalghat, Nagpur District</th>
<th>Nature of the site: Habitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topographic Sheet No</td>
<td>55 L/13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Location | The site of Takalghat (Log. 78°56'30" E; Lat. 20°54'40" N), about 30 Km. south-west of Nagpur and 6.43 Km. from Bori railway station |
| Size of habitation | 3 hectares |
| It is the smallest of the four habitation sites of this region. |
| Rivers and Tanks | The site is situated on the right bank of the river Krishna. Infact the entire area is girdled by the river (Deo 1970: 3). There are fords on the stretch of river close to the site. The site is also close to seasonal nalas. |
| There are also talavs in the vicinity. In a 10 Km radius around the site there is one bit talav i.e. Kanholi and two smaller ones i.e. Kinara and Khadki talav. |
| Hills | Takalghat is situated on the gently rising ground of the Kauras plateau. |
| Vegetation | There are plenty of trees and open scrub area marked around the site on topographic sheet No. 55 L/13. There are also a number of reserved forests |

*All the tables are marked according to their location on topographic sheets.*
marked around the site, mostly having trees of Khair, Salai and teak. No doubt the forests at one time must have been more widespread and with a wider variety of trees.

The Reserved forests around are:

- The Junapani R.F. (3-4 Km. south),
- Dongargaon Forest (5 Km. south-east),
- Keljhar R.F. (8-10 Km. south-west),
- Degma R.F. (12 Km. north-west),
- Wargaon R.F. (14-15 Km. south-east),
- Between 15-20 Km. to the south-east begin the forests of Umrer tehsil.

There are also some very good grazing grounds around the site. In the 1914 forest map of the Nagpur-Wardha division, a number of grazing areas are marked e.g. the Mandva area (3-4 Km. north), the Junapani area (3-4 Km. south) which today is a reserved forest, Dongargaon (5 Km. south-east), which is again marked as a reserved forest on the topographic sheet, the Degma area (12 Km. north-west) also a reserved forest today and Wargaon (14-15 Km. south-east) which has good grazing grounds. Good grazing areas have also been earmarked in the Umrer range of forests according to the 1914 forest map. e.g., Jamrapani grazing area (22 Km. east of Takalghat) or Bhiwapur (now a reserved forest 30 Km. to the east).

Contd.....
Mineral sources:

Nodules of Chalcedony, agate and carnelian are available in the Kalari hills a few Km. north of the site.

Communication Routes:

There was no good metalled road nearby till some years back (but now with big factories coming up in the area road construction has speeded up). But the old southern route called the Nagpur-Bori-Hinganghat road passed through the site and a good track connected it with Bori.

Annual Fairs/Festivals and weekly Markets:

An annual fair is held at Khori Khapa in the Nasargarh reserved forest 20 Km. north-west in February-March. Another annual fair in February is held 20 Km. south-east of Takalghat, across the Vena river. A weekly market is held at the present site of Takalghat, and a small weekly market at Bori.

Villages/Towns in a 5 Km. radius:

15
**TABLE 1.2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Khapa and Gangapur</th>
<th>Nature of the site : Burials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topographic Sheet No.</td>
<td>55 L/13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>The sites of Gangapur and Khapa (Long. 78°57' E; Lat. 20°55' N) lie about 28 Km. south-west of Nagpur and 6 Km. from Bori.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rivers and Tanks</td>
<td>Khapa is on the left bank of the river Krishna (about half-a-mile north-west of Khapa is situated Gangapur). Both the sites are close to seasonal nalas. There are two fords on the stretch of river which has Takalghat and Khapa on the opposite sides.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hills</td>
<td>Khapa and Gangapur are situated on the Kauras plateau. Gangapur is at the fringes of the southern slope of Kalari hills. Khapa is also at the spur of these hills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetation</td>
<td>There are open mixed jungles and reserved forests upto a 3 Km. radius around the site*. There are also patches of good grazing grounds around.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mineral Sources</td>
<td>Nodules of chalcedony, agate and carnelian are available on the slopes of Kalari hills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Routes</td>
<td>See Table 1.1 (Takalghat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Fairs/Festivals</td>
<td>See Table 1.1 (Takalghat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village/Towns within a 5 Km. radius</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Table 1.1 (Takalghat) for details.
Raipur

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Raipur -- Hingna</th>
<th>Nature of the site: Burial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>IAR 1984-85 : 53-55; Deglurkar and Lad 1992</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topographic Sheet No.</td>
<td>55 K/16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 2**

Location: The megalithic site of Raipur lies 15 Km. south-west of Nagpur, on the Nagpur-Hingna Road (Long. 78° 58', Lat. 21°43'). It is part of the twin locality of Hingna-Raipur, situated on either banks of the river Wunna. Stone circles have been evidenced at both places, on either banks of the river. Around this site are clustered a number of megalithic sites. They are the following*:

- Sukli and Takli, one and three km. from Raipur respectively (IAR 1961-62 : 101);
- Wanadongri, 5 km. north-east of Raipur (ibid.);
- Nagarwadi, 2 km. of Wanadongri to the north (ibid.);
- Drugdhamma (IAR 1959-60:72) and Deolimet (IAR 1968-69 : 72), 8-10 km. north of Raipur-Hingna;
- Sonegaon, 8-10 km. of Raipur-Hingna (IAR 1970-71 : 24);
- Kinh 3-4 km. west of Raipur-Hingna (ibid.);
- Nildoh, 10 km. west of Raipur-Hingna (Singh 1970 : 120);
- Amgaon, approx. 8-10 km. south of Raipur-Hingna;
- Vyahad, approx. 10 km. from Raipur-Hingna (IAR 1968-69 : 17).

Contd.......

*According to the Nagpur Gaz. 1907 (p. 230) the stone circles at Raipur- and around are attributed to ancient Gavalis (a pastoral tribe).
Therefore within a 5 km. radius of Raipur there are about 5-6 sites; and within a 10 km. radius there are many more (about 12 sites) megalithic sites.

The river Wunna or Vena, a tributary of the Wardha along with smaller streams that join it is the main drainage system for this portion of Nagpur district (i.e., the south-central portion). The Vena, like other rivers of this region is not a perennial one. But Raipur-Hingna is located 15-20 Km. south from the source of the river, at a point where it adopts a more even course after much meandering, its bed expanding to its maximum and thus retaining a good quantity of water in deep pools in the rocky bed even through dry months.

Most of the clustering sites are either situated along the Vena river or its tributaries. For example, Sangam and Nagalwari are drained by the Kharkari nala (a tributary of the river Vena or Nildoh) which is drained by a tiny stream springing from the main river.

There are no big tanks in the immediate vicinity (except a medium sized one at Dahigaon, 5 km. east of Raipur) but there is a big tank i.e., the Vena tank about 10 km. north-west of Raipur just short of Vyahad.

Contd.....
**Raipur**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hills</th>
<th>There are no big hill ranges in this region only low lying trappean hill ranges here and there. Wanadongari, Deolimet and Drugdhamma lie in these low lying hilly areas.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vegetation</td>
<td>The landscape around Raipur-Hingna is typically dominated by black cotton soil fields interspersed with impoverished grasslands and scrubby growth. The stone circles of Raipur are strewn over a fallow lying rocky plain with sparse vegetation cover (Lad Deglurkar and Lad 1991: 2). The 1914 Forest Map of the Nagpur-Wardha division does not show any forests in this region. But the topographic sheet indicates small patches of open jungle to the north (6-8 km.) and south-west (about 16 km.) of the site. Further to the south and south-west (10 km. and beyond) are some big forest and grazing areas e.g., the Degma area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone Quarries</td>
<td>An extensive pebbly vein, seasonally flooded, cuts through the site, meandering in broad circular sweeps across it (Deglurkar and Lad 1991 : 2). The deep fissures in the vein contain rocky beds of the Deccan Trap which provide the boulders and pebbles for the erection and filling of cairn circles. The easy availability of raw material explains to some extent the unusually heavy bouldered packing of many of the stone circles of Raipur. It may also be responsible for the practice of erecting stone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contd......
Mineral Resources:

Nodules of chalcedony, agate and carnelian are available in the Kalari hills about 18-20 km. south of Raipur-Hingna.

Routes of Communication:

The old road to Bhisnur and Amravati (and then beyond to Bombay and Hyderabad passes from about 8 km. north of the site). It passes close by many of the sites of the Raipur-Hingna cluster. i.e., Sonegaon, Nagalwari, Deolimet, Drugdhamma and Vyahad. However the old road was practicable only during the dry months. Today of course it is a metallic road. Today there is also a metalled road to Nagpur passing through Raipur.

There are cart tracks too around the site. Infact all the sites in the Raipur cluster are well connected by cart-tracks (but the topographic sheets specify that these are motorable only in the dry seasons).

Annual Fairs/Festivals and weekly markets:

There is an annual fair at Nagpur, 15 km. from Raipur-Hingna. There is a weekly market at the present dry site. There are also weekly markets at Mohgaon, Amgaon and Gumgaon (all of which are about 8 km. from Raipur to the west and south). There is also a weekly market at Vyahad (10 km. to the east).
TABLE 3.1

Site : Mahurjhari, Nagpur District     Nature of the site : Burial
Reference : IAR 1958-59 : 21;
           IAR 1970-71 : 24-25;
           IAR 1971-72 : 33;
Topographic Sheet No. : 55 O/4

Location : Mahurjhari is situated 12 Km. north-west of Nagpur on the Nagpur-Katol road. (Lat. 21°74', Long. 79°30'E). It has a number of stone circle sites nearby. Junapani, another major site is 3-4 km. to the south of Majurjhari and in between the blank strip of land there are almost 300 stone circles (Deo 1973 : 3). The other sites nearby are : Chikkikhapa, 3 km. north-east; Koradi, 10 km. north-east; Drugdhamma, 8 km. south-west; Deolimet, 8 km. south-west; Seminary hills, 8 km. south-east; Takli, 8 km. south-east and Sonegaon, 10 km. to the south.

Therefore eight stone circles sites fall within a 10 km. radius of Mahurjhari (and within a 20 km. radius I counted almost 25 sites-all burial with the exception of Naikund).

Rivers and Tanks :

The site is located on a watershed of a seasonal system of a tiny river which feeds the Kolar river. There is a seasonal nala less than a km. to the south-west. There are small tanks located to the west and east; and 2 km. south-east is the big Gorewara tank.

Contd....
### Mahurjhari

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hills</th>
<th>To the north-east are a series of low hills. Infact three stone circles of locality 1 were built on a small hill designated as Raja-ki-Tekdi, now in possession of a Gond Raja of the region (Deo 1973 : 5). But a majority of the stone circles are located on a plain, flat area.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vegetation</td>
<td>Despite Mahurjhari’s proximity to the industrial city of Nagpur, it has open jungle and dense scrub all around.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Routes</td>
<td>Present day Mahurjhari village is located near the Nagpur-Katol road. The topographic sheets shows an unmetalled road passing close to the south and a little up north (but this road is motorable only during the dry season) of the site. There are cart-tracks also seen passing through the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Fairs/Festivals and weekly markets</td>
<td>There is an annual fair (August) held at Sawarmendha 5-6 km. north of Mahurjhari and another about 15 km. again in the northern direction. About 18 km. to the south-west at Tajabad (Southern Nagpur) an annual fair is held in February. There are no weekly markets within 10 km. of the site (except one Sunday market to the north-east) but beyond there are many, for example, the weekly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contd.....
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Mahurjhari</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stone and mud quarries:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/Towns within a 5 km. radius:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Markets of Nagpur, Patasaongi, Khapakhera and Dhapewara Buzur (all within 10-15 km. of Mahurjhari).
TABLE 3.2

Site : Junapani
Nature of the site : Burial
JASB XLVIII 1879 : 1-16
Topographic Sheet No. : 55 O/4

Location : Junapani (Lat. 21° 12' N, Long. 79° 00' E) lies 11 Km. north-west of Nagpur on the Nagpur-Katol road. It has a number of stone circle sites nearby. There are eight burial sites within a 10 Km. radius of Junapani i.e., Mahurjhari, Chikki Khapa, Drugdhamma, Deolimet, Sonegaon, Koradi, Takli and Seminary Hills. And within a 20 Km. radius there are about 20 burial sites.

Rivers and Tanks : To the north and north-east are small rivulets of the Saptadhari nadi (a branch of the river Pench) which are going into the Gorewara tank. To the immediate east of the site is the Gorewara tank and 5 Km. to the south is the Phutala talav and about 8 Km. in the same direction is the Ambajhari tank.

Hills : There are some low lying hills to the north-east. The site itself is on a 300 m contour.

Vegetation : According to the topographic Junapani is in the midst of an open, not-so-dense jungle but my visit to the site indicated only dense scrub.

Contd......
Communication Routes: To the south passes the Nagpur-Katol road and to the north passes the Central railway main line.

Annual Fair/Festival

and weekly market: See Table 3.1 (Mahurjhari)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Villages/Towns within a 10 Km. radius</th>
<th>15-20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Junaparni
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Kampte</th>
<th>Nature of the Site : Burial (Non existent today)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>Pearse 1869*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topographic Sheet No.</td>
<td>55 O/4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location &amp; Water Source</th>
<th>Kampte (Lat. 21°14'N, Long. 71°15' E) is situated 16 Km. to the north-east of Nagpur on the right bank of the river Kanhan, immediately below the junction of the river Pench with the Kolar.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hills</td>
<td>There are no hills nearby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone &amp; Mud Quarries</td>
<td>There are a number within 10 Km. of the site to the north-west.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetation</td>
<td>Today Kampte is a highly industrialized and populated town but despite this areas of open scrub are marked within less than 5 Km. all around the site on the topographic sheet. According to the Nagpur Gaz., of 1907 this site was embowered in luxuriant trees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routes of Communication</td>
<td>Major road and rail lines pass through the town. There are also cart-tracks around the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Fairs/Festivals</td>
<td>The nearest annual fair is 20 Km. to the north west at Sawarmendha.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contd......

*A large solitary tumulus near Kampti was dug up by Col. Pearse. This was also reported by A. Cunningham in his a "Report of a town in the Central Provinces, in 1873-74 and 1874-75" RASL, 1887.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Villages/Towns within a 5 Km. radius</th>
<th>15 (approx.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

There is a weekly market near the site. Other weekly markets are at a distance of 8-10 Km. of the site e.g., Khapakhera to the north-west or Gumthala to the south-east.
<p>| Location | Seminary hills lie in the west of Nagpur city. There are various stone circle sites nearby. For example, Junapani and Mahurjhari 5 and 8 Km. to the north-west respectively; or Deolimet and Drugdhamma 6 and 8 Km. to the east respectively; or as near as Takli which is barely a Km. from the Seminary hills. Therefore within a 10 Km. radius there are a number of sites. |
| River and Tanks | The Nag Nadi flows nearby. There are a number of tanks around like the Gorewara tank 2 Km. to the north-west and the Phutala tank 4 Km. to the south. |
| Hills | It is a hilly area as the name indicates. But they are low hills their range being between 300 - 350 m. |
| Vegetation | Despite the fact that this area falls within the city limits it has green patches around. It is located at the border of the Seminary hills Reserved Forest (which has mainly teak trees). 2-3 Km. to the north-west there is an open jungle (in which the site of Junapani is located). There is an open scrub area marked immediately to the west of the site on the topographic sheet. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stone and mud quarries:</th>
<th>There are a number of stone and mud quarries nearby.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Routes of Communication:</td>
<td>The Nagpur-Katol road passes north of the site and the Nagpur-Amravati and Nagpur-Kondhali roads pass south of the site (The well linked communication network has a great deal to do with it being within the city limits).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Fair/Festivals and weekly markets:</td>
<td>There is an annual Fair (Feb.) held at Tajabad 9-10 Km. south of the site. The <em>Nagpur Gazz.</em> of 1907 mentions a number of weekly markets held in Nagpur town.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/Towns within a 5 Km. radius:</td>
<td>It is difficult to get a right estimate because of it being a part of the city limits.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 3.5

**Site**: Chikki Khapa, Nagpur District  
**Nature of the Site**: Burial  
**Reference**: IAR 1968-69 : 17  
**Topographic Sheet No.**: 55 O/4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>Location</em> :</th>
<th>The site lies approx. 12-14 Km. north of Nagpur; and 2 and 5 Km. north of Mahurjhari and Junapani respectively.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rivers and Tanks :</td>
<td>It lies on the banks of a tributary of the Kolar nadi. There are a number of tanks around the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hills :</td>
<td>There are some low lying hills around the southern and northern side but the site itself is on flat ground.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetation :</td>
<td>There is open scrub to the south and the south-west (towards Mahurjhari) and an open jungle about 2 Km. to the south-west (towards Mahurjhari).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone Quarries :</td>
<td>Many towards the south and the south-east.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routes of Communication :</td>
<td>The topographic sheet shows an unmetalled road running south and south-west of the site but it is motorable only during the dry season. Towards the east is shown a metalled road under construction. There is also shown a cart-track passing through the site.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contd......

*I am not very sure about the location of this site but there is a place by this name marked on topographic sheet No. 55 O/4.*
### Chikki Khapa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual Fairs/Festivals and Weekly markets</th>
<th>There is an annual fair 5 Km. north at Sawarmendha and another 15 Km. to the north. There is a Sunday market 5 Km. to the east and a Thursday market 10 Km. to the north (Patansaongi).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Towns/Villages within a 5 Km. radius</td>
<td>15 (approx.).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Nature of the Site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bhagi Mahari, Nagpur District</td>
<td>Burial-cum-Habitation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Topographic Sheet No.: 55 K/15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bhagi Mahari (Lat. 21° 24' N, Long. 78° 51' E)</td>
<td>is located 45 Km. to the north-east of Nagpur. The stone circle sites of Umri and Pipla lie close by. The former being at a distance of 5-6 Km. and the latter 1-2 Km. Borgaon lies about 10 Km. to the south-east. Other stone circles to the south-west include Wathoda (13 Km.), Kohli (15 Km.) and Ghorar (17.5 Km.). Therefore within a 15 Km. radius there are about six stone circles. Further beyond i.e., about 25 Km. to the west and south-west there are a number of stone circles particularly between Sawargaon and Digras (Nagpur Gazz. 1966: 700) [They are attributed to the Gavalis (ibid.)].</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Habitation</th>
<th>8 hectares (or 82,000 Sq. Km.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rivers and Tanks</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kolar. The Koradhari nala (a tributary of the river Kanhan) also flows close to the north of the site. Bhagi Mahari is enclosed in the narrow strip enclosed between the Kolar and Kanhan rivers and is one of the very fertile and highly cultivated tracts of the district.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contd....
**Bhagi Mahari**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hills :</th>
<th>There are a number of tanks around the site. To the north-west (5 Km.) is the big Umri <strong>talav</strong>, to the south-west (12 Km.) is the Khursapar <strong>talav</strong> and further in the same direction the Chandrabaga <strong>nala</strong>. There are hilly stretches to the immediate north and north-west of the site. There is another hilly stretch 12 Km. south-west. Infact the site is located near the foothills of the Satpura range. The hills near about the site are not too high.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vegetation :</td>
<td>There are open mixed jungles and areas of open and dense scrub in the hilly stretches to the north and north-west. The Jalalkhera reserved forest (which is actually a patchy open jungle) is 7 Km. north-west of Bhagi Mahari. The 1914 Forest Map of the Nagpur-Wardha division marks the Jalalkhera reserved forest as a grazing area. The Khapadari and the Sapghota Reserved Forest’s are within 10-15 Km. north of the site. The Sitagondi reserved forest is about 16 Km. to the north-east. In the north-west (10-12 Km. from the site) too in the hilly regions there are marked areas of fairly dense scrub. Even towards the east (15-20 Km.), across the river Kanhan are patches of fairy dense jungle as indicated by the topographic sheets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routes of Communication :</td>
<td>There is a metalled road leading to Nagpur passing through Bhagi Mahari. The Nagpur-Katol road passes about 4-5 Km. south. Unmetalled roads and cart tracks are also seen around the site. These roads</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contd.......
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Villages/Towns within a 5 Km. radius</th>
<th>10-12.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Annual Fairs/Festivals and weekly markets:**

are also seen passing through the hilly, jungle areas of the north and north-west.

There is an annual fair at Savner 5 Km. south-east of the site. 18 Km. to the east is held another annual fair in honour of Baba Tajuddin Awaliya and about 20 Km. to the south-east is held an annual fair at Sawarmendha.

There are a number of weekly markets all around the site, e.g., at Kelod, 6 Km. to the north; Saoner, 5 Km. to the south-east and Some beyond like at Khapa, 12 Km. to the east; Paradsingha, 12 Km. to the north; Sainkhera 14 Km. to the north-west and Dhapewara Buzur, 12 Km. to the south-east.
**TABLE 4.2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site:</th>
<th>Pipla, Nagpur District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature of the Site:</td>
<td>Burial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reference:** [IAR 1983-84: 57-58]

**Topographic Sheet No.:** 55 K/15

| Location: | Approx. 46-47 Km. north-west of Nagpur; and 2 Km. west of Bhagi Mahari. |

| Rivers and Tanks: | It is situated on the banks of the river Kolar. It is enclosed in the fertile, cultivated narrow strip between the river Kolar and Kanhan. The big Umri talav lies 4 Km. to the north-west. |

| Hills: | There are hilly stretches to the north and north-west (projecting spurs of the Satpura mountains). |

| Vegetation: | There are open mixed jungles and areas of open and dense scrub in the hilly stretches. Jalalkhera open mixed jungle is about 6 Km. to the north-west. |

| Routes of Communication: | There is a metalled road to Nagpur passing through Pipla. The Nagpur-Katol road passes 6 Km. to the south. Cart tracks are also seen passing through the site. |

| Annual Fairs/Festivals and weekly markets: | There is an annual fair at Savner, 7-8 Km. to the south-east. 20 Km. to the east is held the annual fair in honour of Baba Tajuddin Awaliya and about 20 Km. to the south-east an annual fair at Sawarmendha. |

Contd......
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Villages/Towns within a 5 Km. radius</th>
<th>10-12.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are weekly markets all around, e.g. Kelod 7 Km. to the north; Savner 7-8 Km. to the south-east. Khapa, 15 Km. to the east; Paradsingha 14 Km. to the north; Sainkhera about 15 Km. to the north and Dhapewara Buzur, 13 Km. to the south-east.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pipla**
TABLE 4.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Umri, Nagpur District</th>
<th>Nature of the Site</th>
<th>Burial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>IAR 1983-84: 57-58</td>
<td>Topographic Sheet No.</td>
<td>55 K/15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Location          | About 50 Km. north-west of Nagpur and about 5 Km. west of Bhagi Mahari. |
| Rivers and Tanks | The Ambadoh nala, a tributary of the Kolar river flows through the site. And the big Umri talav is immediately to the north. |
| Hills            | The site is situated in a low hilly area. The site itself is on a 366 m. contour. |
| Vegetation       | There are open mixed jungles (Jalalkhera jungle lie 2-3 Km. north) and dense scrub near the site about Km. |
| Routes and Communication | There is a metalled road passing through the site. There are also cart-tracks running south-north. |
| Annual Fairs/Festivals and weekly markets | The annual fair at Savner (11-12 Km. south-east). There are a few weekly markets around (though not very close by), for example Kelod weekly market 8-9 Km. to the north-east and Savner weekly market 11-12 Km. to the south-east. |
| Villages/Towns within a 5 Km. radius | 10 |
### TABLE 4.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Borgaon</th>
<th>Nature of the Site</th>
<th>Burial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>IAR 1980-81 : 40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topographic Sheet No.</td>
<td>55 K/15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Location | Borgaon (Lat. 21° 20' N, Long. 78° 55' E) is located 42 Km. to the north-east of Nagpur. The habitation-cum-burial site of Bhagi Mahari is situated 10 Km. to the north-east. The megalithic burial sites of Pipla and Umri lie 10-12 Km. in the same direction. To the south and south-west are located the stone circles of Wathora (10 Km.), Kohli (13 Km. and Ghorar (9-10 Km.). Therefore within a 10-15 Km. radius of Borgaon there is one habitation-cum-burial site and about six purely burial sites. |
| Rivers and Tanks | The site is situated along a tributary of the Chandrabhaga nadi (a tributary of the Kolar river) which is now almost dry. The river Kolar flows 5-6 Km. to the north. Infact it lies in a belt between the two rivers, i.e. the Chandrabhaga and the Kolar and not too far from Patansaongi (which lies at the confluence of the above two rivers)*. This entire belt has been considered very fertile. |

* Borgaon is 11 Km. west of Patansaongi. Borgaon is built on a plain of black soil lying neither too low or high, with a bed of natural drainage and hence the area is considered pretty fertile.
Borgaon

There are no tanks visible in the immediate surroundings (The Khursapat talav is almost 12 Km. away).

Hills:

The area is at an altitude of 300-350 m. There are small low lying hilly patches to the north, e.g. the Dudhbari hill 4 Km. north-west. The country to the north and west rises to the Satpura hills.

Vegetation:

There are open scrub areas indicated between 3-5 Km. to the north and north-east. And there are some orchards 4-5 Km. to the south-west. However there are no jungles or reserved forest areas indicated within a 15-20 Km. radius of the site. The 1914 Forest Map of the Nagpur-Wardha division does not show any forests in this region. But beyond the 15 Km. range to the north and north-west are some green patches, e.g. Khapadari open mixed jungle (18 Km. north) and Jalalkhera open mixed jungle (18 Km. north-west).

Routes of Communication:

There is a metalled road to Savner passing near the site. The topographic sheet indicates an unmetalled road to the east, motorable only in the dry season. There are also cart-tracks seen around the site.

Two important routes from Bombay and Berar to the old Nagpur province passed through this belt. One, via Jalalkhera-Katol-Kalmeshwar. The other, entering the Nagpur area via Bhisnur-Kondhali-Bazargaon (also known as the old Nagpur-Amravati road).
Borgaon is barely 5 Km. south of Savner where a number of important rail and road routes of communication converge.

**Annual Fairs/Festivals and weekly markets:**

Two annual fairs are held at Savner (one at Shivratri and the other at Jestha) 5 Km. north of Borgaon. Another fair is held 12 Km. to the south-east at Sawarmendha.

There are a number of weekly markets around the site e.g., a large cattle market at Savner, a weekly bazar (Tuesday) at Dhapewara Buzur (3 Km. south). A Wednesday bazar at Mohpa (10 Km. south-west) and a cattle market one of the largest in the tahsil, and Kohli (13 Km. south-west), Patansaongi and Khapa (11 Km. to south-east).
**TABLE 4.5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Kohli</th>
<th>Nature of the Site : Burial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topographic Sheet No. :</td>
<td>55 K/15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Location : | About 32 Km. north-west of Nagpur. 13 Km. south-west of Borgaon (and about 3 Km. from Wathoda and 5-6 Km. from Ghorad*) |
| Rivers and Tanks : | It is located on a tributary of the Chandrabhaga nala. The big Chandrabhaga talav is 4 Km. to the west of the site and the Khursapat talav 5 Km. to the north. |
| Hills : | There are small hills to the north and north-west of the site. |
| Vegetation : | There are orchards and open scrub marked to the north of the site. Fairly dense scrub is indicated about 8-10 Km. to the north-west, which is also marked as hilly. |
| Routes of Communication : | Kohli is on the Nagpur-Katol road. There is also a metalled road passing through the town on to Mohpa. There is an unmetalled road to the south. Cart-tracks are also seen passing through the site. |
| Annual Fairs/Festivals and weekly markets : | There is an annual fair at Savner 15-16 Km. north-east of the site. There is a weekly market at Kohli itself. And another one at Dorli, 3 Km. to the south-west and Mohpa 5 Km. to the north. |
| Villages/Towns within a 5 Km. radius : | 15. |

*According to the Nagpur Gazz, 1906 there are a number of stone circles between Ghorad and Kohli.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>TABLE 4.6</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Site</strong> : Waroda or Wathoda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reference</strong> : Singh 1970 : 120; The Nagpur Gaz. 1906 : 700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topographic Sheet No.</strong> : 55 K/15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Location** : | About 32 Km. north-west of Nagpur and 10 Km. south-west of Borgaon. |
| **Rivers and Tanks** : | It is situated on the banks of the Chandrabhaga river. There are also some talavs around like the Khursapar talav to the north-west and the Chandrabhaga talav 7 Km. to the south-west. |
| **Hills** : | There are small hills to the north and north-west of the site though the site itself is on level land. |
| **Vegetation** : | There are some areas of open scrub around but dense scrub is indicated only 8-10 Km. north-west in an area marked as hilly. |
| **Routes of Communication** : | There is a metalled road to the west of the site and an unmetalled road to the east and cart-tracks running through the site. |
| **Annual Fairs/Festivals and weekly markets** : | Annual fair at Savner 12-13 Km. north-east and at Sawarmeadhha 17 Km. to the east. There is a weekly market held at Mohpa 3 Km. to the north and Kohli 3 Km. to the south-west. |
| **Villages/Towns within a 5 Km. radius** : | 15. |

*The stone circles at the site are known as Chabutras and are said to be the remains of Gavalis- a pasturing tribe (Singh 1970 : 120).
**TABLE 4.7**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Ghorar or Ghorad</th>
<th>Nature of the Site : Burial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topographic Sheet No.</td>
<td>55 K/15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Location :            | Ghorar is located about 24 Km. from Nagpur and about 10 Km. south of Borgaon; and about 5-6 Km. from Kohli. |
| Rivers and Tanks :    | It is on the banks of the Jam river. 12 Km. to the north-west is the big Chandrabhaga talav. |
| Hills :               | The area has an altitudinal range of 300-350 m. |
| Vegetation :          | There is open but not dense scrub to the east, west and north. There are also orchards and trees around the site. |
| Routes of Communication : | There is an unmetalled road passing through the site though motorable only in the dry season. Cart tracks are also seen around. |
| Annual Fairs/Festivals and weekly markets : | There is an annual fair held about 12-13 Km. to the north-east at Sawarmendha. Weekly markets are held around Ghorar. For example, the Sunday market at Kalmeshwar, 4 Km. to the south-east; Friday market at Kohli 5-6 Km. to the north-west; and Tuesday market at Dhapewara Buzur 10 Km. north. |
| Villages/Towns within a 5 Km. radius : | 10 (approx.). |
**TABLE 5.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Naikund, Nagpur District</th>
<th>Nature of the Site : Burial-cum-Habitation site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>IAR 1977-78 : 81;</td>
<td>IAR 1979-80 : 57;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deo and Jamkhedkar 1982.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topographic Sheet No.</td>
<td>55 O/3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Location : | 24 Km. north-east of Nagpur. |
| Size of habitation : | 5 hectare (Mohanty : 94). But according to Deo it is 10 hectare (1985 : 90)* |
| Rivers and Tanks : | Naikund is on the left bank of the river Pench. There is a ferry close to the site. The Kanhan river too is not far from the site (roughly 5 Km. to the west). There are a number of fords (October-June) on the river Kanhan close to the site. A number of talavys are noticed to the north-west of Naikund, mostly at the edge of forest areas, for example, the Bhagimaheri talavy 10 Km. north-west. There are also seen talavys to the north-east. For example Mansar talay 12 Km. north-east or else the tanks around Ramtek town, 18 Km. north-east. Ramtek town has almost 27 tanks several of which are held to be sacred. |

| Hills : | There are several low-lying and gradual hill ranges of the Satpuras fringing the river Pench. Naikund Contd..... |

*Therefore according to Mohanty’s estimate it is the third largest habitation site in Vidarbha after Khairwada and Bhagi Mahari, whereas according to Deo’s estimate it is the second largest.
Vegetation:

Naikund lies at the foothills of the Pench range of hills but the site itself is on flat land.

There are thick Dry Deciduous forests marked on the topographic sheet between the rivers Pench and Kanhan 8-10 Km. north of Naikund (though my personal visit to the site did not corroborate this). For example, the Junawani reserved forest, the Bhiwsen reserved forest, the Sitagondi reserved forest and the Ghuksi reserved forest (Ghuksi was marked as a “grazing area” in the 1914 Forest Map of the Nagpur-Wardha division).

Open scrub areas are indicated on the topographic sheet to the south and east of the site (across the river Pench). And fairly dense scrub 4 Km. to the west and north of the site. No jungle or scrub areas are indicated at the site today though the excavators claims that a majority of the stone circles were in the midst of “thick jungle” (Deo and Jamkhedkar 1982: 1). Their disappearance is a sad indicator of deforestation. Though, I very much doubt, on the basis of a personal visit to the site and a study of the landscape around that a very thick jungle would have existed here. Further up north may be. But not so here. The area around Naikund would most probably have had open forests intermingled with grass covers.

Contd.....
### Naikund

**Routes of Communication:** According to topographic sheet No. 55 O/3 there are not many metalled roads or rail lines passing through here. But my visit to the site in 1997 shows that the picture has changed and that there metalled roads coming up around, e.g., the road to Jabalpur passes close by (though to reach the actual site I too had to take a Kuccha road). Naikund and all the other sites between the river Kanhan and Pench are well linked by cart-tracks (even in the jungle areas).

**Mineral Resources:** The site is located close to a magniferrous belt. The Parshivni* open cast iron manganese mine lies 3-4 Km. north of the site. High grade iron is found here. There are also three iron quarries 12-13 Km. north-east of the site, at the border of the Ghuksi jungle area. (Manganese quarries are also marked near about the iron quarries). Another iron quarry is marked 21 Km. to the north-east in the midst of hilly, Junawani reserved forest. Despite the quarry being in a hilly, forested area there are cart-tracks shown passing right through the middle of the iron quarry site on the concerned topographic sheet, indicating that it was a well connected site obviously due to its iron resources. The iron ore deposits or Bhiwapur tahsil are located 50-60 Km. to the south-east. Small quantities of copper ore are

Contd.....

*On my visit to Parshivini I noticed a fairly big stone circle about half a Km. from the mines.*
Annual Fairs/Festivals

and weekly markets:

Two great religious fairs are held at Ramtek, 18 Km. north-east of Naikund. The fairs are attended by thousands of people. Another big annual fair is held 15 Km. east of the site at Nagardhan on Mahashivratri. 13 Km. to the north-west of Naikund another big fair is held in the month of March in honour of Baba Tajuddin Auliya. Yet another annual fair is held 17 Km. south-west at Sawarmendha. The Nagpur Gaz. of 1908 also mentions a big fair held at Bhivagad, 4 Km. north of Naikund attended mostly by the Gonds and Adivasis of the region in large numbers. Thus within a 20 Km. radius of Naikund, at least four to five big annual fairs are held.

A number of weekly markets are also held around the site e.g., at Parshivni (4-5 Km. north), Dahegaon (8-9 Km. west), Khairi and Nawegaon (13-14 Km. north). In the clearings of dense forest regions of the north also there are weekly markets reported. For example, in the clearing of the Sitagondi reserved forest in the north a Sunday market is held at Saleghat (24 Km. north-west of Naikund) and in a clearing of the Dongartal* reserved forest a Tuesday market is held at Devalpur (35 Km. north-east of Naikund).

Contd.....

*Dongartal has been mentioned in the Nagpur Gaz. of 1908 as a resort of Gavali cattle breeders.
Villages/Towns* within a 5 Km. radius : 15

Naikund

found at Mahali, 6-8 Km. north-east of Parshivni i.e., about 10 Km. north-east of Naikund. The more extensive copper belt of Thutanbore-Kapri and the copper-gold belt at Pular Parsori (both in the Umrer tahsil) lie about 60 Km. south-east of Naikund.

* A number of ruins are indicated upto 25 Km. north of Naikund like Deori, Gorakhpur, Bajarkund, Kukada, Mekhpur, Surera etc. It may be noted that the ruins are all indicated in clearings amongst forested areas. The Nagpur Gazz. of 1908 (as well as the revised edition of 1966 : 698) mentions the existence of the ruins of Bhivagad fort, 4 Km. north of the site (Surprisingly the topographic sheet No. 55 O/3 does not show the existence of Bhivagad. Was it because the area has been abandoned ? ). The fort is said to be attributed to the Gavallis.
**TABLE 5.2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Amgaon, Nagpur District</th>
<th>Nature of the Site</th>
<th>Burial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>IAR 1970-71 : 24</td>
<td>Topographic Sheet No.</td>
<td>55 O/3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Location**
Approx. 34-35 Km. north-east of Nagpur and about 10 Km. north of Naikund.

**Water Sources**
It is situated on the right bank of the Owasiya nala (which is fed by the river Pench). There are noticed talays around the site, as for example, the big Bhagimaheri talay 2-3 Km. to the west. There are other big and small talays within a 10 Km. radius of the site.

**Hills**
Amgaon is at the edge of the low-lying Pench range of hills, a branch of the Satpuras.

**Vegetation**
Amgaon stands surrounded by a number of reserved and protected forests. Infact it is at the edge of a fairly dense, mixed jungle. The Sitagondi, Junawani, Bhiwsen and Ghuksi reserved forests are within 5 Km. of the site.

**Mineral Resources**
The Parshivni open cast iron mine is about 5 Km. south of the site. And within 10-15 Km. to the east and north-east are indicated a number of iron and manganese quarries.

**Annual Fairs/Festivals and weekly markets**
About 15 Km. to the east are held the two big annual fairs of Ramtek.

Contd......
Amgaon

A number of weekly markets are indicated around Amgaon. For example, the Sunday market at Nawegaon (4-5 Km. north) or, Parshivni (5 Km. south).

Routes of Communication: According to the topographic sheet there is a cart track passing through the site and an unmetalled road running close to the site (but it is indicated as being motorable only in the dry season).

Villages/Towns in a 5 Km. radius: 20 (approx.).
### TABLE 5.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Chicholi*, Nagpur District</th>
<th>Nature of the Site</th>
<th>Burial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>IAR 1970-71: 24</td>
<td>Topographic Sheet No.</td>
<td>55 O/4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Location          | 25-30 Km. north of Nagpur and within 15 Km. north-west of Naikund. |
| River and banks   | It is situated on the right bank of the river Kanhan. |
| Hills             | There are low lying hills to the north of the site. |
| Vegetation        | The region appears to have open forests intermingled with glass covers. To its north, north-west and north-east are the Pench range of forests. |
| Annual Fairs and  | An annual fair (March) is held close to the site and there are weekly markets fairly close by e.g. at Dahegaon and Kothulan, both within 5 Km. of the site. |
| weekly markets    | There are manganese quarries to the west of the site and Parshivini iron mine is within 10 Km. of the site. |
| Mineral Resources | Routes of Communication : There is a cart track indicated on the map. There are some roads nearby but only the motorable during the dry season. |
| Villages/Towns in a 5 Km. radius | 12-15. |

* I am not very sure about the location of Chicholi because there is another Chicholi marked on the same topographic sheet about 15 Km. north of Nagpur on the left bank of Kolar Nadi.
TABLE 6.1

Site : Dongar Mauda  
Nature of the Site : Burial

Reference : IAR 1977-78 : 81;  
IAR 1988-89 : 50;  
IAR 1975-76 : 36

Topographic Sheet No. : 55 P/5

| Location : | Dongar Mauda is about 50 Km. south-east of Nagpur. Wag and Mandhal are located 4-5 Km. to the north-west. Udasa and Umrer are located 18 and 21 Km. respectively to the west. |
| Rivers and Tanks : | The site is located on a tributary of the Amb nadi. There are small water tanks all around the site and the fairly big Satighat talav is located 6 Km. to the south-west. |
| Hills : | The site is located on a 320 m. contour. |
| Vegetation : | Dongar Mauda is located at the edge of the Ranbori reserved forest. |
| Routes of communication : | There are a number of (un)metalled roads and cart-tracks passing through Dongar Mauda. |
| Mineral Resources : | Bhiwapur, which has some iron are deposits is located about 15-16 Km. to the south-east and the famous Lohara mines of Chanda about 45 Km. to the south. And the copper belt of Thutanbori-Khapri is located 10 Km. south-east, as also the copper belt Contd...... |
### Dongar Mauda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual fairs and weekly markets</th>
<th>There is held a weekly market at the site itself. There are some other around like the Mandhal weekly market 4-5 Km. to the north-west.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Villages/Towns within a 5 Km. radius</td>
<td>10 - 12.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Rang Mangli village 20° 48' : 79° 27' in the Bhiwapur tahsil of Nagpur district.*
### TABLE 6.2

**Site**: Mandhal, Nagpur District  
**Nature of the Site**: Burial  
**Reference**: IAR 1975-76 : 36;  
IAR 1977-78 : 81  
**Topographic Sheet No.**: 55 P/5

| Location | The site is located about 45 Km. east of Nagpur. Wag is about 2 Km. to the south and Dongar Mauda about 4-5 Km. to the south-east. Umrer and Udasa are situated 18 and 20 Km. respectively to the south-west of Mandhal. |
| Rivers and Tanks | It is located on the Amb nadi, a tributary of the river Kanhan. About 4 Km. to the north flows the Waghare nala. The village itself contains a fairly big tank. There are small water tanks all around the site (though most of them are now dry). |
| Hills | There are a series of low, stong, almost-bare hills in the Umrer range of Nagpur district (though some are grass covered). |
| Vegetation | There is an area of open scrub 1.5 Km. to the south and a small patch a Km. to the west. The Ranbori reserved forest is 5 Km. to the south. As mentioned earlier, in the 1914 map of the Forests of Nagpur-Wardha division this area is earmarked as a grazing area. |

Contd......
Mandhal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Routes of communication</th>
<th>There is a metalled road just up north which goes to Nagpur. And a number of unmetalled roads seem to converge here from all four directions.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mineral Resources</td>
<td>The iron-ore deposits of Bhiwapur are 22 Km. to the south-east. The Lohara iron mines of Chanda district are 50 Km. to the south. The copper belts of Bhiwapur tahsil are located very close by, within a 10 Km. radius. As also the copper-gold belt of Bhiwapur tahsil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Fairs/Festivals</td>
<td>There are a number of weekly markets around, for example, at Dongar Mauda (4-5 Km. south-east), at Adam (5.5 Km. to the north), at Tarna (7 Km. south-west), Salwa (10 Km. to the north) and at Kuhi (about 10 Km. to the north-west).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/Towns within a 5 Km. radius</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 6.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Wag</th>
<th>Nature of the Site : Burial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>IAR 1977-78 : 81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topographic Sheet No.</td>
<td>55 P/5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Location:** A little over 45 Km. south-east of Nagpur. There are other stone circle sites around - Mandhal (2 Km. north-east), Dongar Mauda (4 Km. to the south-east), Umrer (16 Km. south-west) and Udasa (18 Km. south-west).

**Rivers and Tanks:** The site is situated on a tributary of the Amb nadi. There are tanks around Wag, e.g., the large Satighat talay 5 Km. to the south.

**Hills:** Wag itself is above the 260 m. contour.

**Vegetation:** There is an open scrub area to the north of the site; and the patchy open mixed forests of Ranbori (now a reserved forest but under the British declared as a grazing area) begin about 3 Km. to the south of Wag.

**Routes of communication:** There is a road going through Wag and then beyond to Mandhal and Kuhi.

**Mineral Resources:** The copper belts of the Bhiwapur tahsil of Nagpur district are located within a 10 Km. radius of the site.

**Villages/Towns in a 5 Km. radius:** 10
### Table 6.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Umrer, Nagpur District</th>
<th>Nature of the Site : Burial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>IAR 1977-78 : 81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topographic Sheet No.</td>
<td>55 P/5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Location | About 44-45 Km. south-east of Nagpur. There is a cluster of sites in the south-eastern portion of Nagpur district, in the Umrer talsil. Most of these burial sites are indicated on topographic sheet No. 55 P/5. Udasa lies 7 Km. to the north-west of Umred. Wags 16 Km. to the north-east, Mandhal 18 Km. to the north-east and Dongar Mauda 18 Km. again to the north-east. |
| Rivers and Tanks | Umrer lies close to a stream flowing from the Amb nadi, which in turn is a tributary of the river Kanhan. There are small and big tanks visible on Topo. Sheet No. 55 P/5, especially around Umrer. Just above the town is indicated a fairly big tank with a smaller one a Km. up north. 2 Km. to the east is another small talav. 3.5 Km. to the south-west lies the big Pandhrabori talav. 4 Km. to the east in an open mixed jungle is another talav. 12 Km. to the north-east is the Salighat talav. |

Contd......
**Hills:**

There are a series of low hills around which rise from 200-250 feet above the plains of Nagpur. There are stretches of plateaus on some of the hills.

**Vegetation:**

According to the Russell (ed) *The Central Provinces Gazzet.* Nagpur district, 1908, p. 491 a good number of trees in an about the town and mango groves adjoining on the east are said to be remarkably fine and extensive. However the country immediately around it is said to be "bare and uninteresting". Infact there are no scrub or jungle areas noticed immediately around the site even on the topographic sheet. Patches of dense scrub are indicated only 5 Km. to the east and south. The Muniya reserved forest lies 6-8 Km. to the south-west. The Chichala reserved forest, 8-10 Km. to the south. Near Makardhokra* (about 10 Km. west) is marked another reserved forest (open mixed jungle with mainly Khair). But according to the 1914 Forest Map of the Nagpur-Wardha division the area around Makardhokra is shown to have no forests except a small patch at Jamlapani, a few Km. west of Makardhokra. Even the Jamlapani area was earmarked as a grazing area by the British. The Ranbori reserved forest begins 10-12 Km. to the

*According to *The Nagpur Gazzet.* 1966, Makardhokra is located on the Bori-Umrer road and is excellently situated on a fertile level land near the Amb river (p. 725).
east of Umrer. In the 1914 Forest Map this area is again earmarked as grazing area, especially the area around Karandhala (8 Km. south-east of Umrer, at the edge of the now Ranbhor reserved forest). On the whole the Umrer forests produce little but grass, brushwood and thorny species like Khair.

Routes of communication: Many important rail and road lines pass through Umred. There is an excellent road to Nagpur and Bori (20-21 Km. west).

Mineral Resources: About 25 Km. to the south-east is located Bhiwapur, which has some iron ore deposits. But the more important iron ore deposits of Lohara, in Chanda district are located 40-42 Km. south-east of Umrer. Important copper belt of Rang Mangli village is located on the same topographic sheet No. 55 P/5, close to the site. The 2 other copper belts of Bhiwapur tahsil are also located close by.

Annual Fairs/Festivals and weekly markets: There is an annual fair held west of Makardhokra in the reserved forest area (about 15 km. from Umred). There is another annual fair held at Barwa, 11 Km. to the north.

Villages/Towns in a 5 Km. radius: 10
**TABLE 6.5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Nature of the Site</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Udasa</td>
<td>Burial</td>
<td>IAR 1977-78: 81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Location : | The site is situated about 37 Km. south-east of Nagpur. There are a number of burial sites close to the site, e.g., Umrer 7 Km. to the south-east, Wag 18 Km. to the east, Mandhal 20 Km. to the east and Dongar Mauda 21 Km. to the east. |

| Rivers and Tanks : | The site is on the bank of two rivulets which flow into the Amb nadi (a tributary of the river Kanhan). There is a tank at Udasa and another a Km. to the north. 8 Km. to the south is the big Pandharabori talav. 7 Km. to the south-east is the tank at Umred and 8 Km. to the north west the Khapri talav. |

| Hills : | There are a series of low hills in Umrer tahsil of Nagpur district. There are stretches of plateau on some of the hills. The hills are mostly bare (except at places where there are grass covers) with boulders strewn on them. |

| Vegetation : | There are patches of open scrub to the north, north-west and south-west. The Bhiwapur reserved forest is 5 Km. to the north. The Muniya R.F. is 8 Km. to the south-west (with patches of dense and open scrub). And about 10 Km. to the west is the Contd..... |
| **Routes of communication** | There are metalled and unmetalled roads passing through the town linking Udasa to big cities like Nagpur, Umrer etc. |
| **Mineral Resources** | Bhiwapur is located 22-23 Km. to the south-east. It has some iron ore deposits. The famous Lohara iron deposits of Chanda district are located 40-45 Km. to the south-east. There are also a number of coal mines around the site. The copper belts of Bhiwapur tahsil are located within 10 Km. of this site. |
| **Annual Fairs/Festivals and weekly markets** | There is an annual fair near Makardhokra about 6-8 Km. south-west from the site. Another annual fair is held at Barwa 8 Km./ north-east of Udasa. A weekly market (Tuesday) is also held at Makardhokra. A Thursday market is held 8 Km. to the east and a Sunday market 16-17 Km. to the south-west. |
| **Villages/Towns in a 5 Km. radius** | 8 |
**Table 7**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Nature of Site</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Topographic Sheet No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Khairwada, Wardha District</td>
<td>Burial-cum-Habitation</td>
<td>IAR 1981-82; 51-53</td>
<td>55 L/5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>118 Km. west of Nagpur, in the Wardha district.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Size of Habitation</td>
<td>13 hectares (However the habitation area is very much disturbed because of a present Gond village [IAR 1981-82 : 52]).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Sources</td>
<td>The site is situated on the banks of the river Dham. The habitation area is towards the right bank. The cemetery area is divided into three sectors. One, to the east of the habitation. Two, in the reserved forest to the north of the habitation; and Three, on the other bank of the river Dham. There is also a stream flowing close to the site. In the folklore of the region there are mystical stories about the river Dham.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hills</td>
<td>The site is situated in a hilly region. The hills are formed by the spurs projecting from the great Satpura chain. The site itself stands at 1,400 ft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetation</td>
<td>According to the Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of the Wardha District 1891-1894, the hilly regions in the north-east of the district are for</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contd.....
most part rugged and stony but after the rains they are covered with luxuriant grass affording pastures to large herds of buffalo and cattle (p.1). The 1914 Forest Map of the Nagpur-Wardha division marks a number of grazing areas around the site, e.g. the Sindi Vihiri grazing grounds 8 Km. north-east of Khairwada, Dahigaon area 7-8 Km. south, Chandini area 10 Km. to the east (Phepervada stands at the edge of Dhaga reserved forest).

There are a number of forested areas (though not heavily forested today) around. Infact many of the stone circle are located in the Ladgad reserved forest. On the left bank of the river Dham, across the site is the Masod protected forest. 3 Km. to the north-east and north begins the boundary of the Dhaga reserved forest and 8-10 Km. to the north-west is situated the Garpit reserved forest. To the south of the site are hardly any forest areas indicated on the topo. sheet. There are more of grazing areas in the south.

Routes of communication: Despite this area being hilly and forested there are roads (metalled and unmetalled) and cart tracks noticed on the concerned topographic sheet. A personal visit to the site indicated the same. A metalled road passes east of the site going beyond into reserved forest region. A road beginning from the town of Brahmanveda, which is situated in a

Contd.....
clearing about 5 Km. north-west, passes north of Khairwada towards the Sindhi Vihiri grazing area. A cart track passes through the site going beyond into the jungle area.

Annual Fairs/Festivals and weekly markets:

There are many annual fairs held around the site. There is a big annual fair held near Dhaga, a small village 3 Km. north-west of Khairwada in the month of March. Dhaga is situated on a high hill and is surrounded by forests. A small stream, a tributary of the river Dham passes through this area. According to the 1906 Wardha Gazz. (p. 637) the fair used to last for 4 days and was attended by 10-15,000 people, the majority being the adivasis of the region. It must have been a major tribal festival if it was attended by so many thousands and that too at the end of the last century. Close to the site (barely 5 Km. south) are the Mahakali fairs held in March and September. 25-30 Km. to the east, at the edge of the big Bori reservoir another big annual fair is held in February. 14-15 Km. to the north-west near Yengaon (beyond the Garpit R.F.) another annual fair is held in March. 18 Km. to the north-east an annual fair is held in February. 35 Km. to the west yet another big annual fair at Deorvada (opposite the ancient site of Kaundinyapur*) 35 Km. to the

Contd....

* Kaundinyapur, District Amravti has extensive megalithic occupational levels but no burials nearby.
north too another annual fair is held in March. A point that strikes one about the numerous annual fairs held within 30-35 Km. of the site of Khairwada is that a majority of them are held in February or March.

There are a vast number of weekly markets too around the area. These are: Tuesday market at Masod (3 Km. south), Susund weekly market (6 Km. south-east), Kasar Kheda, Tuesday market (6-8 Km. south), Wednesday market at Pipalkhuta (12 Km. to the south-west), Thursday market at Borgaon (10 Km. to the south-west) and the very frequented Kondhali weekly market (20-25 Km. to the north east).

Villages/Towns within a 5 Km. radius: 7