CHAPTER VI

Comparative Study of the Chalcolithic Cultures of the Northern Deccan (Maharashtra) and the Southern Deccan (North Karnataka).

From the contents of the preceding two chapters, it becomes apparent that the two contiguous regions were occupied by small pastoral-cum-Agricultural communities, during the 2nd millennium B.C. However, it should be pointed out here that the neolithic inhabitants of the Southern Deccan appear to be chronologically earlier settlers of the region than the northerners. This is supported by the C-14 dates from Utnur, T.Narsipur, Hallur, Tekkalakota, and Sanganakallu for which the dates are circa B.C. 2,000, 1800, 1700, 1600, and 1590 respectively, whereas, the dates for Nevasa, Chandoli and now Songaon, in northern Deccan show

175. C-14 Dates May 1966, Cyclostyled bulletin, TIFR.
176. Ibid.
178. C-14 Date List - August 1966, Cyclostyled bulletin, TIFR.
180. Deo, S.B., and Ansari, 2-D., Chalcolithic Chandoli, p.25.
181. C-14 Dates List - Aug, 1966, TIFR.
that the region was occupied between Circa B.C. 1600 and 1200. Daimabad, situated between Nevasa and Jorwe, is an exception. Phase I of this site, belonging to the earliest settlers, is characterised by the typical hand-made grey ware and is contemporary to the neolithic of the Southern Deccan. Phase I, which represents the Jorwe culture, could be ascribed to circa B.C. 1500 to 1250, on the comparative evidence of Nevasa and other sites. Phase II, i.e. the Malwa could belong to circa B.C. 1700-1500 as the dates for the Malwa phase of Navdatoli shows. Therefore, Phase I of Daimabad must be earlier than B.C. 1700. The southern neolithic, as we know is dated to Circa B.C. 2000 - 1700, as the Utnur, T. Narsipur and Hallur dates prove. Thus there is a cultural phase in the Godavari Valley, contemporary to the Southern neolithic. However, since this phase is now known from only one site, the details of which are still not known, the comparisons of the cultural traits would be confined only to the middle of the 2nd millennium B.C. when the two cultural cultures seem to have had more contacts with each other.

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The cultural group of the northern Deccan is confined to the Deccan trap area, the typical topography of which are rolling plains spotted with low, flat topped hills. But the southern cultural group flourished in the granitic and gneissic region characterised by castellated granite hills. This environment has played a great part in the nature of the habitations of these communities.

In the northern Deccan, they occupied the river valleys and small villages sprang up. But due to existence of the large open spaces on the granitoid hills (particularly of the Chitradurga, Sellary, Raichur and the neighbouring districts of Andhra Pradesh) which also provided natural fortification by the constellation, rockshelters and cisterns, the north Karnataka folk preferred to live on these hills. Where such hills were absent, river banks have been inhabited, as far example, Hallur, T. Narsipur and Hemmige.

The plan of the structures of these early inhabitants of the two regions show remarkable similarity. The evidence from Tekkalakota (pl. III a, figs. 7 & 9) Sanganakallu, (pl. No. 1) and Hallur (pl. XVI) prove that structures were circular, with walls of probably thatched bamboo plastered with mud, supported by posts at intervals, and equipped with circular hearths or fire places (Hallur, pl. XVI). Similar
circular structures have been noticed at Daimabad,183 and circular fire place at Chandoli,184 both in the northern Deccan. Though not in the region under study, but belonging to the same chronological horizon, are the circular structures unearthed at Navdatoli185 on the Narmada, which may be mentioned in this context. Incidentally, mention must also be made of the evidence of sub-terranean dwelling in the neolithic context, at Nagargarunakonda186 for what it is worth. Here a large number of pits were supposed to have been used for dwelling purposes. This feature at once reminds us of the Buzahom pit-dwelling practice.187

As for as the pottery traditions are concerned, the folk of the southern Deccan generally had a handmade pottery tradition, though, as observed by Allchin, a part of it was made on a turn-table, often a simple lower half of round-bottomed pot and turned with hand as and when necessary.188

184. Deo, S.B. & Ansari, Z.O., Chalcolithic Chandoli, fig. 8a.
185. Sankalia, H.D., Prehistory & Protohistory in India & Pakistan, pl. XVII a.
188. Allchin, F.R. Piklihal Excavations, p. xv, APPAS.No.5.
The principle ware is the grey ware, with burnished and unburnished, and a post-firing ochre painted, varieties. The early phases of Brahmagiri, Maski, Piklihal and Hallur also have a preprinting painted ware, which though rare, Allchin considers a regular concomitant of the lower neolithic both at Piklihal and Hallur.\(^{189}\) The later phases of the North Karnataka are distinguished by the occurrence of two new wares viz., a wheel thrown painted black-on-red ware, and a coarse brown-and-black ware.

The pottery traditions of the northern Deccan has a different story to say. The typical ware of the region is the 'Jorwe Ware' designated after the type-site of Jorwe. This ware has a matt red surface, with a variety of designs, painted in black. The designs include geometric, plant, animals and aquatic features. It is essentially a fabric, made on fast wheel indicated by concentric striations with very well lavigated clay and fired at high temperature as the metallic ring attests.

These contrasting pottery traditions show that the two cultural groups freely adopted the pottery from each other. The neolithic grey wares occur in the early

\(^{189}\) Ibid., p. 56. The Hallur painted pottery was personally examined by Dr. Allchin which confirmed his observations on Piklihal A3 painted ware.
The Southern neolithic folk on the other hand were influenced by the painted pottery traditions. Wheel made, black-painted red pottery though sparse, occurs in the upper levels of the sites of Brahmagiri,MASKI, Piklihal (AB Ware), Tekkalakota (fig. 19), Sangana-kallu, Hallur (pl. $\text{pl.XVII}$, ) and T. Narsipur. From a close study of this ware, it appears to be a local variant of the Jorwe pottery. This further indicates the cultural centres between Northern and the Southern folk.

190. As already refered above, it is only at Daimabad, phase 1, that a purely grey ware phase is met with.

191. The writer personally studied the painted pottery from the excavations at MASKI and T. Narsipur. Both collections appear to be the A3 painted ware of Allchin met with at the lower levels of Brahmagiri and Hallur. At MASKI, however, a wheel thrown, painted ware akin to Jorwe fabric occur on surface as at Brahmagiri.
Further, Black-and-red ware, with a white painted variety occurs in several sites, in the chalcolithic context, viz, at Tkwada, opposite Bahal, Chandoli in the north and Tekkalkota, Sanganakallu and Hallur in the south Deccan. It is interesting to note that a white painted black-and-red ware bowl, along with the typical Jorwe painted jar formed the grave goods of a burial at Tkwada.\textsuperscript{192} Even at Tekkalakota, a similar black-and-red ware bowl, painted with 5 white strokes along with spouted \textit{bla} and other vessels of neolithic fabric formed part of a similar burial (pl. Vb, fig. 22). Further black-and-red ware vessels invariably formed the burial appendage of the latter site. Although this black-and-red ware appears to be \textit{af} megalithic origin, as noted above (p. \textsuperscript{110}), the similarly in the burial appendages of the two sites so far apart is striking.

The next striking feature is the stone tool tradition which occur in most of the sites of the Deccan. This is of two varieties, viz. Ground stone industry and the blade industry.

Southern Deccan has been considered to be home of neolithic inhabitant. Large number of dykes have been

\textsuperscript{192.} \textit{IAR,} 1958-59, pp. 18-19.
known in the granitic area and Sanganakallu has the famous factory site. Therefore, ground stone industry, with the pointed butt axe, is the typical feature of the region. Almost all the sites of the northern Deccan, are associated with this polished stone tool traditions. They have derived the knowledge of this lithic industry from their counterparts in Karnataka. It is interesting to note here the evidence of Soangaon. A polished stone axe found in this site, is made of granite serpentine, an ultra basic rock, occurring in the archaeology. An analysis of this raw material which is not found in this part of Maharashtra, shows that this particular variety occurs in the Chanda, Ratnagiri and Mysore (North Karnataka) region, and is in all probability an imported one. 193

While the chalcolithic folk of the northern Deccan seem to have borrowed the ground stone industry from the southern Deccan, they have lent the typical blade industry to the latter. At one stage, in about 1700 B.C, the southerners seem not to have been influenced by the northern people, as the Hallur evidence shows (Supra 12). But typical blade tools relieved from fluted cores start occurring around 1500 B.C. thus showing the arrival of the chalcolithic elements from the north. Further, that they even used the locally available material, and employed

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193. Information by Mr. S.M. Rajguru, Lecturer in Geology, Deccan College, Poona. Mentioned with thanks.
their technique of the created guiding ridge, is proved beyond doubt, but the used chert and chalcedony in the granitic hilly region, whereas black quartzite, which occurs in the auriferous tract of the schist belt, in Hallur and T. Marsipur. This blade stone industry the origin of which is ascribed to Mesopotamia has certainly traversed south, and has been adopted by the indigenous inhabitants.

The knowledge of the use of Copper seems to have been known to both the cultures. Copper implements though sparsely used, occur in both the regions. The flat axes found at Nevasa, Jorwe and Chandoli show remarkable similarity to that of Tekkalakota flat axe. Antennae hilted dagger found at Kallur is almost similar to the one found at Chandoli. Further, fishhooks, ornaments etc of copper are all similar in the sites of both the regions.

The large number of animal bones and evidence of grains prove that the folk of both the regions were pastoral-cum-agricultural communities. The animals they domesticated include cow/ ox, sheep/ goat, swine, dog, deer.

194. ARADH, pl. V b.

195. Deo, S.B. & Ansari, 20, Chalcolithic Chandoli, fig. 58, No.1.
some of which are also found painted on the vessels. Some of these animals, besides fish seem also to have formed part of their diet.

However, the evidence from recent excavations prove that these communities certainly practiced some agriculture. Tekkalakota has yielded the puse *dolichos biflorus*, while millets, *ragi*, *Eleusine coracana*, and wheat have been recovered from Hallur and Soangaon respectively.

The most striking similarity between the two cultural groups under study is the method of the disposal of the dead. So far a large number of burials have been encountered in the excavated sites of Nevasa, Tekwada, Daimabad and Chandoli, in the northern Deccan. The adult burials, however, are few, being only eleven (of them being found) out of a total of more than 162 burials. The most striking feature is that the dead was disposed in the habitation area itself by these people, sometimes, under the floor of the house or just outside. The adults were generally buried in an oval pit, while there are also instances of grown up boys being buried in multiple-urns, which were interred in a pit dug for the purpose. Children were usually buried in single double—and sometimes triple urns, of the typical neolithic grey ware. The burials

196. At Nevasa (IAR, 1959–60, pl. XXX B), Diamabad (IRR, 1958–59, pl. XXV B), and Chandoli (Deo, S.B. & Ansari, Z.D., *Chalcolithic Chandoli*, fig. 10a & b).
provided with funerary appendage, consisting of pots, and most of the burials were invariably associated with spouted pots. Some of the children were decorated with ornaments such as necklace of copper beads, as evidenced at Nevasa and Chandoli.

The evidence of the disposal of the dead in the southern Deccan is available in most of the excavated sites, like, Brahmagiri, Piklihal, T. Narsipur, Tekkalakota, Hallur, and Nagarjunakonda.

As in northern Deccan, the southerners also buried the dead in the habitation area. Oval pits were dug and many times within the houses themselves, under the floors.

197. Wheeler conjectures the use of such spouted vessels for pouring libations into the ear of mouth of the dead (AI, No. 4, p. 203), as has been conjectured in the case of the funnel shaped vessels from Luristan graves (Godard, A. 'Les Bronzes du Luristan', *Ars Asitica*, Vol. XVII, p. 90, (Paris 1931). It is interesting that most of the burials from Deccan have spouted vessels.


199. Deo, S.B. and Ansari, Z D., op. cit., p. 23, fig. 56, No. 3.
as evidenced at Tekkalakota,\textsuperscript{200} and Hallur (pl. XVI. 2) and dead were buried. Children were generally buried in urns, though instances are available to show that they were also placed on the ground in a pit. The examples from Brahmagiri,\textsuperscript{201} and Hallur (pl. XVI. 2) show that as in Deccan, the neolithic inhabitant buried the children in double urns placed horizontally, mouth-to-mouth and buried in the oval pit.

The most striking similarity is that of the multiple pot burial from Tekkalakota (pl. XVI) which at once reminds us of the analogous burials in three, or five storage jars used in the burial, at Chandoli,\textsuperscript{202} Diamabad\textsuperscript{203} and Nevasa.\textsuperscript{204} The burial had as many as 9 vessels forming the burial appendage. The second instance which is again striking is that an extended burial of an adult occurring in phase II. (pl. V a, fig. 21) The furniture of this consisted of seven vessels, of which three were of black-and-red ware. The large bowl of one of these was found painted in white with groups of five strokes, (fig. 21 a). An exactly similar white painted

\textsuperscript{200} Nagaraja Rao M.S. & Malhotra, op. cit., p. 93.
\textsuperscript{201} AI, No.4, p. 226.
\textsuperscript{202} Deo & Ansari, op. cit., fig. 10a & b)
\textsuperscript{203} IAR, 1958-59 - pl. XXV. B.
\textsuperscript{204} IAR, 1959-60, pl. XXXB.
black-and-red ware, painted in white but with 6 strokes formed part of a burial appendage at Tekwada in Khandesh. These instances, which are new confirmative evidence, prove beyond doubt that the folk were either had close contact or of common origin. It has already been pointed out earlier that the black-and-red ware used in these burials appears to be of megalithic origin.

As noted above, adult burials were far and few, in the Deccan, and some have felt that this is due to the fact that only children were buried, and adults were probably disposed of by throwing into the river or by cremation. However, the evidence from Tekkalakota does not warrant any such view. So far, only phase 2 i.e. the upper strata have been exposed in the large scale excavation. As many as 13 adult burials have been encountered, and in the limited excavation of the writer, three adults from the lower phase and two from the upper have been noted. Therefore, the horizontal, large scale at the site is very likely to bring out more burials. As such the disposal of adults by other modes suggested by Gupta cannot be accepted.

205. IAR, 1956-57, fig. 8, No. 3, p. 19.
The foregoing account clearly indicates that similar burial customs were prevalent among the two cultural groups of the Deccan. The chronological antecedency of the southern group suggests that the northern group adopted the neolithic practice of the disposal of the dead. Further, so far no evidence is available regarding the modes of burial in Malwa, Rajputana and Saurashtra except for the Harappan phase.208

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207. Exception of Diamabad discussed above. 
Supra p. 126

208. Although burials were found in the habitation area of the Deccan sites, evidence of separate cemetery is not wanting. For instance, Tekwada, purely a burial site is on the other bank of the Girna opposite Bahal and is correlated to Bahal IB by the excavator. It is also significant that no burials were found in the habitation mound.

Further Sali has located a number of purely burial sites belonging to chalcolithic phase, away from habitation sites, in the Tapi valley (IAR 1959 - 60, p. 34; 1960 - 61, p. 26; 1961 - 62, p. 31). 196 - ,p. ; 196 - ,p. ; 197 - ,p.

It is also significant that the Harappan sites had their cemetery away from the habitation. If it is, therefore, probable that the chalcolithic folk beyond the Narmada, had separate burial grounds as no burials have been encountered in the habitation? The possibility cannot be ruled out. Only further explorations should answer this question.
This also further strengthens the observation that the chalcolithic of the northern Deccan derived their inspiration from their counterparts in Karnatak with whom they came into contact. 209

Although a number of similarities in the cultural traits have been detailed above, there are many points of contrasts between the two cultural groups. It is needless to repeat the ground stone Industry and the handmade grey wares of the Karnatak neolithic and the blade industry and the painted wheel made pottery of the northern chalcolithic. But the ash mounds form the most distinctive feature of the neolithic of the Karnatak region and are conspicuous by their absence in the north. These mounds, as already explained, are formed by the periodical burning of the heaps of cow dung, as revealed at Utnur, Kupgal etc. 210


THE AUTHORS

The authors of these early pastoral-food producing cultures still remain a problem. However, the evidence to-date would be put forward here.

Basing his arguments on the distribution of the pointed buff axes, Wheeler tentatively suggested a movement of the folk from north-east to south-east. Recently he has gone further, saying that the axes might have been derived from Central Asia through China.

Allochin on the other hand, claims an Iranian origin to these cultural groups. This he bases on the similarity of potting techniques; occurrence of grey wares; spouted and channel spouted vessels; and use of basalt at Shah Tepe and Piklihal. There was a movement of pastoralists, who inhabited the region of Turkoman steppe in the last centuries of the 3rd millennium B.C., into the Indus valley through Southern Baluchistan via Seistan or else eastward via Arachosia. Here they are said to have acquired the bos indicus which became 'an all-important part of their economy'. Some of these

211. Al, No.4, p. 295.
212. Early India and Pakistan, p. 89.
213. Piklihal Excavations, pp. 139-142.
pastoralists at least, together with their cattle moved into Sind and Saurashtra and further to the Deccan. When they arrived in Karnatak, they are said to have revived the art of making polished tools, because of the plentiful of raw material. On the evidence of the three skulls, they are said to be of Dravidian stock who might have introduced the Dravidian language, or a movement connected with the wave of the Indo-Europeans.

Sankalia discards this theory of Iranian origin and suggests an indigenous origin. His main objections for Allchin's theory are as follows:

If there was migration of groups of people, from Iran, traces of the equipments of their culture such as Grey ware, stones axes should be found in the region in between Iran and the Deccan. These are absent, except for a few ground tools in the sites of Baluchistan. Absence of raw material for lithic tools in this intermediate region is no reason, as Malwa and Saurashtra have trap or basalt with fine grained dolerite dykes. This is said to obviate the inference that pastoral group who arrived in Karnatak remembered the grinding tools after seeing the plentiful of raw material. Secondary acquiring bos Indicus in the Indus valley en route is also ruled

215. Ibid., p. 274.
out as fossil jaws and teeth of *bos Indicus* from Nevasa on Pravada in the Deccan and Gonchi on BeIwa, in Malwa, prove its existence by the beginning of holocene. Lastly scanty evidence of only two skulls and the study of skeletons from Nevasa which shows primitive aboriginal population, are referred to refute the Dravidoid or Indo-European penetration into the Deccan or Karnatak.

For the indigenous origin, the evidence is based on the study of skeletal remains. The single child skull from Brahmagiri is said to be of the autochthonous Austroloid type.\(^1\) The skeletons of chalcolithic Nevasa, the majority of which were of children, are also said to have been of primitive aboriginal population.\(^2\)

Thapar also believes that the southern neolithic seems to have originated in the region itself. He hints, the microlithic and blade industry appears to have been derived from the pure microlithic series and a closer observation in this regard to find out whether there was any continuum of microlithic tradition from the aceramic geometric series into the Southern Neolithic complex is advocated by him.\(^3\)

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217. Erhardt in Sankalia et al., *From History to Prehistory at Nevasa*, p. 520.

218. Thapar, B.K., 'Neolithic Problem in India', *in Indian Prehistory : 1964*, (Ed.) Misra. V.N., & Mate, M.S., p. 93.
In spite of all these theories, with the present state of evidence, the problem still remains the same and nothing can be conclusively said. One thing appears to be clear and that is these pastoral-cum-agricultural people have come from elsewhere. Because, all the excavations so far conducted have shown the earliest settlers of the region in a developed stage and no evolution of the culture is discerned. At Sanganakal, an aceramic preneolithic phase is encountered at the lowest level. The phase, characterised by patinated trap and quartz flakes occurring in the natural red moorum, the basal disintegrated granite, does not appear to have any relation to the lowest neolithic occupation which took place on the red-moorum. This neolithic, which is dated to circa B.C. 1550, is again found in a well developed firm. So no evolution of either ‘The continuum of microlithic tradition from the aceramic geometric series’ or other cultural traits is seen, in any of the excavations so far conducted.

Now about the racial elements of these people.

Quite a number of skulls from the excavations at Tekkalakota have been studied. The cranial studies show


morphic similarity among all the skulls of the site. A number of common morphometric characters also discerned between these series on the one hand and those from Brahmagiri (Stone Axe Culture), Piklihal, Nevasa and Chandoli on the other. It is significant that these skulls are dissimilar as far as the phenotypes are concerned, to those of Brahmagiri (Megalithic), Yelleswaram, Langhnaj and Harappa (Cemetery-H, Stratum-II).221

The Mediterranean and the proto-austroloid racial elements are said present among these specimens in a mixed form. The latter is said to be autochthonous and found to be superimposed by the former.222 Anthropologists are said to accept that these 'palæo-Mediterraneans' or 'Dravidoid' stock, as they are called by some scholars, were widely spread throughout the Iranian plateau and must have entered India from Iran.

However, this theory is disputed as mentioned above. But that these folk have come from elsewhere is almost certain, as no local evolution could be established. The following hypothesis is posed before scholars, on the available material evidence from the excavations.

221. Ibid., p. 156.
222. Ibid., p. 157.
The evidence is three fold, viz., (i) head-rests; (ii) polished-stone axes; and (iii) black-and-red ware.

(i) Pottery 'neck rests' as they were originally designated by Foote, were first reported by him from T. Narasipur on the Kaveri.\(^{223}\) The writer himself collected fragments of two such head-rests during his private visit a couple of years ago (pl. \(XX\), figs. 2\(a\) & b). At Hallur, fragment of such a head-rest was found in the debris of the one of house plans, of the neolithic-chalcolithic phase. (pl. \(XX\), fig. 2\(a\)). They are all made of burnished grey fabric, and sometimes painted with ochre, as at T. Narasipur. They would have concave top, and a hollow-stand. But so far, their actual use and significance were not known. In his recent excavations at T. Narasipur, Dr. Seshadri found one such complete specimen of a head-rest placed in a burial, near the temple of the skull.\(^{224}\)

This is further confirmed by the fact that in ancient Egypt such head rests were found in the royal burial chambers. In the tomb of Tut-Ankh-Amen, four head-rests were found in a table-shaped cabinet. They were of ivory.

\(^{223}\) Foote, R.B., IPPA, Notes, p. 69, pl. 23, 123

\(^{224}\) IAR., 19\(61-62\), p. 36, pl. \(VII\) A.
carved and tinted ivory, lapis lazuli blue faience and turquoise blue glass. The finest of these is of ivory, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and resembles in shape, the specimens from the neolithic sites of the southern Deccan. The caryatidal figure of Shu, the god of atmosphere, represented, on the stem, holds the concave part of the 'rest' high. The myth it represents is that God Shu is supposed to hold the head of the King which lies on the concave part of the 'rest' so that he might rest in heaven for ever. Thus the significance of the headrest is proven for certain.

The similarity in shape and the association with the burials not only clarifies the purpose and the use of these head-rests, but makes one wonder whether there were any contacts between the southern Deccan and Egypt of 1400 B.C. If the kings of Egypt could afford 'rests' of precious materials, the pastoral, neolithic folk of Karnatak could at least have earthen 'rests'. In this context it would be interesting to know whether such 'rests' are available in the burials of middle and lower strata of the Egyptian society and if so what is the material, of this period. But what is remarkable is the continuity and the similarity of the tradition.

226. Ibid., pl. XXXVI, B; see also Chenry, J., Lost Worlds, Fig. on p. 47.
Secondly, the polished stone axes. The recent excavations by Lal 227 at the Nubian site Afyeh, have exposed the 'A Group Culture', characterised by the occurrence of serrated blades, borers etc. of chert, polished stone axes of diorite, painted and incised pottery etc. This culture (usually dated to circa B.C. 3000) is dated to the second quarter of the third millennium B.C. by C.14 Method. All the above cultural equipments are remarkably similar to the neolithic-chalcolithic of the Deccan.

Finally, although chronologically posterior to the period of our study, Black-and-red ware bowls and red ware stands have been unearthed, in the excavations of graves of Tummas. These are so identical in shape and are reminiscent of those found in the Megalithic tombs of Maski 228 and other sites of Karnatak, that one cannot refrain from the thought whether there was any link and movements between these two regions. It would not be out of place here to mention that inverted firing technique, the result of which was the black-and-red ware, was known to the neolithic potters of Egypt. 'Black-topped ware'


228. Lal, B.B., pp. cit., pl. XXXIII.
as it is called, it is found at the neolithic sites of Fayum and Badari. These had a rippled surface, as a result of burnishing with blunt-toothed comb. In this context; occurrence of such pottery with rippled surface, at T. Narsipur is again significant. This pottery in Egypt is ascribed to 5th millennium B.C.

The above examples from the Egyptian settlement and tombs not only indicate the possible links between Egypt and the southern Deccan, but pose the following problems.

Did the authors of the southern neolithic come from Egypt by the sea-route? If Indian and West Asian trading ships could be moving up and down the Arabian sea, late in the 3rd millennium B.C., could they not have come down the West coast of the Peninsula? Later literature mention the existence of parts such as Barukaccha (modern Broach) in West coast of India.

The use of head rests for sepulchral purposes and other similarities mentioned above do point out that contacts might have existed or the traditions have their


inspiration from a common source. If the latter, from where, would be question. Could it be West Asia?

As Lal has put it, ' before attempting a detailled correlation between these two 4000-Kilometre-apart cultures, would it not be worth while to explore the Coastal regions of south Arabia and south-eastern Iran, and West Coast of the Peninsula?

Finally some of the semihunting communities of southern Deccan appear to be the survivors of these neolithic folk, as some of the traditions appear to survive in them. The author had an occasion to study this community, which forms the major population of Bellary in general and of Tekkalakota in particular.

The community is divided into three groups, called the 'Uru boyas' (boyas of villages or towns), the 'Myasa boyas' (boyas of Grassland) and the


232. This subject is dealt with in detail in a paper; See Nagaraja Rao, M.S., 'Survival of Certain Neolithic Elements among the Boyas of Tekkalakota', Anthropos 60, 1966; see also Nagaraja Rao, M.S., & Milhotra, K.C., op. cit., Appendix B, pp. 100-103.
'Konda boyas' (boyas of the hills). Each of this groups, have a sub-division called the 'bedagua'. Four well-known bedagus are Yemmalavaru (buffellow men); Mandalavaru (herdsmen); Minavaru (fish-men); and Pulavaru (flowermen). These exogamous names, particularly the first two, are very interesting. The neolithic people, as is wellknown, were the first to domesticate the animals. These sect names, therefore, seem to suggest their original profession of cattle-keeping.

The Boyas are a semihunting community. Although they have now taken up other professions, it is interesting to find that original profession of theirs still survives to this day by way of ceremonial hunting.

It is incumbent upon the boyas to go for hunting on the day next to the lunar New Year's Day, in March-April. On the preceding two days, there will be a community dance. Then they would proceed for hunting generally to the hilly tracts around, and after their return in the evening, they partake the booty in a community feast. In one of the rock shelters on the granite hill in the neighbourhood of Tekkalkota, this tradition of ceremonial hunting seems to have been depicted in painting executed in ochre (fig. 30 a), as described by the writer.233

The boyas themselves draw such stylised human figures in ochre, in front of their huts with the belief that they protect them from evil spirits. It is interesting to see almost similar painted human figures drawn on the chalcolithic pottery from Navdatoli.

The plan of the huts of the boyas present a striking similarity to the circular plans of the neolithic sites excavated (cf. pl. IIIa, fig. 8, and fig. 7 with pl. XII c, and fig. 31, bP3b3b pl. XIV).

A preliminary study of the Crania from Tekkalkota has shown that the so-called proto-austroloid element is present in majority of them, as also those from contemporary sites. The Boyas, too show the presence of this racial element though in a mixed form.

The above features, though not conclusive, do hint at the possibility of these Boyas being the survivors of the early pastoral folk of the region. What is now required is a detailed study of the skeletal remains from the excavated sites on the one hand, and the traditions, customs and modes of living of the semihunting tribes, particularly the hill-dwelling Boyas of Andhra region, on the other.

234. Sankalia, et al., Excavations at Maheshvari and Navdatoli, fig. 42.
235. Sarkar, S.S., ASI, 44