CHAPTER IV

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS IN AMARAVATHI RIVER VALLEY

The intensive archaeological explorations carried out in the course of this research substantially supplemented the existing knowledge. There are 211 archaeological sites, of which, nearly 180 sites are discovered in the present explorations alone. The field based study provided a good picture on the settlement pattern, various grave types, potential resource zones, religious centres, trade centres, industrial production centres and formation of trade routes. However the observations made on these surface indicators had its own limitation. The hidden nature of the archaeological material prevented us in understanding complete picture of the society. The excavations fill this gap to some extent. Three excavations at Karur, Nedungur and Porunthal were conducted in this valley. The first ever excavated site in Amaravathi river valley is Karur. The site located at the confluence of the Amaravathi river with Kaveri was excavated in the years 1973-74, 1977 and 1979. Six trenches laid within the town area yielded important evidences like Tamil-Brahmi inscribed potsherds, graffiti marks, Chera coins, Roman artifacts like coins, amphorae and brick structures, all indicative of urban nature. Irrespective of its potentiality, either Karur or the entire valley did not receive proper attention of archaeologists. After 28 years, the region was again placed under spade work. In 2008, the site Nedungur located 15 km west of Karur was excavated. Four trenches in the habitation and one transepted grave opened at the site provided limited information on the nature of the site. These two sites, excavated in the upper Amaravathi river valley, yielded a good picture on the stratigraphical positions of two cultures namely Iron Age and Early Historic. Both the sites were dated based on archaeological stratigraphy and did not have any scientific dating. In the basin area of the river, the site Porunthal was excavated for two seasons in the years 2009 and 2010. Three trenches and four graves opened respectively in habitation mound and grave yard provided some interesting evidences on glass bead making and the rituals performed in the graves. The river valley could not yield a complete picture of any site due to very limited nature of material evidence. Irrespective of these limitations, the excavations provided a good picture on the potentiality of the region. Future excavations may throw much light on various
aspects of the society and may strengthen the existing knowledge. Keeping in view of these limitations, the archaeological findings of Amaravathi river valley that were obtained in the excavations are prescribed below.

**Karur**

Archaeologically speaking, in the absence of any prehistoric localities the antiquity of this region commences with the Iron Age only. The Iron Age sites like Somur, Nerur, Thirumukkudalur, Porani and Attur located within a 5 km suggest the existence of Iron Age culture at Karur. In order to assess the nature of this culture that seems to coincide with the historical times, the present chapter presents a brief history of the earlier works and also the descriptive details of the excavated material. Karur, the district headquarter, lies on the left bank of the river Amaravathi at the confluence of river Amaravathi with Kaveri. The Sangam literature Padirruppattu, Purananuru and Akananuru and the post-Sangam epics Slippadikaram and Manimekalai give vivid accounts on Karur Vanji and its association with Chera kings. In order to ascertain the validity of the literary references and other archaeological, epigraphical and numismatic evidences, a systematic spade work was carried out in the year 1973-74, 1977 and 1979 by the state Archaeology Department. (Nagasamy 1995:63-85).

The excavation trenches were laid within the city of Karur at following five locations:

2. CSI High School Ground (KRR-3 in the year 1977)
3. Taluk Office Ground (KRR-4 in the year 1977)
4. Boys High School Ground near the Pasupathi Temple (KRR-5 in the year 1979)
5. Girls High School Ground (KRR-6 in the year 1979)

The trenches laid at Jaiprakash School ground and the Girls High School ground stand for the maximum cultural deposit measuring 4.52 m and 5.25 m respectively. The excavator states that the site had its beginning from the black-and-red ware period and continued to prosper up to the medieval times without any break. Four major cultural divisions designated as period I, II, III and IV revealed the following cultural sequences.
The early settlers using the typical black-and-red ware pottery arrive at the site around 2nd century BC. The excavator identified this period as Pre-Christian era deposit, having no signs of Roman contact. The next cultural period (period II) witnessed the efflorescence of external trade and the influx of important pottery assemblage like the Rouletted ware and Amphorae. Three fragments of Arretine ware is also stated to have been collected from the surface. The occurrence of inscribed potsherds ascribable to period II shows that a section of the society was literate to display their writing skills over their belongings. The inscribed potsherds were found at a depth of 3.85 m (Jaiprakash School), 2.75 m and 1.85 m (Girls high school).

Except for that of a sherd with letters inscribed over a red slipped ware, all other sherds were found to be inscribed on black-and-red ware only. It is worthy to note that an inscribed black-and-red ware sherd with letters reading catan was found in the stratum that yielded Roman amphorae. The rest of other sherds found in the excavation were highly fragmentary. Two sherds found in the upper (?) levels had the reading as Kati (1.85m) and Irukup (2.75m). Some of the surface collections made at the site also contained inscribed sherds. An inscribed sherd of red slipped ware had the reading Kuru Akal meaning the little cup. The excavator assigned it to 2-3rd cent. AD on the basis of the evolved character of letters (Fig. 4.1).

The pottery assemblage of this period consisted of black-and-red ware, red slipped ware and matt designed sherds. The stratified occurrence of a square copper coin with an elephant on the obverse and bow and arrow on the reverse deserves to be mentioned here. The coin with such symbols indicating the royal insignia of the Cheras was the first of its kind to occur at Karur in a stratified context. A highly corroded silver Roman coin found in the upper levels (taluk office 0.52m) perhaps indicate the survival of external trade activities. The occurrence of imported pottery, inscribed sherds and coins on the whole has been dated to 1st -2nd cent. AD

In Period III, one could observe a change in the pottery variety in the form of russet coated ware dated to 3rd - 4th cent. AD. Except for the passing reference of the pottery, the report hardly provides any details over other aspects of the period. Further, assigning the period of russet-coated ware to 4th cent. AD did not match other archaeological sites excavated in this region. The subsequent Period IV saw the gradual disappearance of the earlier pottery types and in turn replaced by a single
dominant variety namely the coarse red ware. An insignificant dull red ware was its associated variety. The excavation also showed some architectural remains in the form of brick flooring or pavement and a drain with an adjoining brick structure. The bricks measure 26x16x4 cm (Nagasamy 1995; SII 3:20-22) (Fig.4.2).

Nedungur Excavation

The Nedungur excavation was conducted by State Dept of Archeology in 2008 (Seetharam Gurumoorthy 2008). The site yielded Iron Age (3\textsuperscript{rd} B.C - 3\textsuperscript{rd} A.D) and Early Historical (4\textsuperscript{th} A.D - 10\textsuperscript{th} A.D) settlements.

The village Nedungur is situated 15 km west of Karur on the way to Coimbatore. Iron Age habitation-cum-burial site was found on western side of the village. More than 20 hectares area of habitation mound was found in 2008 on south-western side of the village locally known as Naththamedu. The mound yielded red ware slipped ware and black polished ware. The explorer also observed stone circles with cairn packing found near the habitation mound locally known as Pandiyanakuli and Pandiyanavdu. The excavation carried out in the year 2008 State Archaeology Department yielded two cultural periods namely Iron Age and Early Historic.
Habitation cuttings

The excavation trenches were laid on four different locations on the habitation mound. The first trench (NDR-1) laid 100 m southwest of the burial site yielded black-and-red ware, red ware, black polished ware and russet-coated ware and red slipped ware. These ceramics were collected from the depth of 0.20 m to 1.40 m. Some potsherds with graffiti marks representing star, triangle and drum were observed. The iron objects like sword and nail, shell bangle and copper ring objects were also reported in this trench.

The second trench (NDR-2) laid 15 m west of NDR-1 yielded 70 cm cultural deposit containing black-and-red ware, red ware, black polished ware and russet coated ware and red slipped ware.

The third trench (NDR-3) laid 20 m south of the NDR-1 and NDR-2 yielded 0.50 cm cultural deposit containing black-and-red ware, red ware, black polished ware and russet coated ware. The iron objects like sword, arrow head and broken knives (12 in numbers), deer horn (6), graffiti marks, shell bangles were also collected from this trench.

The fourth trench (NDR-4) laid on 3 m west of NDR-1, 2 and 3 had some amount of red ware, few red slipped ware and black-and-red ware. This trench yielded terracotta gamesmen, pipes, lamp and spindle whorl (Fig. 4.3).

Graves

The cairn circles were found near the Karudaiyanpalayam village. More than 50 cairn circles were found in disturbed condition. Out of 50 graves, only three were found in good state of preservation. Among these three graves (NDR MEG-1), the grave having inner circle and outer circle entombing a transepted cist with passage was selected for excavation (Fig. 4.4).

Outer circle made up of 31 small and 20 huge boulders was found in irregular round shape. The western and eastern part of the circles was disturbed. The gap between the inner and outer circle was 40 cm.

The transepted cist was in east west orientation. It yielded iron objects four legged- jars, shallow cups, swords, ring stands, and pots (Sridhar 2009:1-12) (Fig. 4.5).
Porunthal Excavations

Porunthal (77° 28’ 38” E; 10° 22’ 58” N), a tiny village, is situated on the foothill of the Western Ghats about 12 km southwest Palani, the taluk head quarters of Dindigal district. Palani lies on Madurai-Coimbatore road at a distance of 56 km southeast of Coimbatore and 110 km northwest of Madurai. Palani town with presiding deity Muruga on the summit of the hill is one of the famous pilgrimage centers of South India. The village Porunthal lies on the left bank of the river Porunthalar (also Porunthi lar), which descends from Western Ghats. The river Palar flowing parallel to the river Porunthalar on its right (east) joins together at Kalayamputtur, a few kilometers down the stream. The river Porunthalar is called as Sanmuganadi at Palani after the God Sanmuga and it joins with Amaravathi (ancient An-Porunai) near Dharapuram town in Tiruppur district.

This village Porunthal lies close to the major trade route connecting Madurai, the Pandya capital on the south and Vanji on the west. Vanji was the celebrated Chera capital on the bank of river Periyar in Thrissur District of Kerala. This route also connects Alagankulam, the Pandya port on the mouth of river Vaigai on the east coast with the well known Chera port Musiri (Pattinam) on the mouth of the river Periyar on the west coast after passing through Madurai, the Pandya capital. Several Jain beds and shelters with Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions like Vikkiramanagalam, Mudalaikulam and Mettupatti and trade centers like Anaimalai lie on this route. The Roman coin hoard yielding sites like Pollachi, Budhinattam and Kalayamputtur discovered in pre-Independence era also lie on this trade route. The famous Roman coin hoard site Kalayamputtur on Porunthalar river bank’s 6 km north of Porunthal village. The occurrence of Jain beds donated by the traders and Roman coin hoards found along with Punch-marked coins clearly suggested that this route was very active during Early Historic times. The later medieval trade guild inscriptions also attested the continuity of this route for brisk trade. Three trade guild inscriptions were located on this route at the sites like Thamaraikulam, Rajapuram and Kodaimangalam. The existence of important Kongu-Chola/Chera/Pandya temples on this route also vouches our point that this route was very active since Iron Age. The recent explorations carried out in Amaravathi valley by the present researcher reevaluated about 173 Iron Age and Early Historic sites. The present site Porunthal was one among them discovered in March 2006.
The village Porunthal is ideally located in the midst of the several archaeological sites namely Thamaraikulam, Kalayamputtur, Kiranur, Ravimangalam, Neikarappatti, Rajapuram, Pallapatti, Kolumam, Kodaimangalam, Manur, Palani, Aykkudi, Ayivarmalai, Kutampundi Valasu, Kappalurpatti and Periyakottai. A cursory look on the archaeological and historical vestiges encountered at these sites would provide the archaeological importance and contextual position of the site Porunthal.

Historical Geography

Historically, the village Porunthal was part of the territorial division known as Vaikavur nadu, named after the main village Vaikavur or Aviyur which in the present Palani (the ancient Pothini). Other names mentioned about these territorial divisions were Avi-nadu, Vaikavi-nadu, Vaiyavi-nadu and Vaiyapuri-nadu, all denoting the same region. One of the important clan groups settled in this area was Aviyar kudi. One of the famous Vel chieftains who ruled this region was Vel-Avi-k-ko-p-perump- pekan. Some Sangam poets who spoke on this chieftain were Kabilan, Van-Paranar, Ariciil-Kilar and Perunkunur-Kilar (Purananuru 143, 144, 145, 146 and147). The Sangam literature Akananuru (Akananuru 1 and 61) and Purananuru (142) mention this place as Pothini belonging to the Vel chieftain Nedu-Vel-Avi. Further, the place Pothini is noted as a Pon-udai-nedu-nagar-pothini meaning the big town Pothini having gold. As per Sangam poem Padirruppattu another important chieftain Vel-avi-k-ko-paduman had matrimonial relations with Cheras who ruled this region with capital at Karur (ancient Karur-Vanjji) located on the confluence of the river Amaravathi with Kaveri. Due to his close relationship with Cheras, this chieftain Vel-avi-k-ko-paduman had a palace near Vanji. The Sangam poet Porunthil Ilangiranar hails from this village. He had sung three songs, two in Akananuru (19, 351) and one in Purananuru (53). In Purananuru, he composed a poem in praise of Chera king Mantharal Cheral Irumporai, who ruled from the Chera country with capital at Karur and believed to be issued inscribed coins with a title Kolipporai datable to 1st century AD.

The famous Jain centre Ayvarmalai (the ancient Ayiraimalai) lies about 15 km northwest of this site. Jain beds were found in the natural cavern on the eastern side of the hillock. Several Jain sculptures in bas-relief were found at the entrance of the cavern and the inscriptions in Vatteluthu character clearly points to the fact that this
centre was survived as great Jain centre. The Sangam poem Padirrappattu (21, 70, and 79) mentioned this place as Ayirai which had the Chera’s family deity Goddess Koravai.

Coin Hoards

Among the coin hoards of Roman times discoursed in India, nearly 90 % of coin hoards were unearthed in Chera country. Of these, majority of them were found on trade routes. One such coin hoard, amounting to 63 gold coins, was discovered at Kalayamputtur on the left bank of river Porunthalar in 1856. They belong to Tiberius (6), Gaius (1), Claudius (18), Nero (17), Domitian (5), Nerva (2) and unidentified kings (14). Other important archaeological sites that yielded Roman coin hoards in its vicinity were Budhinattam, Udumalaipettai, Pollachi, Dharapuram and Karur (Swell 1882:286; Turner 1989).

Trade Guild Inscriptions

Historically important medieval trade guild inscriptions issued by the celebrated trade guilds Ainurruvar/Tisai-ayirattu-ainurruvar were located about 5 km from Porunthal down the stream at Thamaraikulam and Rajapuram. Thamaraikulam lies on the right bank whereas Rajapuram lies on the left bank opposite to Thamaraikulam. It is quite interesting to note that both the sites have trade guild inscriptions suggesting the east-west trade route that would have crossed the river at this point.

The Rajapuram medieval trade guild inscription refers to a gift made by the Tisai-ayirattu-ainurruvar for the maintenance of a garden of a Siva temple located at Thamaraikulam. The symbols like sword, trishul, knife, tamaru and kalasa are found engraved at the base of the inscription.

The village Thamaraikulam is known for several archaeological findings. The habitation mound, locally called Tukkottai, yielded several graffiti marks engraved on black-and-red ware, russet coated ware and red ware. Besides, iron furnace, TC pipes, tuyeres, bricks, terracotta figurines, hopscotch, etc., were collected from the disturbed habitation mound covering an area of about 10 acres. Urn burials with skeletal remains were found exposed earlier (Fig. 4.6).
Thamaraikulam Inscription

King: Parakecari Vira Chola (Kong Chola) (1183-1206 AD)

Date: 9th Regnal year 1192 AD

Location: In the paddy field of Panchayat President

Description: It refers to a gift of the reclaimed land granted to ainaruvar after naming it as ainaruvar-kulatalai vacakkal by one poci aritasan sri kalaip-pillai of amarpuyangka chaturvethimangalam, a bramadeya of Vaikavur-nadu (Seetharam Gurumoorthy 2007: 149-150).

1. svasti sri kopa
2. rakesari panmara
3. na tiripuvana cakara
4. vartikal sri vi
5. rachola tevarku
6. ttiruvelutti
7. tuc ccellanira
8. tiru nalli-yan
9. tu onpatavatu
10. vaikavi nattu ama
11. rapuyanga ccaturve
12. timangalattu po
13. ci aritasan pon
14. villiyan sri kali
15. p pillaiyen pumi
16. tirutthi ainnu rruvakuthalai vasakka lenru
17. peritten cikali
18. pillaiyen
19. inurru
20. vai raksai

Note: Two lamps were depicted on either side of the plough and curulipatta is engraved below the inscription. The symbols suggest that this inscription belongs to the trade guild Ainaruvar.
A Tripurantaka bronze statue was discovered a decade ago while digging a basement for the construction of a school building. Again, two years later, another Nataraja bronze statue was unearthed. Besides, Bairava and Saptamatrika sculptures were found at Sengalu-nir-medu. A trade guild inscription of 1192 AD issued during the 9th regnal year of Parakesari Viracholan, a Kongu Chola, was unearthed in the cultivated field. It refers to the trade guild Ainurruvar.

Another inscription found at Rajapuram speaks of an endowment made by the Pathinen-bhumi [tisai-ayirattu-ainurruvar] to the Siva temple (Seetharam Gurumoorthy 2007: 203).

The availability of early historical vestiges, coin hoards, graffiti marks, brick structures, trade guild inscriptions, etc., in and around Porunthal clearly pointed to the potentiality of the site.

**Porunthal and its archaeological settings**

The ancient site Porunthal lies on the left bank of the river Porunthalar at the distance of 5 km up the stream from Rajapuram. The site Rajapuram lies 7 km west of Palani town. One has to take diversion at Kalayamputtur on the Udumalaipettai road towards south for about 4 km to reach Rajapuram. The present village Porunthal lies on the right bank of the river. The shift from left bank to right bank would have taken place recently. All archaeological vestiges like habitation mound, Iron Age burials, historical temples and inscriptions lie on the left bank. The habitation mound covering an area of about 5.5 ha. of elevated field locally called Paci-Medu meaning bead mound (Paci > bead; Medu > mound) lies south of Marutha-kali-amman-koil. In support of this name, innumerable beads and bangles made of glass and paste were collected on the surface. The site might have survived for a longer period of time as bead manufacturing centre as attested to by the occurrence of fragments of tuyeres, slags and furnace material. Iron Age grave yard, consisting of stone circles entombing cist/urn burial numbering around 50, is noticed at the foothill near the present hamlets Chinnagandhipuram, Kavalapatti and Puliyamarattusettu. Dolmen sites were located at Periyaduraikombai and Salpulparai. Black-and-red ware, red ware and black ware were collected from more than 2 m deposit (Fig 4.7-8) (Map 13).

A fragmentary inscription datable to 12th century AD noticed on the slab, placed as a part of door jam, mentions this village as Porunthal.
The literary and epigraphical references mentioned above clearly suggest that this village was in existence since early historic times (Rajan and Yathees Kumar 2008:159-160).

**The problem to be investigated**

Archaeological explorations undertaken in this region particularly in the radius of 5 km around the archaeological sites Porunthal, Thamaraikulam and Rajapuram yielded important archaeological vestiges like glass bead manufacturing centre at Paci-Medu near Porunthal, Iron Age burials at Puliyanmattusettu, graffiti marks at Tukkottai near Thamaraikulam, trade guild inscriptions at Rajapuram and Thamaraikulam and urn burials with skeletal remains at several places around these three villages. These evidences demonstrate that the people started to occupy this region from the time of Iron Age and continued to live till date. Interestingly, all the archaeological sites of this region were located on both the banks of the major river.
Porunthalar. The ideal location of the trade centers would have attracted the attention of people to settle in this region as early as Iron Age. The limited excavations were carried out with an aim to understand cultural wealth, cross-cultural transmission and transformation that happened in this micro region. This excavation was made under the direction of Prof. K. Rajan during 2009 and 2010. I participated as site supervisor on following report of excavation is based on my personal observation and on the basis of the report authored Prof. by K. Rajan.

**Habitation Cuttings**

(Trenches A1, B1 and XN7)

The habitation mound locally called Paci-Medu meaning bead mound (Paci > bead; Medu > mound) covering an area of 5.5 ha lies on the left bank of the river Porunthalar. This mound could be seen from distance and also could be identified from the surrounding area as the mound looks ashy in colour. It is also known as Sambal-Medu meaning ashy mound. It has a gentle rise while approaching from the river bank. The river meanders here in S-shaped valley. Now the river flows in deep valley 10 m below the mound. It seems, at the time of occupation, the river might have flown over a meter below the level of habitation mound. The present level of the flow probably is due to continuous erosion of the river bed.

In total, three trenches were laid one on southern part of the mound and the remaining two at the central part. The two trenches covering an area of 50 sq.m. It was named as A1 and B1 each measuring 5x5 m and the total digging area comes to 10x5 m. The two trenches were laid adjacent to each other in east-west orientation. Both yielded similar cultural deposit. Therefore, in all practical purpose, the two trenches had been taken as a single cultural unit. The complete cultural deposit could not be ascertained due to limitations in digging. The natural soil could not be achieved in the trenches and the cultural deposit still persists at the time of closing the excavation. The material recovered from the limited digging suggests that it was a single cultural deposit covering the period between 1st century BC and 3rd century A.D. Further digging may push back the date to a few more centuries (Fig. 4.09-12)

The habitation yielded 250 cm cultural deposit but the digging area is restricted to a depth of 90 cm in the eastern part and to 140 cm in the western part due to availability of strong evidences in the form of floors, glass polishing furnace and
several associated important cultural material that required close attention. After removal of the humus, the trenches yielded loose ashy sandy soil admixture with a number of antiquities (table 1 and 2). These were exposed on the floor (Floor 1). A 5 cm thick floor (Floor 1) made of red gravel mixed with lime was exposed throughout the eastern part (trench B1) and partly in the western part (trench A1) of the digging area at the depth of 15 cm. On the surface of the floor, several antiquities like glass and paste beads, glass bangles, pendants, garnet, a copper bell, terracotta ear lopes, hopscotches, terracotta weight, gamesmen, stoppers, spouts, glass slag, bones, brick pieces, stone pebbles, a gold pendent, ivory weight, etc., were recovered (Fig. 4.13-17). On removal of the floor, the structure of the soil changes from loose ashy to light compact reddish in the eastern part and brownish in the western part. The change in colour is due to the existence of the floor. The eastern part of the digging area met with three floors whereas the western part met with refuses. Due to this fact, the western part of the trench yielded more objects than the eastern part. A floor (Floor 2) was encountered at the depth of 30 cm. A 20 cm thick hard floor made of gravel mixed with lime was unearthed again the eastern part of the trench by partly extending into the western side. It yielded a glass polishing furnace almost at the centre of the floor. The side (hearth) wall of the oval shaped furnace had crumbled inside the furnace. From the furnace alone nearly 60 glass beads were recovered. The hearths formed due to intensive and continuous heat process were noticed on the side walls of the furnace. The furnace was made below the floor surface and looks like an oval depression. Two holes probably used for placing the bellow were noticed. A flat stone, probably used by the glass-smith, was noticed in association with the furnace. On the southern end of the furnace, base of a 30 cm thick wall was noticed. This mud wall would have risen above the ground close to furnace to prevent air flow. Such short walls are being used even today in the furnace of a black smith. The wall oriented north-south was extended beyond furnace. In association with this furnace, several identical red ware bowls having wide mouth and narrow bottom were noticed. These bowls were placed around the furnace. These bowls might have been used in the workshop to keep the glass beads in heated condition. As per the present day glass manufacturing process, these bowls filled with sand are being used to keep the glass beads in mild heated condition. The bowls with sand and bead might have been placed around the furnace after removal from the furnace (Fig. 4.18). The sand might have been retained the heat for a longer period. The heat might have facilitated to
polish the glass beads or helped to remove the impurities attached to the surface of the glass bead. Several triangular terracotta pieces were recovered in association with these bowls. These terracotta pieces might have used to polish the glass surface. The sides of the triangular cakes were smoothened due to continuous rubbing. Close to this furnace, pits with ashy material were encountered along with such broken bowls and glass beads (Fig 4.19-23). The furnace and its associated material like red ware bowls and triangular cakes suggest that glass beads might not have manufactured at this place. The manufacture of beads might have taken place on some other part of this mound. The non-availability of glass slag, tuyeres and waste material clearly points to the fact this furnace might have restricted to the use of polishing the glass beads. There were seven postholes noticed at regular intervals along the floor. The round post holes having 25 cm diameter had a depth of 10-20 cm. The size of the porthole suggests that the poles inserted into these postholes could hold comparatively bigger roof. Interestingly, one of the postholes yielded a wood piece. Several hundreds of glass beads were recovered from the cultural deposit above this floor. A celt in association with a pot was recovered close to the floor on its eastern side (Fig. 4.24). Several pits were noticed close to the furnace. The pits generally carry the ashy material and a few broken bowls. Quite interestingly, the regular household pots used in the day to day domestic life were missing. All the pots recovered from these two trenches point to the industrial activity rather than domestic activity. The occurrence of more than 2000 beads also supports this view. The western part of the trench witnessed refuses of the furnace. A wooden piece, probably a part of Palmyra tree, was noticed on the edge of the floor. Such wooden pieces were noticed at several places in this part (trench A1). A solitary example of a russet coated ware was collected from this level. On removal of the floor, by leaving the furnace intact, another thick floor plastered with lime surfaced along with postholes. A brick piece measuring 7x21x42 cm was also recovered at this level. A terracotta human figurine, a gold piece, a copper coin, a terracotta humped bull, a female head and several pots and bowls were recovered. Besides, charred grains like paddy and seeds of a tamarind were recovered at this stage (Fig 4.25-30).

The total antiquities recovered from these two trenches are given in the table 1 and 2. In total 2441 antiquities were recovered from the limited area of digging. The important antiquities recovered from these trenches were beads made of glass, paste,
quartz, shell, garnet and terracotta. Bangle pieces came from glass and shell. The terracotta objects like ear lobes, ear rings, gamesmen, hooks, hopscotches, spindle whorls, balls and cart-wheels are some of the interesting objects recovered from these cuttings (Fig 4.31-32). In case of metal objects iron arrow heads, knives and nails were collected sparingly. Likewise a copper ring and a copper bell were also collected. Two pendants one made of gold and another of glass were also unearthed. The weights (presumably), made of quartz and ivory, were noteworthy. Among the antiquities, majority of them except glass beads were encountered in the upper level particularly above the second floor. Glass beads were mostly found in the earlier levels below 50 cm or one may say below the first floor. Majority of the beads started occurring from the second floor onwards. The glass bead polishing furnace was in fact associated with the second floor.

The other important findings that need close attention were of the terracotta human and animal figurines, a copper coin and glass beads. Out of 2441 objects recovered from these trenches, nearly 2275 were beads. Among them, glass beads predominate with 1744 beads. The paste beads, also one kind of glass bead, stand next in the queue with 463 beads. If one put together, the glass (1744) and paste beads (463) amounts to 2207 beads which corner 96 % of total beads. The 50 sq.m digging area amount to merely a 0.25 % of the total habitation mound. These beads were the refuses left by our ancestors, as the best ones were being used or sold. The main shapes were circular, tubular, barrel, bi-conical and collar beads. Among the shapes, the circular one predominates. There are various colours of glass beads like black (4%), blue (8%), green (80%), red (1%), violet (0.01%), white (1%) and yellow (6%). Among the colours, green dominates with 80 % of beads. All the paste beads were red in colour. The paste beads were distributed in the upper levels at a depth between 0-90 cm with much concentration at a depth between 70-90 cm. Whereas, the green glass beads found in large numbers in earlier layers. Out of 1397 beads, nearly two hundred beads come from the upper level and remaining 90% came from the lower level (Fig 4.33).

Five terracotta human figurines were recovered at a depth of 60-65cm. Among them, first one was a human figurine comparatively bigger in size. Second was a small human figurine, third was a female head and the remaining two were torso. Besides, a humped terracotta bull was also recovered. The well-modeled human
(male?) figurine with prominent human facial feature made out of pinching method has elongated body, broad shoulder and short legs, all suggestive of archaic figure generally dated to 1st century AD. Such unique terracotta figurines were not reported elsewhere in Tamil Nadu. The identification of this human figurine as a male or female needs some analysis. The figurine does not carry any physical features like the breast or genital. On appearance, it looks like a male figurine. However, Prof. P. Shanmugam of Madras University identified this as a female figurine. Close to it, another human figurine smaller in size, probably a child, was also recovered. In addition to these figurines, three torso figurines were recovered, one at the same level and remaining two at the depth of 50 cm. Besides, a female head was recovered 10 cm below the above said terracotta figurines. The head with curling hairs was shown with prominent elongated ear. The examination of these figurines suggested that these were probably brought into these areas from outside. Near to these figurines, a square (Sangam Age?) copper coin was also recovered. One side of the coin has semi-circular top. The fragile condition of the coin prevented to identify any royal insignia or any other symbols both on the reverse and obverse.

Besides the above two trenches laid on the central part of the mound, one more trench (Trench XN7) measuring 5.00x2.00 m was laid on the southern part of the habitation mound close to river bank to understand the extent of the habitation. After clearing the humus for about 5 cm, a brick structure was exposed on the northeastern corner of the trench. The exposed structure suggests that it was the corner of a house. The wall running southwest-northeast direction had a length of 152 cm (Arm-A) and breadth of 90 cm. The wall running southeast-northeast direction had a length of 197 cm (Arm-B) and breadth of 76 cm (Fig 4.34-36).

The northern main wall (Arm-A) and southern wall (Arm-B) was inter-locked at the northeast corner. A hard floor made of gravel mixed with lime associated with the third course of the brick structure was exposed at the depth of 18 cm. The floor was extended throughout the trench. On the floor, beads of quartz, paste, glass and ivory dice were recovered (Fig 4.37-38). Among the beads, paste beads dominate the scene with 68. Nearly, 39 glass beads of various colours like green, black, violet, brown, blue and white were recovered (table 5). Glass beads came next to paste beads. Quartz beads were only few totaling 3. One of the interesting features of this floor was the recovery of terracotta ear lobes of various sizes. The diameter of the ear
lobe various from 3 cm to 34 cm. Interestingly, the exposed side of the ear lobe had design. The circles, circle at the centre with radiating arms and dots on the outer edge were some of the designs. Ear rings identical to the ear lobes except the centre holes were also recovered. Terracotta balls and a miniature pot were recovered from the floor. Besides, sprinklers and hopscotch es were recovered from the floor along with quite a number of pots. The pots were mostly of bowls with narrow round base and out flared rim. Bones, iron and pieces were recovered from the surface of the floor. The floor was made of gravel mixed with lime rammed on the smoothened surface.

The digging was continued further after removal of the 14 cm thick floor. Two major pits (pit 1 and pit 2) appeared respectively near the eastern and western section of the trench. The pit 1 cut into the southern end of the brick structure thereby truncating its further extension. In the same manner the pit 2 did the damage to western extension of the wall, finally restricting the wall to the corner portion. Irrespective of the disturbance five courses of the brick wall were exposed. The brick wall was raised over a base made of 20 cm thick clay foundation. The bricks were laid using the English bond method. The size of the brick is 7x21x42 cm and 8x24x48 cm in the ratio of 1:3:6 cm (Fig 4.39). The stretcher and header method was adopted alternatively. The general observations made in the course of excavation suggest that the paste bead found more in upper level amount to 56 beads out of 68 beads and less in lower levels in which glass beads collected more in numbers. Likewise, the red ware were found more in numbers in the upper level followed by brown slipped ware and black-and-red ware. The black-and-red wares were recovered in very limited number at the lower most level. In total 237 objects were recovered from the limited dig of 100 cm cultural deposit. Of 237 objects, nearly 185 were beads made of glass (87), paste (81), terracotta (1), garnet (3), chowri (8) and quartz (8) (Fig 4.40-44).

Based on general observations made during the course of excavations and subsequent preliminary analysis of the objects recovered from the three trenches could be summarised as follows:

1. The site was an industrial site involved with manufacture of the glass beads
2. The inhabitants were rarely involved in agricultural production
3. Glass manufacturing activities are more at lower levels then in upper levels.
4. Green beads were manufactured in larger quantities in early period and paste beads in later periods.

5. The occurrence of terracotta human figurines suggests their external contact.

6. Though they were involved with the mass production of glass beads, their external trade contact was kept at minimal level. They might have involved in the manufacturing of beads rather than marketing. The marketing of these beads would have taken place at some other marketing sites, probably located along the trade routes.

**Excavation of Graves**

Iron Age graves consist of dolmens, urn burials, stone circles entombing simple cist with passage or transepted cist with passage or double cist with passage are noticed at five localities in and around Porunthal habitation mound. The first group of graves containing urn burials and dolmens are observed 3 km south of habitation mound at the foothill of Karadimalai on the right bank of the river Palar. The red ware urns having bulbous body, heavy rolled rim, short neck and base with mat impression are found exposed at several places. Besides, two groups of dolmens placed within a square wall, like Palani dolmen types, are also found close to urn burials (Fig 4.45). Generally, two east facing dolmens with passage are noticed within a square wall. These rectangular dolmens are built of multiple orthostats (Fig 4.46). The front and back side of the dolmen is built of single orthostat whereas the side walls are built of two orthostats. Some of graves are disturbed beyond recognition. This first group of graves could be approached from Palar village. These graves are presently submerged under Palar-Porunthalar dam. However, these graves are getting exposed during summer when water level goes very low. Rock paintings executed on the ceiling portion of rock shelter with white pigment representing cattle and trishul are noticed further east of the urn burial site. The shelter with a Spathamatirika sculptural panel is known as Kannimar koil.

The second group of dolmens and stone circles entombing cist burials are noticed 2 km south of the habitation on either banks of the river Porunthalar (Fig 4.47). The dolmens identical to the first group of dolmens are noticed on the left bank close to the foothill called Sal-pul-parai. Nearly ten group of dolmens are noticed in highly disturbed condition. However, three are in a better state of preservation. The
Stone circles entombing either simple cist or transepted cist are noticed close to the dolmen site in the water spread area of the dam locally called Thada-kulam. There are about eight circles get exposed during summer. These chambers are enclosed with heavy capstone.

The third groups of graves are noticed 1.5 km southwest of the habitation close to the village Puliyampatti which lies 17 km south of Palani. The stone circles entombing cist and urn are found on eastern side of the village and near the small hillock called Kuttikaradu (Fig 4.48). Around this hillock more than 50 burials are located spreading in an area of 3 ha. One of the disturbed cists yielded urn, pots of black-and-red ware, plates and bowls of black ware and pots of red ware. The burial site was partially disturbed due to cultivation. The stone circle measures 5 to 7 m in diameter. Besides, group of dolmens built within a square wall, built of heavy granite blocks in two or more courses, are noticed further 1 km up on the hill close to Karutha-Perumal temple.

The fourth group of graves containing exclusively dolmens is found 4 km west of habitation mound at a place called Periyamataiodai. Group of dolmens, mostly two in numbers, are built within a square wall. These dolmens are identical to the dolmens of Palani hills. One solitary example is also noticed on the opposite hillock (Fig 4.49).

The fifth group consists of more than 60 circles noticed 2.5 km west of habitation mound at the foot hill of Tannasiyappanmalai (Fig 4.50). This graveyard can also be approached from Neikarappatti which lies on the Palani-Kolumam main road at a distance of 7 km west of Palani town. The burial complex is located close to the village Chinnagandhipuram which lies 8 km south of Neikarappatti. The place is locally called as Pandiyankadu. The small rivulet Pachchaiyar flows 2 km north of the site. The graveyard covering an area of 2 ha. lies at the eastern side of the foothill of Tannasiyappanmalai. They are found on the either side of the road leading from Neikarappatti to Puliyampatti. At the time of exploration in the year 2007, there were 60 burials. There would have been many more such circles. But due to cultivation, several graves were ransacked. In 2009, five graves were found in less disturbed condition. Besides, one more burial complex is noticed further south of this burial complex close to the village Puliyampatti.
The graves are distributed in north-south axis along the foothill in the contour between 230 and 250 m MSL. One could see some pattern within the distribution. The graves comparatively bigger in size, elegant in architecture and rich in graves are found in the northern part of the graveyard. The limited excavations suggest that these graves might have been erected for the elite. In total, four graves (one grave [Meg-I] in 2009 and three graves [Meg-II, III and IV in 2010] were opened for investigations (Rajan 2009 and 2010).

MEGALITH - I

Among the graves, the one found in the cultivated field on the eastern side of the main road was selected for excavation in May 2009. The capstone of this grave was missing and the northern and southern orthostat got exposed. The east facing transepted cist with passage was placed almost at the centre of the circle. This circle measuring 12.50 m diameter was built of 32 considerably huge boulders. The diameter of the boulders varied from 35 cm to 80 cm. The boulders were placed at the ground level at regular intervals and the gap between the boulders was filled with small and medium sized boulders. However, at several places, particularly in the north western part and south eastern part of the circle, the boulders were displaced and dislocated (Fig 4.51).

Method of Construction

Cist

Based on construction of the cist, it appears that a rectangular transept slab was placed in east-west orientation on the floor in upright position. On the northern and southern side of the transept slab, two rectangular floor slabs were placed. Against this transept slab, two vertical slabs respectively measuring 105 x 68 x 15 cm and 95 x 63 x 16 cm were placed in north-south direction on either side of the porthole of the transept slab, resulting with the division of southern chamber into three square compartments. The eastern most compartment measures 88 x 54 cm. The centre compartment measures 105 x 88 cm. The western compartment measures 88 x 79 cm. The two vertical slabs had a “U” shaped porthole (33 x 28 cm) on the top edge almost at the centre of the slab. A rectangular slab covering the central and eastern compartments was rested on two vertical slabs with “U” shaped porthole. The southern orthostat was rested against these three slabs. The western orthostat was
placed in a slanting position against the transept slab. The northern orthostat was placed in a slanting position against the western orthostat. Finally the eastern orthostat was placed against the eastern end of the northern and southern orthostats. This construction resulted in formation of a rectangular transepted cist having two chambers on its northern and southern side. The rectangular cist measures 177 x 129 cm at the top and 301 x 187 cm at the base. The broadness of the chamber at the base was due to the slanting position of orthostats. The size of the northern chamber was 240 x 70 cm with height of 219 cm. The size of the southern chamber was 298 x 105 cm with height of 239 cm. The transept slab had a trapeze shaped porthole. It was made almost at the centre of the transept slab connecting the northern and southern chamber. The porthole had a breadth of 42 cm at the top and 48 cm at the bottom with height of 44 cm. Another main trapeze shaped porthole measuring 32 cm at the top and 40 cm at the bottom with the height of 47 was found on the eastern slab against the northern chamber connecting passage and the cist (Fig 4.52-54).

Passage

A passage (240 x 110 cm) was made against the northern chamber on its east by placing three slabs to form a box-like structure. The northern and southern slabs were placed vertically against the eastern orthostat on either side of the porthole. The eastern slab was placed against the southern slab. A slab, closing a porthole, was placed in the passage. This closing slab was rested on two small supportive slabs. The closing slab could not cover the entire porthole, leaving a gap on the top. The builders made an attempt to close this gap with rubble (Fig 4.55).

Placement of Grave Goods

The grave goods were placed inside the northern and southern chambers and in the passage. Besides, grave goods were also noticed outside the chamber but mostly within the circle. A few grave goods placed in south-east corner were also observed outside the circle but close to the boulders. Grave goods were placed at two levels. The first level of grave goods noticed on the floor slab and the second level of grave goods noticed at the porthole level. It can be also conceived in other way that the first level of grave goods were placed opposite to the porthole scooped out in the transept slab. The second level was observed opposite to the main porthole. In northern chamber, all the grave goods except a pot were placed at the floor level.
Only one pot was placed at the second level. In southern chamber, the grave goods were placed at the floor level of all the three compartments but in a limited quantity. However, several grave goods were placed on the bench slab at the second level. The ritual performed in this grave was of high standard. For the purpose of better understanding, it has been described as the ritual was performed (Fig 4.56).

**Northern Chamber**

In northern chamber, several pots, four-legged jars, plates, ring stands, bowls, miniature bowls, stirrups, beads, arrow heads, skeletal remains, swords, pots and knives were placed on the floor slab (Fig 4.57). It seems the grave goods were placed from the western most part of the chamber. The most important thing to be observed is that mouths of all the pots were placed facing west. The description is made here in order of placement i.e. from west to east as done by the ritual performers. In the north-western corner of the chamber, a 93 cm tall four-legged jar with two identical graffiti marks engraved at equal distance of a red slipped ware was placed in a vertical position on the floor slab (Fig 4.58). It is rested against the western orthostat. One of the most interesting features of this legged jar is the occurrence of paddy, close to 2 kg, in comparatively better state of preservation (Fig 4.59-60). Close to this four-legged jar, a deep dish with graffiti containing paddy was placed. A red slipped pot was placed inside this dish, but over the paddy. In the southwest corner of the chamber, a black-and-red ware bowl was rested on the floor slab. Near to this bowl, a black slipped ring stand was noticed. Over this bowl and the ring stand, a black-and-red ware plate was observed. Close to this plate, on the southwest corner, a red slipped ring stand was placed in a little slanting position with mouth facing west. On its east, two four-legged jars of red slipped ware were rested, of which, one was in intact position and another was completely crumbled. Over this crumbled legged jar, a bone piece, probably a humerus, was placed (Fig 4.61-62). Above this piece of bone, two black slipped ring stands, one in vertical position and another in horizontal position was noticed. Bone piece, probably a part of knee, was placed inside the ring stand. A red slipped pot was placed on this ring stand. Another black slipped ring stand was placed in horizontal position. Further up, two ring stands, one was of a red slipped ware and another was of a black slipped ware was placed. On the latter ring stand, a red slipped pot was rested. A black-and-red ware conical vase with incipient rim was placed over and above these objects. On the whole, five ring stands were
placed one upon the other. On its left, close to conical vase, two four-legged jars were placed in a slanting position. One black-and-red ware plate was sandwiched between the orthostat and the legged jar. All the above grave goods were packed in a limited area on the western most part of the northern chamber. Next to this, on its east, the most important ring stand was noticed. This red slipped ring stand was placed in a vertical position on the floor slab. Around this 22 etched carnelian beads were placed. Of these 22 beads, two were button-shaped and remaining 20 beads were barrel in shape (Fig 4.63). Further, 4 more etched carnelian beads, a small sword and an arrow head were placed inside the ring stand. The tip of the sword and the arrow head placed pointing upward. Of the 4 beads, one is button-shaped but broken. An iron sword, in east-west orientation with tip on its west, was placed on northern side of the above ring stand. The sword was placed close to northern orthostat. One of the important points to be observed here is that all the ring stands placed in this grave were made fresh and interned as grave goods but the ring stand under discussion was a used one, probably, belonging to the deceased and upon his death, this would have been brought and placed in the chamber and some important ritual might have performed around this ring stand. Above all, the ring stand under discussion had five post-firing graffiti marks engraved on the exterior surface of the shoulder portion of the ring stand. Four marks engraved on one side and the remaining one was on the opposite side. The four marks were placed facing west and the remaining solitary graffito on its opposite facing east. Of the four graffiti marks, three graffiti marks are Tamil-Brahmi scripts reading va-y-ra (Fig 4.64). These are smaller in size when compared with the fourth graffiti engraved next to these three scripts. The last symbol is identical to the one, both in size and shape that were found in most of the pots placed as grave goods in this grave. The fifth symbol engraved on the opposite side of the ring stand was identical to the fourth symbol. The Tamil-Brahmi script, graffiti marks, carnelian beads, an iron sword and an arrow head found in association with the ring stand clearly point to the importance given by them. This ring stand, as said above, was noticed close to human bone pieces placed over a broken legged jar and a ring stand. The contextual position of the ring stand clearly points to its importance.

Above this, a small black-and-red ware bowl with paddy was placed in association with many plate pieces of black slipped ware. Close to it, a long conical black-and-red ware vase and a black slipped ring stand was observed.
In the mid part of the chamber, several broken plates of black-and-red ware and black slipped ware and seven black slipped ring stands of unique shape (like a bowl-on-stand) were observed. These plate pieces and ring stands were found opposite to the porthole of the transept slab. A solitary example of barrel shaped etched carnelian bead was collected at this level. Over these plates, two four-legged jars rested in a slanting position with mouth facing west, a deep bowl, two pots and a ring stand were placed. All these specimens were of red slipped ware. Near to it along the orthostat, two long iron swords with a bunch of arrow heads close to its tip portion were observed. Besides, three set of iron stirrups were also observed. Over these iron objects, bone pieces were placed in a black-and-red ware plate. In addition to this, a bone piece (tibia/femur) was noticed close to the porthole of the transept slab.

In the eastern part of the chamber, a miniature red ware pot, a black-and-red ware bowl, two red slipped pot, a black-and-red ware bowl, four black slipped ring stands and a bottom portion of red slipped four-legged jar were placed on the floor slab. Over these objects, part of a skull, femur and humerus were seen (Fig 4.65-66). Close to bone pieces, a black-and-red ware miniature bowl, a red slipped pot and a black slipped ring stand were observed. Finally, a black-and-red ware plate was noticed in the northeast corner of the chamber. Adjacent to the skeletal remains, a black-and-red ware bowl and a red slipped pot were exposed. The red slipped pot had two holes on its body portion. These holes resemble the holes observed in the present day ritual.

The general observation made in the northern chamber suggests that the grave goods were piled up in the western part of the chamber starting from the western most end of the chamber. The grave goods stacked in the chamber extended up to the mid part up to the porthole level of the transept slab. To avoid any tilt, was some rubble below the pots. After doing this ritual, put the important objects like skeletal remains, swords, arrow heads, stirrups and few pots related to the ritual might have been placed.

**Southern Chamber**

The southern chamber was divided into three parts/compartments by placing two vertical slabs on either side of the porthole of the transept slab as described above. In the western part of the chamber, an iron sword was inserted in a slanting
position with tip facing upward in the gap between the central transept slab and the floor slab. Close to it, a ring stand, a broken pot and a bowl of red slipped ware, a plate of black-and-red ware and an iron knife were placed in the eastern end of the western compartment. A slab was placed on these objects covering entire grave goods. On this closing slab, a few skeletal remains were placed along with a few arrow heads and a sword in the northern part of the slab. In the central compartment, fragmentary part of a skull, a long bone (humerus?), an iron sword, a black-and-red ware pot and a few potsherds were noticed opposite to the porthole. These were covered with soil. In the eastern compartment, three ring stands were noticed of which one was made of black slipped ware and the remaining two were red slipped ware. One of the red slipped ring stands carries a big red slipped pot placed in horizontal position facing west. There was a broken red slipped pot close to it placed facing north. All the three compartments were filled with soil to the level of vertical slabs. As stated above, a rectangular slab was placed on these two vertical slabs covering the entire eastern and central compartments and a part of western compartment. Over this closing slab, skeletal remains mixed with beads of carnelian, quartz, agate and steatite were noticed along with an iron sword (Fig 4.67-74).

Over these objects and skeletal remains, several pots were piled up starting from the eastern most part of the chamber. Two red slipped four-legged jars were placed one above the other facing opposite directions. Each legged jar carried a huge black-and-red ware plate. Around these jars, three red slipped pots were placed. Further, two deep black-and-red ware bowls were noticed close to the jar on its southeast corner. Besides, two more black-and-red ware deep bowls; a black slipped ring stand and a red slipped ring stand were observed on its west.

The entire grave goods of this grave were placed opposite to the level of main porthole or below it. These objects were covered with a thick soil cover, up to the top level of the chamber. The chamber might have been covered with a capstone which was missing at the time of excavations (Fig 4.75-76).

The Passage

In the passage, a iron sword, a four-legged jar and a red slipped pot were recovered opposite to the porthole. The passage was packed with compact hard clay
there by indicating that they ensured the protection of this grave from any pilferage in later days.

**Graffiti marks**

A double line “U” shaped graffiti mark was found engraved on the shoulder portion of the grave goods. This post-firing graffiti was noticed on the shoulder portion of the pot on its exterior surface. Most of the pots carry two identical graffiti marks engraved at equal distance. Of the two identical marks, one was found at the front and another on its opposite side. Interestingly, the pot carrying graffiti mark was placed in such a way that one mark was facing east and another facing west (Fig 4.77-78).

**MEGALITH - II**

Megalith – II (MEG – II) is located (77° 27’ 51”E; 10° 23’ 48” N) 123m southeast of MEG-I in the cultivated field on the eastern side of the main road. It was selected for excavation in May 2010. The capstone of this grave was missing and top edges of the orthostats were exposed at a few points and the cist projected 100 cm above the ground level. However, a thick slab was found on the southern side of the passage, probably a part of the capstone removed by the cultivators. The east facing transepted cist with passage was placed almost at the centre of the circle. This circle measuring 12.50 m diameter was built of 36 considerably huge boulders. The diameter of the boulders is varied from 35 cm to 80 cm. The boulders were placed on the ground level. Bigger boulders were placed at regular intervals and the gap between the boulders was filled with small and medium sized boulders. At the ground level, fragmentary pieces of a four-legged jar, a black-and-red ware bowl and iron objects like a sword and arrow heads are noticed on southern side of the passage and in front of the southern chamber of the transepted cist (Fig 4.79).

**Method of Construction**

**Cist**

Based on construction of the cist, it appears that a rectangular transept slab was placed first in east-west orientation on the floor of the pit in upright position. On the northern and southern side of the transept slab, two rectangular floor slabs were placed. The western orthostat was placed against the transept slab in north-south orientation. Two vertical slabs serving as northern and southern orthostats were
placed in east-west orientation against the western orthostat. Two eastern orthostats were placed on either side of the transept slab respectively against the northern and southern orthostats resulting in the formation of a transept cist facing east. The eastern end of the transept slab was projected beyond the chamber. The whole exercise resulted in formation of a transepted cist having almost equal size of southern and northern chambers. The northern chamber measures 203x100 cm and the southern measures 200x90 cm. The transept slab had two round portholes connecting the southern and northern chambers of the cist. The southern chamber was further divided into lower and upper chambers by placing a rectangular slab covering the entire chambers at the depth of 158 cm and 65 cm above the floor slab. This slab stands on a series of thin vertical slabs placed against the inner wall of the southern chamber. These small vertical slabs served like legs of a bench/cot. Two small vertical slabs were placed against the western wall of the southern chamber. Two more such slabs were placed one against the southern wall but on its eastern end and another against the eastern wall. In total, these four small vertical slabs standing on the floor slab hold the rectangular slab dividing the lower and upper chambers of the southern chamber. This slab was placed at bottom level of the upper porthole of the transept slab. Thus, the lower and upper round portholes respectively connected the lower and upper chambers of the southern chamber with northern chamber. The lower round porthole had a diameter 60 cm whereas the upper porthole had 70 cm. The gap between the lower and upper porthole is 15 cm. One more round porthole having a diameter of 70 cm is also noticed at the centre of the eastern orthostat of the northern chamber connecting the passage on the east (Fig 4.8-83).

Passage

A rectangular passage with the maximum size of 220x126 cm was constructed against the porthole of the northern chamber on its eastern side. This passage was made by placing three slabs to form a box like structure. A rectangular slab measuring 88x92x8 cm with top edge tilted towards east was noticed in the passage. This slab served as a closing slab of the porthole. The closing slab, presently could not cover the entire porthole due to outward tilt and leaving a gap on the top. However, this slab would have closed perfectly the porthole at the time of construction (Fig 4,84).
Placement of Grave Goods

The grave goods were placed inside the northern and southern chambers and in the passage. Besides, grave goods were also noticed outside the chamber but mostly within the circle. A few grave goods were placed in south-east corner. Grave goods were placed at two levels. The first level of grave goods was noticed on the floor slab and the second level of grave goods noticed at the porthole level. In case of northern chamber, almost all the grave goods except few pots were placed at the floor level. In case of southern chamber, the grave goods were placed at the floor level of the upper chamber. The lower chamber did not yield any grave goods. The ritual performed in this grave was of high standard. For the purpose of better understanding, the placement of grave goods is described as the ritual was performed at the time of internment.

Northern Chamber

In northern chamber, several pots, four-legged jars, conical vases, plates, ring stands, bowls, miniature bowls, arrow heads, swords, stirrups and knives were placed on the floor slab at the depth of 235 cm. (Most of the graves goods were broken and crumbled due to the thrust of the overlying quartz blocks.) It seems, the grave goods were placed from west to east (Fig 4.85). One pair of iron stirrup was placed in the southwest corner of the chamber. Around this stirrup, arrow heads were placed. Over these objects, black-and-red ware bowl with negligible number of skeletal remains are noticed. Close to these objects, four-legged jars of red slipped ware was rested touching the inner wall of the western orthostat. Interestingly, one of the four-legged jars kept in the northwest corner of the chamber yielded remnants of paddy. Next to these objects, three black-and-red ware bowls, two ring stands of black polished ware, two black-and-red ware conical vases were observed. Two black-and-red ware conical vases were placed close to the inner wall of the northern orthostat. At the centre of the chamber, just opposite to the lower porthole of the transept slab, were several interesting grave goods. Two iron swords and one dagger with tip facing southeast were placed on the floor slab. Close to this, iron arrow heads are also observed. Over these iron objects, two red slipped pot, five black polished ring stands, one red slipped ring stand, one narrow necked red slipped pot, two four-legged jars, one black ware pot and one black-and-red ware bowls were kept on a floor slab(Fig 4.86).
One of the important features observed in the four-legged jar is the presence of the painting executed on the exterior surface of the four-legged jars. The paintings were restricted to both white and black pigments. The paintings were executed on the shoulder and body portion of the four-legged jars. The V-shaped design in black pigment with white dots was executed at the shoulder just below the grooving. There are seven dots in each V-design portion. Below this, another identical V-design was executed in white pigment with black dots. Below this garland-like design, a row of horse in black pigment was executed. Below the horse, another row of peacocks was executed using both black and white pigments. Below this row, a leaf design is shown. The edges and the mid rib of the leaf were painted with black pigment whereas the other ribs were executed with white pigments (Fig 4.87-88).

On the eastern part of the chamber, several interesting grave goods are unearthed. Two iron swords with tip facing southeast were placed on the floor slab. Close to this, iron arrow heads were also observed. Over these iron objects, two red slipped pot, five black polished ring stands, two narrow necked red slipped pot, a four-legged jar, two black polished ware plates, one black-and-red ware pot and two black-and-red ware bowls were rested on a floor slab.

On the whole a pair of stirrup, several arrow heads, four swords, one dagger, five red slipped ware four-legged jars, five black-and-red ware bowls, two black-and-red ware conical vases, four red slipped ware pots, one black ware pot, ten black polished ware ring stands, three narrow necked red slipped ware pots, two black polished ware plates and two red slipped ware ring stands were collected. However, there are some more grave goods which could not be recognized due to its fragmentary nature.

The general observation made in the northern chamber suggests that the grave goods were piled up starting from the western most part of the chamber. Interestingly, sometimes they placed small rubble below the pots, probably to arrest the tilt. One of the interesting features observed in this chamber is the total absence of beads.

Southern Chamber

The southern chamber was further divided into two chambers/compartment (lower and upper) by placing a horizontal slab in the middle as described above. The lower chamber did not carry any appreciable grave goods except a black-and-red ware
bowl and a black polished ware ring stand placed on the floor slab. The ring stand was placed close to the inner wall of the southern orthostat opposite to the lower porthole. The bowl was placed on the side of the porthole close to inner wall of the transept slab. The lower chamber was completely covered with sand up to the bottom edge of the upper porthole. Over this sand packing, the floor slab rested on four short vertical slabs serving as legs. The placement of this slab divided the southern chamber into two chambers. The upper chamber had two four-legged jars placed in opposite direction in the south-eastern corner of the chamber. A black-and-red ware bowl was placed above these four-legged jars. A red slipped ware pot and a black polished ware ring stand were placed in the mid part of the chamber opposite to the upper porthole.

The entire chambers were covered with a thick fine soil cover, up to the top level of the chamber. The capstone was missing at the time of excavations. Some of the stone blocks are found close to the chamber suggesting that these stone blocks are probably part of the capstone (Fig 4.89-90).

The Passage

In the passage, a red slipped ware ring stand, iron pieces and a four-legged jar are unearthed opposite to porthole. All these grave goods are fragmentary in nature. The passage was packed with tight hard-to-dig clay there by indicating that they ensured the protection of this grave from any pilferage in later days.

Graffiti marks

Post-firing graffiti marks are noticed on the shoulder portion of the pot on its exterior surface. A double line “U” shaped graffiti mark is found engraved on the shoulder portion of the grave goods. In one of the pots, an “x” shaped graffiti mark is found engraved before the “U” shaped design. Most of the pots carry two identical graffiti marks engraved at equal distance. Of the two identical marks, one is found at front and another on its opposite side. Interestingly, the pots carrying graffiti marks were placed in such a way one mark facing east and another facing west.

The grave MEG-II is important in many ways. For the first time, one could observe the representation of the peacock and horse in painting executed on grave goods. The ritual significance of the peacock and horse could not be ascertained due to the limited nature of the evidence. However, one may recall that this area is known for peacocks as attested in the Sangam literature. One of the legends associated with
the Sangam Age Vel chieftain Pekan, who ruled this part of the territory, speaks on the generous act of the chieftain. According to the Sangam literature Purananuru (141:10-12; 145:1-3), the ruler Pekan swath ed a blanket to protect the peacock from the cold. The peacock also became vehicle (Vahana) of the Lord Muruga, one of the ancient deities of the Tamils. As stated elsewhere, Porunthal village is considered as part of present pilgrimage town Palani, the abode of god Muruga. The ancient name of the Palani is Pothini. One of the important clan groups settled in this area is Aviyar kudi. But the association of peacocks with grave is more important and its significance is yet to be ascertained in the present context. One may recall the existence of peacock motif on the Harappan cemetery H pottery.

MEGALITH - III

The grave Megalith –III (MEG-III) is located 34 m west of MEG-I at the foot of the hill called of Tannasi-malai. It is a stone circle having a diameter of 8 m entombing double cist with passage on the East. The circle is built of double circle. The inner circle is built of huge boulders and the outer circle is built of small boulders. These small boulders served as supporting boulders for the inner circle. Several small boulders of the circle were removed by the cultivators recently. The inner circle is almost found intact and it contains 27 boulders.

The two cists were placed at the centre of circle looking towards northeast at the angle of 20° degree deviated from east towards north. This deviation is probably due to their observation of the rising Sun at the time of disposal of the dead. Therefore, this grave would have been erected in the month of July-August. These two cists were constructed adjacent to each other with a gap of 42 cm. A pit was dug at the centre of circle to the diameter of 5.40 m. At the time of excavation, the capstone is missing and the top edges of some of the orthostats are exposed. Huge boulders were dumped over the cist by the cultivators. The total length of the cist including the passage is 3.80 m. The soil cover around the cist is removed to the depth of 90 cm to reach the ancient ground level. The cists are found in fragile condition due to the poor quality of the stone and also due to the weight of the capstone. The orthostats had developed cracks and crumbled at many places. For instances, the eastern orthostat of the chambers was crumbled at the porthole level (Fig 4.91-92).
**Northern cist**

Northern cist is made up of four orthostats measuring 220x100 cm in size. Based on the position of various orthostats and their natural inclination, one presumes that the southern orthostat was planted first in slanting position without support of any orthostat. The western orthostat was placed against the southern orthostat. Then the northern orthostat was planted vertically against the western orthostat. The eastern orthostat was placed against the northern and southern orthostats. The upper part of this orthostat is broken at the porthole level. However, the remnants of the trapeze shaped porthole are observed at the centre of the eastern orthostat. Owing to the fragile nature of the orthostat, the complete shape of the porthole could not be ascertained. However, the close observation of the orthostat provides a clue to understand the shape and dimension of the porthole. The porthole measures 47 cm in length at the base, 32 cm in length at the top and the height measures to 52 cm. This porthole was covered with a closing slab from the passage. The cist was partially exposed above the ground level. At the ground level the cist measures 220 cm in length and 110 cm in breath.

The passage placed on the east is almost trapeze in shape with eastern part is shorter in breadth when comparing with western part. The northern slab of the passage was placed against the eastern orthostat at its northern end. The southern orthostat was placed in north-east and south-west orientation against the eastern orthostat at its southern end. The eastern closing slab was placed against the northern and southern slabs of the passage. The passage measures 110 cm at the western end and 52 cm at the eastern end. The east-west length of the passage is 115 cm. The total length of the cist including the passage comes to 3.80 m (Fig 4.93).

**Southern cist**

Southern cist is made up of four orthostats. The southern orthostat was planted without support of any orthostats and it was tilted inwardly. The tilt was caused probably due to the non-supportive nature of the slabs. The western orthostat was placed against the southern orthostat. The northern orthostat was planted vertically against the western orthostat. The eastern orthostat was placed against the northern and southern orthostats. The trapeze shaped porthole is observed at the centre of the eastern orthostat. The basal part of the porthole measures 49 cm in length and the top
measures 40 cm. The total height of the porthole is 51 cm. This porthole was closed with a slab from the passage. The cist is partially exposed above the ground. At the ground level, the cist measures 190 cm in length and 60 cm breadth. The passage placed on the east is almost rectangular in shape measuring 110x65 cm in size. The northern and southern slabs were placed on eastern orthostat of the cist opposite to the northern and eastern orthosats. The eastern closing slab was placed against the northern and southern slabs of the passage. The total length of the cist including the passage is 3.50 m (Fig 4.94).

**Placement of grave goods**

This grave is rich in grave goods. The first level of grave goods appeared at the depth of 90-93 cm. Four urns with several pots were unearthed from the two cists. In both the cists, the grave goods were packed without leaving any gap. The placement of grave goods is being discussed as they were placed at the time of burying the dead.

**Northern cist**

Two conical shaped pits were dug into the bed rock below the floor in the northwest and southeast corner of the chamber to accommodate two urns. The pit dug at the western end of the chamber is conical in shape with broader mouth on the top and narrow base at the bottom, probably to accommodate a few grave goods. The pit (Pit-1) measures 74 cm at the mouth, 40 cm at the base and 45 cm in depth. Otherwise the second pit dug in the eastern part had perfect conical shape. The pit (Pit-2) measures 55 cm at the mouth, 25 cm at the base and 60 cm in depth. First set of grave goods were placed in the western pit of the chamber. Pit-1 contains a bowl of black polished ware, three ring stands of which two are black polished ware and remaining one is a red slipped ware. Over these objects, two black-and-red ware conical vases and a black-and-red ware bowl were also noticed. Above this pit containing the grave goods, a huge urn (Urn No. 1) measuring 125 cm in height, 85 cm in breadth at the shoulder portion and mouth with a diameter of 49 cm was placed in horizontal position with mouth facing southwest corner of the chamber. The urn had a button shaped bottom measuring 10 cm in diameter. The thumb impression running all over the body in circular form is noticed 17 cm below the rim. The red ware urn contains skeletal remains at the base. It is a disarticulated secondary burial consisting of the
skull, fibula, humerus, tibia, mandible and many other small fragmentary bones. Several carnelian and quartz beads were placed around these skeletal remains. Further, a black-and-red ware conical vase is noticed. Around this urn several four-legged jars are observed. Two four-legged jars are noticed below the neck and shoulder portion of the urn but on its eastern side. Of the two, one is facing east and another facing northwest. Four four-legged jars are noticed below the neck and shoulder portion of the urn but on its western side. Below these four-legged jars, a sword was placed on the floor slab in north-south orientation with the tip facing north. In the northwest corner, one more four-legged jar was placed. All these legged jars were placed facing north. A black polished ware ring stand was placed in the southwest corner of the chamber. Two more legged jars are noticed in the northwest corner below the belly portion of the urn.

Another urn (Urn No. 2) was placed in the southeast corner of the chamber. This was vertically placed in a conical shaped pit (Pit-2) dug for the purpose in the floor of the chamber. The urn (Urn No. 1) measures 100 cm in height, 90 cm in breadth at the belly portion and mouth with a diameter of 55 cm. The body portion was exposed above the floor and the bottom portion was accommodated in the pit. Inside the urn, skeletal remains in disarticulated form containing skull, fibula, humerus, tibia and many other small fragmentary bones were placed at the base. An iron sword with tip facing down was placed close to these skeletal remains. A red ware pot and a black-and-red ware plate were placed. Around this urn several grave goods are noticed. An iron sword was placed on its south in the gap between the inner wall of the southern orthostat and the body portion of the urn. The sword touching the wall was placed in a horizontal position with tip facing west. On the western side, in the gap between the urn no. 1 and urn no. 2, five ring stands, four red slipped pots, one four-legged jar and one black-and-red ware conical vase are noticed. Of the five ring stands, four are black polished ware and the remaining one is a red slipped ware (Fig 4.95).

Southern cist

Two conical shaped pits were dug into the bed rock below the floor in the northwest and southeast corner of the chamber to accommodate two urns. The pit dug at the western end of the chamber is conical in shape with broader mouth on the top and narrow base at the bottom, probably to accommodate a few grave goods. The pit
(Pit-3) measures 74 cm at the mouth, 25 cm at the base and 45 cm in depth. Otherwise the second pit dug in the eastern part had perfect conical shape. This pit contains three bowls of black polished ware placed one upon the other at the bottom of the pit. A black-and-red ware conical vase facing south was placed over these bowls. The bottom tip of the conical vase was perfectly seated on the black-and-red ware bowl. Above this pit, a huge urn (Urn No. 3) was placed in horizontal position with mouth facing southeast. The urn has a total height of 100 cm with mouth diameter of 41 cm with heavy rolled rim. A thumb impression running around the body is noticed on the shoulder portion, 18 cm below the rim. The urn was made of three parts i.e., base, bottom and top and all the three were luted together to get the complete shape. The body portion of the urn touches the rim of the conical vase placed below the urn in the pit. A black-and-red ware deep bowl is noticed in front of the urn. The rim (mouth) of the deep bowl was attached with the inner wall of the southern orthostat of the chamber. The upper part of the urn was filled with fine sand up to the belly portion. The basal portion of the urn contains the skeletal remains but in a very fragile condition. Thirteen paste beads were collected along with skeletal remains.

Another urn (Urn No. 4) was placed perfectly in a vertical position in a conical pit dug in the southeast corner of the chamber. The pit (Pit-2) measures 55 cm at the mouth, 25 cm at the base and 60 cm in depth. The urn (Urn No. 4) measures 100 cm in height, 62 cm in breadth at the belly portion and mouth with a diameter of 40 cm. Thumb impression is observed on the shoulder portion, 20 cm below the rim. The body portion was exposed above the floor and the bottom portion was accommodated in the pit. Around this urn several grave goods like four-legged jars, bowls, plates, conical vases, deep bowls and ring stands are noticed. In the gap between the two urns, a four-legged jar of a red slipped ware was placed with mouth attached to the southern orthostat. Next to this, a black-and-red ware bowl, plate and a conical vase were placed in the mid part of the chamber between the two urns. A big black-and-red ware basin and black polished ware ring stand were placed close to the northern orthostat. On the northern side of the urn (Urn no. 4), a black polished ware ring stand, two black-and-red ware bowls and a four-legged jar of red slipped ware are found in the gap between the urn and the northern orthostat. An iron sword touching the northern orthostat in a slanting position with the tip facing upward towards the seat is observed. On the eastern side, in the gap between urn (no.4) and the eastern
orthostat, two black-and-red ware bowls, a four-legged jar, a deep black-and-red ware plate and a ring stand of black polished ware are observed (Fig 4.96-99).

MEGALITH - IV

The grave Megalith -IV (MEG-IV) is located 11m south of MEG-III at the foot hill of Tannasi-malai. It is a stone circle having a diameter of 10.20 m entombing double cist with passage on the east. The circle is built of huge boulders, however the eastern part of the circle was disturbed due to cultivation. These two cists were constructed adjacent to each other at the centre of the circle with the gap of 40-50 cm. A pit having a diameter of 4.30 m was dug at the centre of circle to accommodate these two cists. The capstone is missing and the top edges of some of the orthostats were exposed. Huge boulders were dumped over the cist by the cultivators. Both length of the cist including the passage is 3.60 m. The two cists are found in fragile condition due to the poor quality of the stone and also probably due to the weight of the capstone. The orthostats had developed cracks and crumbled at many places (Fig 4.100).

Northern cist

Northern cist is made up of four orthostats placed in anti-clockwise direction. It seems the southern orthostat was planted first in a vertical position. The western orthostat was placed against the southern orthostat. The northern orthostat was rested against the western orthostat. The eastern orthostat was placed against the northern orthostat. The trapeze shaped porthole is observed at the centre of the eastern orthostat. Due to the fragmentary nature of the orthostat, the exact size of the porthole could not be ascertained. However, the visible part of the porthole suggests that it looks trapezium in shape. The cist was partially exposed above the ground level. At the ground level, the cist measures 170 cm in length and 105 cm in breath.

The passage constructed on the east is rectangular in shape and comparatively bigger in size if one compares with the cist. The northern slab of the passage was placed at the northern end of eastern orthostat. The southern slab was placed at the southern end of the eastern orthostat. The eastern closing slab was rested against the northern slab of the passage. The passage measures 150x80cm. The total length of the cist including the passage comes to 3.20 m.
Southern cist

Southern cist is made up of four orthostats placed in anti-clockwise direction. It seems the southern orthostat was planted first in a vertical position. The western orthostat was rested against the southern orthostat. The northern orthostat was placed against the western orthostat. The eastern orthostat was placed against the northern orthostat. The trapeze shaped porthole is observed at the centre of the eastern orthostat. Due to the fragmentary nature of the orthostat, the exact size of the porthole could not be ascertained. However, the visible part of the porthole suggests that it looks trapezium in shape like the portholes of MEG-III. The cist was partially exposed above the ground level. At the ground level the cist measures 210 cm in length and 145 cm in breadth.

The passage placed on the east is rectangular in shape and comparatively bigger in size if one compares with the cist. The northern slab of the passage was placed at the northern end of eastern orthostat. The southern slab was planted at the southern end of the eastern orthostat. The eastern closing slab was rested against the northern and southern slabs of the passage. The passage measures 150x100 cm. The total length of the cist including the passage comes to 3.60 m.

Placement of grave goods

This grave is rich in grave goods. The first level of grave goods is appeared at the ground level. Four urns with several pots were unearthed from the two cists. In both the cists, the grave goods were packed without leaving any gap. The placement of grave goods is being discussed as they were placed at the time of burying the dead.

Northern cist

Two identical conical shaped pits were dug below the floor in the northwest and southeast corner of the chamber to accommodate two urns. These pits (Pit-1 and Pit-2) had broader mouth on the top and narrow base at the bottom, probably to accommodate a few grave goods. These pits measure 55 cm at the mouth, 25 cm at the base and 60 cm in depth. First set of grave goods were placed in the western pit of the chamber. A huge urn (Urn No. 1) measuring 100 cm in height, 100 cm in breadth at the belly portion and mouth with a diameter of 70 cm was placed in vertical position in the pit. The urn had a button shaped bottom measuring 10 cm in diameter. The thumb impression running all over the body in circular form is observed 16 cm
below the rim. A black-and-red ware bowl, a four-legged jar and a jar with flat bottom of a red slipped ware were placed at the bottom of the urn. Another four-legged jar was placed over these objects. Around this urn, several four-legged jars were rested on the western side of the urn in the gap between the western orthostat and the urn (no.1), two black-and-red ware conical vases and three four-legged jars covered with black-and-red ware bowls were placed in north-south axis along the western orthostat starting from the south. One of the four-legged jars placed at the southern end close to the conical vase, contains paddy. The black and red bowl placed on this legged jar as a lid also contains paddy. The other two black-and-red ware bowls placed on the remaining four-legged jars also carry little quantity of paddy. In the gap between the urn and the northern orthostat, one more four-legged jar and a ring stand of black polished ware are noticed. On the southern side, in the gap between the urn and the southern orthostat one red ware ring stand was placed close to the two conical vases. These two conical vases were placed one above the other (Fig 4.101-105).

Another urn (Urn No. 2) was placed in the southeast corner of the chamber. This was vertically placed in a conical shaped pit dug for the purpose in the floor of the chamber. The body portion was exposed above the floor and the bottom portion was accommodated in the pit. This urn (Urn No. 1) measuring 100 cm in height, 100 cm in breadth at the belly portion and mouth with a diameter of 70 cm was placed in vertical position. The urn had a button shaped bottom measuring 10 cm in diameter. The thumb impression running all over the body in circular form is observed 16 cm below the rim. This urn was covered with a huge black-and-red ware basin. The bottom portion of the basin was broken and fallen at the belly portion of the urn thereby suggesting that the urn was filled with find sand up to the belly portion of the urn. The urn did not yield any appreciable grave goods. Some of the interesting grave goods were observed in the mid part of the chamber but on the southern side of the two urns in the gap between the two urns and the southern orthostat. There were miniatures pots, which rarely occur in graves. Four miniature pots were placed close to the urns on its southern side. Among them, two are four-legged jars and remaining two are conical vases of black-and-red ware. Two black-and-red ware bowls, two black polished ware ring stands, one narrow necked red slipped ware pot and a small black-and-red ware bowl were placed close to these miniature pots. The narrow
necked pot was placed upside down close to the orthostat. A four-legged jar kept upside down and black-and-red ware conical vases were placed in the southeast corner of the chamber. A black polished ring stand was noticed on the eastern side of the urn (no.2) close to the eastern orthostat (Fig 4.106).

**Southern cist**

A huge urn (Urn No. 3) was placed in horizontal position in northwest-southeast axis with mouth facing southeast. The urn has a total height of 130 cm with mouth diameter of 55 cm. A thumb impression running around the body is noticed on the shoulder portion, 25 cm below the with heavy rolled rim (Fig 4.107). The urn had a button shaped base with diameter of 17 cm. The urn is made of three parts i.e., base, bottom and top and all the three pots were luted together to get the complete shape. Around this urn several grave goods were placed. Three four-legged jars were placed on the western side below the urn in the gap between the urn and the western orthostat. Three black polished ware plates were placed one above the other attached to the southern orthostat but close to the shoulder portion of the urn on its western side. One black-and-red ware bowl was placed over these plates. Below this bowl, three terracotta rings (ear lobes/rings) were placed (Fig 4.108). A black-and-red ware bowl was placed below the rim. On the eastern side of the urn, two four-legged jars were placed, one below the rim of the urn and another at the northwest corner below the base of the urn. Between these two jars, three black-and-red ware conical jars are observed. The red ware urn contains skeletal remains at the base but in a very fragile condition. It is a disarticulated secondary burial consisting of the skull, fibula, humerus, tibia, mandible and many other small fragmentary bones. Several carnelian, quartz, steatite and paste beads were placed around these skeletal remains. A black-and-red ware plate carrying an iron sword with tip facing down was placed over these skeletal remains. A small red slipped pot with narrow neck was placed on this iron sword.

Another urn (Urn No. 4) was placed perfectly in a conical pit dug in the southeast corner of the chamber. This urn (Urn No. 4) measuring 100 cm in height, 70 cm in breadth at the belly portion and mouth with a diameter of 70 cm was placed in vertical position. The urn had a button shaped bottom measuring 10 cm in diameter. The thumb impression running all over the body in circular form is observed 16 cm below the rim. The body portion was exposed above the floor and the bottom portion
was accommodated in the pit. Inside the urn, a huge black-and-red ware basin was placed at the base of the urn. A small pot of red slipped ware, two black-and-red ware bowls, a black-and-red ware deep bowl and a red slipped pot were placed on this basin. Around this urn, several grave goods like four-legged jars, bowls, plates, conical vases, deep bowls and ring stands were noticed. Five four-legged jars carrying black-and-red ware bowls were placed on the southern side in the gap between the southern orthostat and the urn. Of these five jars, three jars were accommodated in the southeast corner. An iron sword with tip facing downward was placed vertically in the southeast corner. Close to this, a black-and-red ware deep bowl with mouth attached to the eastern orthostat is noticed. Below the jars, another iron sword was placed horizontally on the floor with tip facing east. On this sword, a black polished lid is noticed. A black-and-red ware conical vase, rings stand and black-and-red ware basin are noticed close to these jars. A ring stand was placed on the basin. In the northeast corner of the chamber, six black-and-red ware plates are noticed. Close to these plates, an iron sword with tip facing west was placed.