CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION
Past is the foundation for present, present forms the basis for future. If it is not so, we may not be what we think and even we may not be able to know that what we are. Often scholars question as to why we have to concentrate on digging into past though we are on the footpath of 21st Century and to know many new horizons. The recently launched Soviet Union's 'PHOBOS' to probe the Mars in order to get further information about the enigmatic objects may perhaps tell the answer.

Prehistory is one among several disciplines which synthesizes the data provided by Archaeologists. Its field is the time period which ranged between the first appearance of man to the development of written records, and it seeks to reconstruct both ethnography and ethology. It does so by applying the accumulated knowledge of cultural, physical, social and linguistic anthropology to the archaeology of that period.

In the words of Sankalia (1974), "Prehistory" means "the study of a region, a country or a nation, people or race, before it took to or know writing. This unlike ordinary history is not based on account of contemporary or later writers. Hence, Prehistory is also defined as an account of illiterate or preliterate people".

Historians are concerned primarily with written records, and the earliest systems of writing were invented only some five thousand
years ago, whereas Man has evolved during immensely a long period from his ape-like ancestors say about half-a-million years ago. Since then archaeology has become necessary, Archaeology deals with all the material remains in the past history of man such as the objects he made and used, his dwelling places and defensive structures, his tools and weapons, the remains of food, own bones, and burial places, and from these, it is to be deduced on how he lived. Thus, archaeology provides adequate information about prehistoric time i.e., man before the beginning of written records. Although prehistoric man did not leave daily or annual, or generational dairies to pickup and use but, he did leave sufficient evidence on his existence which represents the framework for archaeological research.

The framework for such research is provided by the great divisions -- Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic, Chalcolithic, Bronze and Iron ages. These names are distinguished based on the principal raw material used for the manufacture of their tools and weapons. Stone was used during the first three with distinguished techniques while in the last three metals, hence the names.

Classification of Stone Age Cultures:

Various classifications have been put forth by different scholars for the study of prehistoric cultures. Among them R. B. Foote (1916) the earliest discoverer of Palaeolithic tool in India, Miles Burkitt (1930) who has given a four series classification for lithic cultures based on typological aspects which had no stratigraphical evidence. These series were not specially named, but according to him
massive crude tools belonged to series I, small needles belonged to series II, thinner fine blades and burins to series III, and microliths to series IV. Bendapudi Subba Rao (1958) who divided the same into Early Stone Age, Middle Stone Age and Late Stone Age stand most important. These were accepted by the congress of Asian Archaeology met in New Delhi, 1960. These were used to refer to the Lower and Middle Palaeolithic and Mesolithic of Europe and Africa respectively.

In the late 1960's for the first time distinct blade and burin industries were discovered from several regions in India. Hence, the terminology adopted for the Indian Pre-Neolithic cultures in 1960 needed to be revised once again. So, the European terminology has been followed as it is i.e., Lower, Middle, and Upper for Palaeolithic cultures and while the rest, Mesolithic and Neolithic remain the same.

**Palaeolithic:**

The Palaeolithic was originally defined as the era of chipped stone tools, lasted for tens, even hundreds of thousands of years. But, as we know it now, we see that it was the stage when man was slowly differentiating himself from the rest of the animal world as hunter and food gatherer. Believed to have lived like an animal but differentiated by tool make and tool use where he does not have to depend merely on bodily strength or sharpness of teeth or nails. Therefore he could develop physically in a way which animals could not. Moreover Man's mental power developed at the same time, for inventiveness which provided the best way of survival through Stone Age cultures.
Sub-divisions of Palaeolithic Period:

On the basis of geological and artefactual evidence, Palaeolithic is further divided into (i) Lower, (ii) Middle and (iii) Upper Palaeolithic phases, each described as follows:

Lower Palaeolithic:

Lower Palaeolithic culture is characterised by pebble, handaxe and cleaver industries. These are made on cores, so it is also called as "core tool culture". The raw material used was pebbles of quartzite primarily.

Middle Palaeolithic:

Middle Palaeolithic is preceded by Lower Palaeolithic cultural phase and in this phase, the tools were made on flakes, hence it is also called as "flake tool" culture. The main tool types are scrapers (including a variety of sub types), points, borers and also small handaxes called as 'miniature' type. The raw material used was better variety of quartzite.

Upper Palaeolithic:

Upper Palaeolithic cultural phase comprises blade and burin industries some times it is associated with blade and knives also. As in the case of Middle Palaeolithic all types of scrapers are made but on large and slender blades, and also knives. Burins or knives form associated types. The raw material used was fine grained quartzite and some times lydianite etc.
Mesolithic Period:

Mesolithic is a transitional stage between Palaeolithic and Neolithic cultural periods. Mesolithic is characterised by microliths i.e., tools are 'tiny' in size. These are used in the form of composite tools after hafting in a wooden or bone or clay shafts/handles. The raw material used was mainly fine grained quartzite, followed by quartz and small proportion of chalcedony, chert etc.

The Mesolithic not only followed the end of the glacial period but was also a stage between Palaeolithic and Neolithic. It was some way rather a poor stage in man's development, during which he has adapted himself to a new environment. The man was still a hunter and food gatherer, but has a less well stocked preserve into hunt, to fish, and to fowl.

Present study is confined to Palaeolithic and Mesolithic cultures after which Neolithic, chalcolithic, Bronze, Iron ages and Civilization proper continues.

Ethnoarchaeology:

"Gordon Childe once observed that "you can't dig the social organisation of people". However, it now become possible to study the socio-economic and even political organisation of prehistoric societies. It is ethno-archaeology which has made this possible. Scholars have attempted to trace the evolution of human societies from band organisation to statehood through chiefdoms" (Dhavalikar, 1986).
According to Oswalt (1974), it is 'the study, from an archaeological perspective, of material culture based on verbal information about artefacts obtained from persons, or their direct descendants, who were involved with the production'. Ethnoarchaeology is the direct observation field study of the form, manufacture, distribution, meaning and use of artefacts and their institutional setting and social unit correlates among living, non-industrial peoples for the purpose of constructing better explanatory models to aid archaeological analogy and inference.

In a more precise definition given by Gould (1974) "......... living archaeology is the actual effort made by an archaeologist or ethnographer to do field work in living human societies with special reference to the 'archaeological' patterning of the behaviour in those societies. Ethnoarchaeology, refers to a much broader general framework for comparing ethnographic and archaeological patterning. In the latter case, the archaeologist may rely entirely upon published and archival sources or upon experimental results .... for his comparisons without having to do the actual field work by himself. The ethnoarchaeology may include studies of 'living archaeology' along with other approaches as well".

One of the most important aims of ethnoarchaeology is improving the quality of the gathered information to make it more useful to archaeologists in formulating models and applying analogies.

The aim of using the present to aid in explaining the past generates certain needs: (i) Detailed information on all aspects of
organised human activity of the kind which will leave preservable traces in the archaeological record. (ii) Understanding of the relationship of the patterns of these traces to the patterns of activities which produced them.

The ethnoarchaeological studies focus on the relationship of human behaviour to the physical world; the influence that the physical world exert on behaviour and imprint behaviour which leave on the physical world for future archaeologists appears to puzzle out.

Regardless the sources of ethnographic data, it can be used in three general purposes (Styles, 1977).

(a) The ethnographic analogy: In it a specific set of ethnographic data is compared to an analogous set of archaeological data.

(b) The generation of hypotheses and models: Ethnographic data can be used as a source of 'inspiration' in generating hypotheses and models about the past. The hypotheses and models are tested using archaeological data.

(c) The testing of hypotheses: Once hypotheses have been formulated from ethnographic observation then one proceeds to analyse the results of a comparison between the ethnographic data and the relevant archaeological data. With this background, I have selected an area covering about 1250 sq. kms. in the coastal Andhra Pradesh.
The area:

The area under study lies between 13°45' to 14°20' N. 79°30' to 80°15' E. (Plate 1) which lies in Nellore district of coastal Andhra Pradesh. The area is characterised by dry tropical forests to tropical dry ever green scrub forests in the main land and islands respectively. In the southeastern part of this area, the Pulicat lake and the SHAR islands and in the western side, the Veligondas, a part of Eastern Ghats are situated. There are about 52 islands in Pulicat lake comprising both inhabited and uninhabited types. Based on geographical location and geomorphology it is divided into (i) Main land and (ii) Islands. The islands are yet to yield information on lithic cultures. Among them, from Sriharikota Island, Venadu and Dugarajupatnam the ethnographic data has been collected. The mainland is dotted with numerous tanks varying from 125 mts. to 3.7 kms. in their long diameter. A total of 1,130 tanks or lakes have been recorded. Maximum concentration of tanks are found in southeastern part and are fed by rain water through northeast monsoon. In the mainland archaeological sites are located in Sullurpet, Nayudupet, Venkatagiri and Rapur (Map 4). Stone Age cultural industries are found to range from Palaeolithic to Mesolithic. These are studied as follows:

Sullurpet (Lat. 13°50' N. and 79°17' E.): Sullurpet is the head quarters of the mandal and it is situated on the bank of the Kalinga river at a distance of 80 kms. on the north of Madras. It can be approached by both rail and bus. The name Sullurpet was derived from celebration of an Utsavam called "Sullu" in this place. Here is an important temple of Goddess Chengalamma, a special feature of this deity is, the sanctum
sanctorum (Garbhagudi) is without doors. It is an uncommon feature.
Chengalamma jatara is being celebrated once in every two years for a period of 5 days during the month of March-April. This is attended by about 50,000 devotees from the surrounding areas. The islands Sriharikota, Venadu; the bird sanctuaries Pulicat and Nelapattu and the coastal villages Dugarajupatnam, Chittedu (Locus I. 1), Gudali (Locus IV. 1) and Mettu (Locus IV. 2) are rich in providing ethnographic and archaeological information.

Nayudupet (13° 57' N. and 79° 58' E.): Nayudupet is a small town situated on the bank of the river Swarnamukhi flowing parallel to the Madras-Calcutta grand trunk road. It is also a railway station on the Madras-Waltair broad gauge line. It is situated at 107 kms. to the north of Madras. The place name is derived from Bangaru Yachana Nayudu, the zamindar of Venkatagiri, who gave this village to the vaisya. Because it is gifted by Nayudu it is called after him. Nayudupet is a bus junction, where the roads from Venkatagiri, Srikalahasti and Dugarajupatnam meet. Here lace knitting is an important cottage industry. It contains several temples dedicated to Vishnu, Siva, Anjaneya and Vinayaka. Molakalapudy (Locus I. 2), Ekasiri (Loci I.3, V. 1 & VI. 1), Mittakandriga (Loci II. 1, II. 2, II. 3 & II. 4), Menakur (Locus III. 1) and Nayudupet (Loci IV.4 & IV. 5) are rich in ethnographic and archaeological data.

Venkatagiri (13° 56' N. and 79° 35' E.): Venkatagiri is known after zamindars. It is situated at a distance of about 44 kms. from Nayudupet on Gudur-Tirupati broad gauge line. It is the head quarters of the mandal of the same name. Venkatagiri sarees are popular and are in great demand all over the country. There are a few huge constructions made by
the former zamindars. There is also a zamindar palace, nearby hill at a distance of 14 kms. from the town. The chiefs of this place also built a Fort on a steep cliff, which is not easily accessible. So it was made as seat of that Government. The town is encircled by the river Kaivalya and it possess two popular temples dedicated to Kasiviswanadha Swami and Varadharaja Swami. The annual festival of the Goddess Poleramma called as 'jatara' are held on the third Wednesday after the festival 'Vinayakachavithi' annually. It attracts about one lakh devotees from nearby areas. Boggulamitta (Venkatagiri) (Loc i I. 4 & IV. 5), Agraharam (Locus IV. 6), Perimidi (Locus V. 2), Malliswari kona (Loc i III. 2 & VII. 1), Mupillamandagutta (Locus V. 3), Marrimanupenta (Locus III. 3), Palemkota (Locus III. 4), Lalapet (Locus III. 5) and Manulalpet (Locus I.5) are rich in providing the ethnographic and archaeological information.

Rapur (14° 13' N. and 79° 32' E.): Rapur is the head quarters of the mandal situated at the foot of the Veligondas. It is connected with Nellore, the district head quarters and Gudur by bus road. There is a ruined Fort surrounded by a ditch. About 8 kms. on the west of this village, there is a pass in the Veligondas known as the Rapur 'Kanuma' leading to Cuddapah district. Mallemadugu (Locus V. 4), Kutalamarri (Locus VII. 2) Dakkili (Locus III. 6), Jinkalagutta (Rapur) (Locus I. 6) and Saidalapalle (Locus I. 7) are quite rich in ethnographic and archaeological data relevant to the present research investigation.
Main Events in the Indian Archaeological Scenario:

The true beginning of research in Prehistory in India can be assigned to the year 1863, when Robert Bruce Foote discovered first Palaeolithic tool at Pallavaram near Madras. Among the contemporaries of Foote who contributed to the discovery and investigations of Stone Age cultures were T. Oldham (1864, 1865), V. Ball (1865, 1874, 1875, 1876, 1878, 1879, 1888), W.T. Blanford (1866, 1867, 1868, 1871, 1875), W. King (1866, 1893), J. Cockburn (1879, 1888, 1894), Revett-Carnac (1882, 1883, 1884, 1885), R.D. Oldham (1897), Rev. P.O. Bodding (1901, 1904) and several others. Most of these men were officers of Geological Survey of India. Their finds came from many parts of India that included Central Provinces, Berar, Central India, Bundelkhand, Rajputana, Sind, Punjab, Bengal, Orissa, Madras presidency and the Deccan (Misra, 1978).

The most dynamic phase of research in Indian prehistory began after 1940, with the establishment of a Department of Archaeology at the newly started Post-Graduate and Research Institute at Deccan College with H.D. Sankalia as Professor in 1939.

In India, besides the scholars worked for their Ph.D's a number of other workers have also contributed towards the understanding of Stone Age cultures. But, a systematic work has begun only after 1955 and is yet to become a regular practice. A majority of excavations made so far are very small, semi-primary and secondary in condition, and archaeological context and most of them are of macrogeographical in nature. Now the prehistorians felt the need of microgeographical specific area studies in Prehistory, like in any academic discipline.
The specific area studies have some inbuilt advantages. They provide an opportunity to understand much better and also provide solutions to the problems specific to local archaeoecotom(s). Further, they also provide an opportunity to probe into factors like the relationship between the environment and man, the process of human activities, effects of cultural contacts i.e., the so called man made part of environment.

**Research in Andhra Pradesh:**


On looking unto the data, one can say to-date, only a few reports are made on the occurrence of Palaeolithics from coastal Andhra Pradesh. Some of them Murty (1966, 1968, 1981), Sudersen (1976), Jacob Jaya Raj (1983, 1984, 1986), Eswara Prasad (1986), Vijaya Prakash (1986-7), Raju (1986-7). All these reports have shown adequate prehistoric
cultural importance of the area and also they have attempted on reconstruction of prehistoric cultures and ethnographic account.

However, prehistoric cultural investigations in Island environments in India had not been attempted so far except the explorations made by Zarine Cooper (1985) in the Andaman Islands. So, I have chosen to work on prehistoric cultures of the coastal and SHAR Island environments. In this process, a few works such as 'A report on Palaeolithic cultures of Yanadi settlements, Nayudupet taluk, Nellore district, Andhra Pradesh' (1984); 'Palaeolithic-Mesolithic Gatherer-Hunter-Fisher's parallels among Pulicat lake Yanadi, Southeast coastal India' (1985); 'Prehistory of Pulicat lake area, East coastal India' (1986-a); 'Ekasiri an abode of Palaeolithic-Mesolithic people, East coastal India' (1986-b); 'Prehistory of Pulicat lake area, East coastal Andhra Pradesh' (1987); 'Fishing strategies of the contemporary Tribe in the Pulicat lake area, coastal Andhra Pradesh' (1988) form important reports.

**Ethnoarchaeological Investigations:**

Ethnographic data has long been used by archaeologists for interpretation and explanation of the data found in the archaeological record. In the recent past, as archaeologists have become more preoccupied with theoretical aspects, a conscious attempt has been made to create more systematic model: the use of ethnographic analogy. Thus Ethnoarchaeology forms a distinct sub-discipline of Anthropology, is a relatively recent phenomenon.
The concept on the use of ethnographic information in archaeology is not a new one. In fact, ethnographic information was used as early as the seventeenth century as evidence that *ceraunia* (*Pierres de foudre* or *thunderstones*) were actually implements made by man. (Peake, 1940: 117-18).

In Indian context, quiet a good number of works are made on ethnoarchaeology during this decade (Nagar, 1978; Misra *et. al.*, 1982; Murty, 1981, 1985; Raju, 1985-b; Jacob Jaya Raj, 1983, 1986, 1988; Eswara Prasad, 1986; and Suresh Kumar, 1987).

Now-a-days in pursuit of the same attempts are also made to excavate sealed occupational sites (Misra, 1973, 1976, 1978; Misra *et. al.*, 1982; Joshi and Marathi, 1977; Murty, 1981; Paddayya, 1978; Reddy and Vijaya Prakash, 1978) and study of primary surface sites (Jacobson 1975, 1978; Jacob Jaya Raj, 1987). Moreover, ethnographic analogy is being used to reconstruct Stone Age hunter-gatherer subsistence strategies and settlement patterns, (Misra, 1978; Murty, 1981, 1985; Raju, 1985; Reddy and Vijaya Prakash, 1985; Jacob Jaya Raj, 1983, 1987; Suresh Kumar, 1987) and more emphasis is given to micro-geographical level studies and the present study is the sequel of such studies made so far.

Against this background, I have selected coastal Islands and SHAR environments of Andhra Pradesh for investigations on "Ethnoarchaeology of Hunter-Gatherers in Coastal and Island Environments of Andhra Pradesh, India".