CHAPTER VI

IRON AGE MEgalITHIC CULTURE

The nature, the environment, the density and the distribution of the Iron Age Megalithic sites are already described in Chapter I, Part I at appropriate place. The artefacts such as pottery of varied types, besides teeth of an animal of the culture have been collected in the sites ranging from neolithic to early historic periods. Mention has also been made of the occurrence of an iron object and teeth probably of a Bos domesticus respectively from disturbed pits at Bagdal (Bidar taluk) and Yenkura (Bhalki taluk) and pottery from both the pits. The pottery of the culture can be classified into three fabrics of usual characteristic features black-and-red ware, red ware and black ware. Among the types of the pottery are bowls, dishes and vases of varied types. The select typical pottery types and their characteristics as well as other antiquities are described below.
a. Dishes

1. From Venture: Featureless edge of a shallow dish of black-and-red ware. It has saggar base, slightly convex side. The interior is burnished black.
(Fig. IX, No. 2).

2. From Kawsarchinchollis: Fragment of a flat bottomed shallow dish ware. The edge is slightly bent inwards and thickened. It is of medium to fine black core and well polished. Analogous to Maski: Fig. 14, No. 3(i)5 (Thaper, B.K.; 1957). (Fig. IX, No. 4).

(Fig. IX, No. 1).

4. From Sirsi: Featureless pointed tip and small shallow edge of a bowl of red ware of unusually very thick section. The surface is worn out. It has red slip. Rare type. (Fig. IX, No. 3).
b. Vases

(i) Pottery of Black Ware

5. From Kammarohinchollii: Fragment of a vase of black ware with bulgeous body. The edge is externally thickened. It is well polished having medium to fine black core. And it has indistinct parallel shallow corrugation shoulder. (Fig. IX, No. 6). Analogous to Maski: Fig. 18, No. B(iii)9. (Thapar, B.K.; 1957) etc.

(ii) Pottery of Red Ware

6. Kammarohinchollii: Rim fragment of a vase of red ware with globular body. The rim is externally thickened and single grooved. It has black coarse core with red slip. (Fig. IX, No. 7). Analogous to Maski: Fig. 24, No. 37a, p. 70. (Thapar, B.K.; 1957) etc.

7. From Kammarohinchollii: Rim fragment of a vase of a red ware with slightly globular body. The rim is externally thickened and it has external ledge near the neck. It has black coarse core with bright red slip. (Fig. IX, No. 8). Roughly comparable to Maski: Fig. 24, No. 37a. (Thapar, B.K.; 1957) etc.
(iii) Pottery of Bull Black Ware

8. From Yenkura: Rim fragment of a vase of dull black ware slightly blashy. The rim is cut turned and flaring. It has expanding shoulder and of coarse core thin in section with brown dull black slip.

9. From Yenkura: Variant of type 8. It has parallel grooves on the shoulder. (Fig. X, No. 3).

10. Other Artefacts

Iron Spoon

10. From Bagdali: An elongated thin iron spoon. It is 25 cm length and 0.2 cm thickness thin rod which is wide at the one end obliquely bent. It is corroded and in mutilated condition.

(ii) Teeth

11. From Yenkura: It is an incisor of a Bos Domesticus. The description of the specimen is given in the appendix part. I.
General Observations

How the topographical features of the region under study has not been favourable for the construction of various kinds of orthostatic-chamber tombs has been discussed above in Chapter I, Part I at the appropriate place. If there would be Iron Age Megalithic culture flourishing in the region it could be evident in the form of only one type of megalith namely Cairn-Stone Circle. If there were Cairn-Stone Circles the surface indications of the graves have disappeared especially in the recent times when even stony waste lands are brought under cultivation. It is, therefore, now only by chance that such megalithic burial pits may be revealed as for example the pits in Bagdal and Kasaarchinchalli.

The pits noticed confirm the above observation i.e., the existence of Cairn-Stone Circles enclosing pits. Of course, elsewhere such Pit-Circles as at Maski (Thapar, B.K.; 1957, p. 53), Brahmagiri (Wheeler, R.E.M.; 1947; p. 194), Tadékanahalli (Mégrajá Rao, K.S.; 1981; p. 26), have been noticed and excavated. But there is one noteworthy feature in the pits of the region. The pits are cut in the laterite rock because of the
location in the laterite plateau unlike the pits of the other areas dug in the virgin soil. It implies the tool kit of the megalithic builders for excavating the rock i.e., for making pit, such as adzes, chisel, etc.

Therefore, so far as the iron tool assemblage of these builders is concerned it must be in some respect different from that of the other areas. Therefore, it is worthwhile to investigate further the megalithic remains for understanding the distinct salient feature of the culture here.

The location of the pits in the midst of the habitation site at Tenkura recalls similar situations in Maski (Thaper, B.K.; 1971 pp. 27-32), Görkal (Sundara, A.; 1975; p. 79).

There is yet another aspect of the culture. This region is in the proximity with the peripheral zone of the Viharba megalithic area. There is, therefore, every possibility of either the influence of contacts with the culture of that area at some stage. This point has to be borne in mind for further investigation. The pottery
types and fabrics are closely akin to those from the other sites in Karnataka and South India. Thus megaliths of this region probably belong to the South Indian Megalithic cultural complex.
Fig. No. IX: Nos. 1 & 2, Black-and-red ware bowl and shallow dish (Cullapur & Yenkura); 3, Red ware bowl (Sire); 4 & 6, Black ware dish and vase (Zammarchincholla); 5, Dull black ware vase (Yenkura); 7 & 8, Red ware Vases (Zammarchincholla).