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For this work I am indebted to several friends, colleagues and scholars in various ways. It was Professor N.R. Ray, of the Calcutta University, who gave me the idea of working on the subject, as far back as 1958, during his visit to the excavation camp at Ujjain, where the third and last season of work was then on. The inspiration came, no doubt, from the large scale discoveries of iron objects in the excavations at Ujjain, which Professor Ray himself witnessed. This led to the writing of a long paper on the Advent of the Iron Age in India. But Shri A. Ghosh, Director General of Archaeology in India, to whom I gave it for publication in the Ancient India, suggested a more comprehensive work on the subject.

Shortly afterwards, early in 1959, I was deputed to West Germany under a scholarship scheme of the German Academic Exchange Service for a study of Assyriology. This gave me an opportunity to come into contact with the European Scholars, and also to look into the evidence from West Asia at first hand.

I am grateful to my Professor, Dr. Anton Moortgat of the Free University of Berlin, for going through the tentative paper and for making many valuable suggestions. During my European sojourn, I have had the opportunity of discussing the question with several scholars of international reputation including Sir Mortimer Wheeler of London, England, Professor Louis Renou
of the Sorbonne, Paris, Professor A. Alsdorf of Hamburg, Professor W. Hofmann and Professor Walter Wuest of Munich, West Germany, Professor Robert Heine-Geldern of Vienna, Austria, and Professor J.E. van Lohuizen de Leeuw and Professor R.J. Forbes of Amsterdam, Holland. Most of them agreed with my point of view and all have offered helpful suggestions. At this time I was able to collect an extensive bibliography of work on the subject under research by European scholars, but was prevented from doing anything more substantial by my engagement on studies of Assyriology at the Free University at Berlin.

On my return to India in April 1960, I tried in vain to obtain the vast references for consultation in India. My chances of completing the work in hand appeared very bleak, when an opportunity to visit Europe a second time presented itself. I was to be India's delegate to the first International Conference on Megaliths held in Paris in February 1961, thanks to Shri A. Ghosh and Professor A. Varagnac of St. Germain en-Layé, France. Professor J.E. van Lohuizen of Amsterdam, who had taken considerable interest in my work, persuaded the Dutch Government to offer me a Fellowship for completing my researches on the Iron Age in India, after the megalith conference, for a period of three months. I was able to look up all the outstanding references during this period at Amsterdam and Leyden, in Holland, thanks to Professor Lohuizen de Leeuw and the Dutch Government.
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The contacts with the German Archaeological Institute brought me into touch later with Professor Dr. K. Bittel, the successor of Professor Boehringer at the German Archaeological Institute. Having worked at Boghaz Keui, in Turkey, the seat of the Indo-European Hittites, for nearly two decades, he took considerable interest in my work and offered me a travelling fellowship to travel through Europe and the Middle East in order to enable me to discuss the question with competent scholars and also see the excavated sites and museums connected with the problem. I cannot thank him adequately for his help and interest.

As a result of this helpful gesture I was able to travel extensively through Europe and West Asia in furtherance of my researches, after completion of the studies in Amsterdam, in June 1961.

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