CHAPTER II

Pre-history and Pro-to-history

The existence of man in the district of Allahabad may be traced back to the early stone age period. The inference has been drawn on the basis of the relics of the early man in the forms of stone tools and rock-shelters found in the region. Before discussing the available relics, it would be worth while to gather an idea of the geological features of the area which made early man to reside in those areas.

GEOLOGICAL FEATURES.

All the pre-historic sites, so far discovered in the district of Allahabad, are confined to the southern side of river Yamunä. This region is hilly, forested, gravelly and rocky, and is an extension of the Vindhya range. The adjoining districts of Banda, Mirzapur and parts of Vārañasī have also similar geological features. The ordinary alluvium of the Gangetic plain covers the trans-Ganges tracts, the alluvial detritus of the Bundelkhandi hills is however limited to the south of the domb. The region to the south of the Yamuna is part
of the Vindhya rock series usually named 'Pabhosā outcrop'. The sandy and silty area of the Gaṅgā valley in trans-Yamunā tract acts as a terminus to the Vindhyan detritus. The signs of the merging of these two are vivid in the west of Karchhana and the east of Bara.

The hilly region, lying to the south of Yamunā and discussed above shows three sub-divisions of the Vindhyan rocks. The first sub-division or the lowest, known as Vindhyaḥchal range, begins from the alluvial plain of Māndā and runs like an irregular chain beyond Koharār. It emerges again, in the south of Bara and runs towards the north upto Yamunā. The second sub-division of the upper strata represents the Kaimūr range formed of sandstone. In the northern region of the Vindhyaḥchal range there occurs a bold scarp which is not traceable in the lower valley of the Tons.

The lower Rewa group, an irregular plateau found to the south of the escarpment is characterised by an upper shaly band, called Jhiri shales, and a lower on which forms the Panna shales. A sandstone band found in between the two, acting almost as a dividing line, is known as the lower Rewa sandstone. The third sub-division is the highest of the three, known as the upper Rewa group. This group running upto the southern limits of Allahabad for about sixteen kilometres in the form of massive sandstone scarps,
is called Panna range. It resembles Vindhyachal range in all respects, except the elevation. These three sub-divisions are quite prominent in the Barokhar hills. The lower Rewa group represents the westernmost part of the region where the famous diamond bearing conglomerate makes its appearance as a subordinate band in the Panna shales (1).

**ROCK SHELTERS**

The palaeolithic man lived in rockshelters or in natural cave-dwellings in the remote areas where he had the facility of hunting and also of roots and fruits for eating. Besides, he looked to the facility of water, from natural springs, rivers and lakes. Such rock-shelters have been discovered not only in the region under review, but also in the adjoining districts. Recent explorations conducted by the Allahabad University have revealed the existence of rock-shelters at Deoghat and Ramgarh in the Allahabad district (2). On the walls of these rock-shelters there are paintings all done in ochre colour depicting hunting, dancing and ritual scenes. This evidence may be compared with that of their counterparts found in the neighbouring districts of Mirzapur
and Vārānasi. The relics of Bagapahari, Baghai-Khor, Bedia, Khari Pathari, Lekhania, Marchahia and Tharpahar in the district of Mirzapur (3) and Bairgarh and Gadha Shahpur on the bank of the Karamnāśā river in Vārānasi district are very much similar (4).

The 'ochre red' colour of the painting in the shelters of Allahabad and Mirzapur districts tallies with the colour used in the rock-shelters of Vārānasi (5). The rock-shelters containing paintings show four stages of evolution, outline coverage with oblique lines, solid filling and white colour. These shelters are located at Koskan- Gadh in Chhaniwa-ki-Pahari and Vasaha in Jharana-ki-Pahari in Allahabad as well as Mirzapur district and also at Kushiar- Ghat-Ki-Pahari in the Rewa district.

An early stone age site of the Allahabad region is found near the Kanhaiya hillock at Bataubir (6). A few other sites pertaining to the same culture have been discovered at Lekhahiya hillock near the confluence of the Thema and Kauhar rivers in Rewa district (7), on Malia close to Kachar in the Mirzapur district (8) and also near the foot of the Hathiniya pahar in the Vārānasi district (9). Objects like handaxes, cleavers, scrapers of sandstone and quartzite (10) have been found at these places.

The handaxes and cleavers are typical tools of the achenelium stage of the lower palæolithic age. These tools
were executed in clacton and levallois technique.

MIDDLE STONE AGE:-

There are several sites of the Middle stone age in the Allahabad region. These have been noticed at Chandiha, Deoghat, Kon, Lal-Bijora and Nodiha. Blades, flakes, scrapers and cores were found at these sites (11). A section which was exposed on the river Thema revealed two cycles of gravelly deposits alternated by a deposit of coarse sandy silt (12). Particular mention may be made of a stag-horn bearing flake scars found at a place called Deoghat on river Belan in Allahabad district (13). During this age also the techniques of making tools were the similar to those prevalent in early stone age.

LATE STONE AGE:-

There is abundance of relics of the late stone age in the Allahabad district. Sites of the age have been discovered at Bhagesar, Chopani, Kapasi and Sepauwa. The outstanding antiquities from these places are largesize cores and Cherts. Late stone age sites (belonging to pre-pottery microlithic stage) have been found at Bans Bhageswar (on Belan), Bataubir, Chopani and Jecharani (on the Scoti) and Gadha, Hanumanganj, Hardaun (on the Corma);
Koskan, Ga-ha (on the Lunriari), Kundidin, Lonamati and Majhigavn (near Jhobignat hillock), Jadipur, Jhorna-Ki-Panari, Kapasi in the district of Allahabad (14). Of the so far discovered sites, representing the microlithic culture, the significant were those between Seoti and Lunriari rivers; the representative tools include parallel-side blades, blunted backblades, lunates, burins, etc(15). Similar cultural evidence was spotted in the Chamiraprabha valley (district Varanasi), Sarai and Khajuri (district Mirzapur)(16). These sites, offering a number of microlithic tools, were located near Hathinia hills and Kaurihar (Varanasi district) and also at Khajuri, Bainsaur, Dagama-gapur, Jrumoniganj, Budhi, Hathwani, Memakachar, Kon, Muralia, Paraspani, Raja-Ki-Nauki and Raja-Baba-Ka-Panar (Mirzapur district)(17).

NEOLITHIC CULTURE:

The district of Allahabad has supplied a number of neolithic tools, which were discovered in various excavations and also by stray finds. The excavated material consists of sharpened polished axes, practically in one size.

Ten rare tools of the period were spotted at Jamsota a village sixty miles south of Allahabad city (18). The lot is now in the State Museum, Lucknow (19). Another
specimen was found in a temple at Siha in the Allahabad district (20). Kauśambī (21) and Jhūšī (22) two important sites also yielded one tool as surface find.

The neoliths were also found in the white excavations conducted by Marshall (23). These implements were unearthed from different levels and were in varied shapes. Some of the finds are described below:

(a) Wedge-shaped celt, made of basia rock, ground and polished. Obtained from Kushana level.
(b) Wood-splitter with curved edge, made of local sand stone, rough-sided, showing marks of cutting. From Kushana level.
(c) Wedge-shaped celt of diabase. From Kushana or Gupta level (2½ long x 1⅞”).
(d) Celt of diabase, nearly oblong, made of slate stone, rough, unpolished surface, sharpened lent damaged. From Gupta level (3½“x1½“).
(e) Wood splitter of sand stone, sharp edged but curved. From the level belonging to the 6th century a.d. (2”x1½“).
(f) Celt of diabase, nearly oblong, having cutting edge damaged. From the debris (6½“x4“).
(g) Wedge-shaped celt of diabase, having rounded sides. From the level belonging to the 8th or 9th century a.d. (1¾“x1½“).
(h) Similar in both shape and material. From the level belonging to 8th or 9th century A.D. (381-395).

The relics of the Chalcolithic culture were noticed at Beoghat and a few other sites in the Allahabad district (24). These are very much similar to the types found from certain sites of the adjoining Mirzapur district. The microlithic tools in association with sherds of black-and-red ware were encountered at these sites. Particular mention may be made of painted sherds from Beoghat and Bairia, containing paintings, drawn by black pigment over a red-slipped surface.

MEGALITHIC BURIALS

The Allahabad region is also rich in the sites of megalithic culture. In the course of recent explorations conducted by the Allahabad University megalithic burials have been discovered at Batalbir, Hardaun, Jadipur, Kapasi, Komii, Koskan-Gadha, Kondari, Lonamati, Majhigawan, Badaun Kalan-Kotia and Manio. They were cairn circles and dolmenoid cists (25).

Out of the above sites Kotia stands outstanding because of the discovery of more than three hundred megalithic tombs of both types at the site. It is however worth
observation that dolmenoid cists pre-dominated the region.

Megalithic burials have been noticed at several places in the neighbouring districts of Mirzapur and Vārāṇasī.

The excavated Megalithic burials of the Allahabad region offer interesting material for a comparative study of similar material found in the Mirzapur and Vārāṇasī districts and also from South India. The Allahabad University excavated five burials at Kotia situated on the right bank of the Belan. Of these mgs I, II and III were cists, mgs IV cist within a cairn and the V a cairncircle (26).

The megaliths of cist type had rectangular chambers having east-west orientation and an average depth of sixty centimetres. The side walls of the chambers, which were made of stone pieces, set in vertical rows of two or three courses, rested against the four sides of the pit. An offset was found in between the courses of the cist-walls.

These cist chambers can be compared to the south Indian megalith types. The side-walls of cist-chambers in the south were made of monolithic slabs instead of broken stone pieces.
After going through the ritualistic exercises the chamber was filled with small stone pieces. The excavations at the megalithic sites during the year 1963-64 by the Allahabad University did not reveal whether such megalithic burials had invariably an enclosure of low rising cairn being encircled by a row of big stone pieces (27).

The cist chambers revealed some very interesting features. In one of the burials exposed at by the Allahabad University the three compartments in the cist were very much similar to the transepted cists exposed at certain places in Deccan. The chamber was of 5:26 x 4:26m. dimension. It had two broad sections, one of them was subsequently again divided into two parts by stone pieces collected in a row. No interconnecting doors or passages were noticeable in the cists. Two cist-burials had only one compartment (28).

The second type, which was exposed at showed a cist encircled by a heap of stone pieces. On top of the cairn there was a rectangular chamber made by stone pieces placed inside a circle (29).

The third type showed a stone circle containing a rectangular pit. Its orientation lay east-west and was dug to a depth of 60 centimetres. The articles
exhumed from the burials included postherds, iron spearhead, and scanty skeletal remains under a 15 centimetre thick layer of ash. The same clay which was dug out from the pit appears to have been stored over the ashy covering resulting in the increase of the height of the burial above the ground level. The burial was shaped like a barrow. The periphery of the burial was in the shape of a circle made by huge stone slabs (30). Out of the exposed burials by the Allahabad University during 1963-64 named as megalith No.1 by Prof. G.R. Sharma (one of the cist types) yielded a large number of antiquities. These included spearheads, sickles, and arrow head and an adze. There were also pottery fragments mixed up with the skeletal remains. Iron objects were noticed in all the burials except meg.II at Kotia site (31).

Bones of domestic animals like Bos indicus, sheep, pigs and cattle were found in the burial. A few bones of tortoise and possibly rodent were also found in a burial (meg.v) exposed at Kotia. Human bones were noticed only in one burial (meg.v by Prof. G.R. Sharma) (32).

The cut-marks detected on some of the bone pieces from meg.I. indicate that the bones belonged to those
animals which were sacrificed at the time of worship or in some ritual. Charred bone pieces were discovered in two burials (megs. I & V)(33).

The potsherds, found in the burials, represented black-and-red ware, red ware and dull-black or grey ware having thick fabric. The fragments formed part of bowls, dishes with out turned rims or flattened bases, bowls with hollow and solid pedestals, sharply carinated cooking-vessels, knobbed lids, medium-sized vessels with everted rims, large elliptical storage-jars, bowls with ledged shoulders (34).

Since no stratigraphic sequence was possible at the sites, it is difficult to determine the exact chronology of the megalithic culture of the Allahabad region. The finds from the megalithic burials, indicate that the megalithic culture of the Allahabad region was slightly later than that found in Vārānasaī region. The former yielded iron objects while it was absent at Vārānasaī. Even the pottery-types of Allahabad region megaliths differed from those found in Vārānasaī region (35).

The excavators, under these circumstances, suggested the date of the megaliths of the Allahabad region, between the time bracket of eight-fourth centuries B.C. (36).
A copper celt has also been found in the ruins of Kausāmbī. It appears to be a stray find and it must have been transported to the city from some other place. The enormous mass of antiquities found at Kausāmbī, does not have, any copper age bearing (37).

FOOT NOTE.

1- Allahabad district Gazetteer - 1928, p.5.
3- Ibid.
5- Ibid.
7- Ibid.
9- Ibid.
10- Ibid.
11- Ibid.
12- Ibid.
13- Ibid.
15- Ibid.
16. Indian Archaeology 1962-63 — A Review, Pl. LXXVI.
18. Late Shri J.N. Das personally told me that he picked up these implements from Jamasot while on official tour and sold them to State Museum, Lucknow.
19. Ibid.
20. Allahabad Museum: Miniature objects Reg. P. No. 69, No. 18
21. Ibid. No. 22
22. Ibid. No. 20.
23. ASR, 1911-12, p. 39, Pl. XXXII, Nos. 1, 6, 7.
24. Indian Archaeology 1962-63 — A Review, p. 31
26. Indian Archaeology 1963-64 — A Review, p. 40
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid. — Pl. XXV A
29. Ibid. — Pl. XXV B
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
37. Allahabad Museum: Miniature objects Reg. p. 69, No. 23