Among all the pebble tool cultures reported so far from various parts of the world the report, barring that of the Kafuan (Wayland in 1919), relating to the Sohanian seems to be the earliest. The discovery was made by Wadia as early as 1928 although at that time the artifacts he discovered were not interpreted in terms of pebble tool culture. Later Hawkes and DeTerra (1934) for the first time drew the attention of the prehistorians to the possibility of an exclusive existence of a pebble tool culture in N.W. India which they tried to demonstrate with the help of data collected by DeTerra from Kargil and Salt Range area taking into consideration those of Todd made earlier (1930). This was further strengthened by the work done by Yale-Cambridge expedition (1935) which named it as Sohanian after the type sites situated in the Valley of the Sohan in the Potwar region, now in Pakistan. In the meanwhile identical pebble tool cultures were reported from North China (Breuil 1931, Pie 1931, Chardin and Pei 1931, Black, Chardin, Young and Pei 1933) and Olduvai Gorge in Tanganyika (Leakey 1934). Following this in the succeeding years more similar cultures were reported from Burma (Morris 1935, Movius 1943), Java (Von Koenigswald 1936, DeTerra 1943) and Malaya (Collings 1938). Thus with in a decade from the discovery of first pebble tools in N/W India the region of S/E Asia emerged, leaving aside the Olduvai Gorge, as a
distinct zone of this peculiar lithic tradition. This was amply illustrated by Movius in his comprehensive study of all the lower palaeolithic cultures of S/E Asia (1943,49) who initiated the idea of a pebble based chopper-chopping tool complex for the entire region with its centre in Malaya or S. China. This was a bold generalization despite the views of Pei, Chardin, and Breuil who considered Choukoutienian of N. China to be a flake culture and Von Koenigswald and Chardin thinking Patjitanian of Java as a Chellean Culture. However, Movius's stand was vindicated by later researchers like Heider (1960) and Sieveking (1960) in Thailand and Malaya respectively.

The lead provided by the above mentioned workers in 1930's was not followed seriously for more than a decade. The reasons responsible were probably the great political turmoil raging the whole of S/E Asia at this time and the infantile status of and lack of patronage for the Pleistocene studies in these undeveloped countries.

During this period in E. Africa the Oldowan continued to enjoy the privileged status of the only culture of its type till Arambourg (1950) & Biberson (1955, 1967) reported a similar culture from N/W Africa. Europe till 1965 (Kretzoi and Vertes) was not known for a pebble tool culture barring those undefined Clactonian functional cores. The Buda industry in Hungary as reported by Kretzoi
and Vertes although is not exactly similar to the industries found in S/E Asia. Still the preponderance of pebble element in it is fairly thought provoking. Similar finds from Central Jordan Valley (Steklis 1960) have been considered as Clactonian by Oakley (1964).

At present due to the immature state of the research relating to the pebble tool cultures their characters are more ill-defined than obscure. When it is natural to deduce from the extant evidences that the pebble tool industries in Africa and Europe form a sub-stratum of the Chellean-Acheulian Culture (Clark 1961) the same does not hold good in case of S/E Asia. Even at Olduvai the picture is far from clear as revealed by the study made by M.D.Leakey (1967). Here the Oldowan (Pebble tool sub-stratum) neither provides all the various evolutionary stages in its development towards Chelles-Acheul as was previously thought, nor does it occur exclusively as is seen in S/E Asia. Whether the Oldowan is to be considered as "ancestral both to the Chelles-Acheul handaxe tradition and the Chopper-Chopping tool complex" (J.D.Clark 1961) is a problem yet to be settled.

The picture which emerges from S/E Asia in collusion with that brought out by the author from Jammu points out to the currency of a vigorous and fairly independent trait as initially outlined by Movius, DeTerra and
But of late some have come forward to dispute the relevancy of such an idea and have made efforts to redefine the industries which were previously grouped within this culture complex. One of these is Collins (1969) who thinks that pebble tools like "flakes" have little value as traits. He goes further in designating these pebble tool cultures of Asia as Clactonian. This is a myopic view which probably has its origin in one of the papers of Paterson (1940) in which using a binomial system of classifying cultures, he had placed Sohanian and other pebble-tool cultures under the 'genus' of the 'family' Clacton. Strangely enough such were the views of many others regarding the other pebble tool cultures like Choukoutienian, Fatjitarian, Anyathian etc. (e.g., Bordes 1968). Encouraged by these trends of thought some Indian archaeologists came forward to suggest Sohanian as a flake culture (Sen 1954, Bose 1955 Soundara Rajan 1961). As a result they went forward to argue that the Sohanian is represented through the ontogeny of the flakes and pebble tools in it are nothing but subsurvients and have doubtful cultural status (Soundara Rajan 1964).

Unfortunately solutions to these controversial problems could not be reached due to reasons which were mostly political. The two most promising areas, N. China and N/W India, became out of bounds to the present generation of the prehistorians. As a result new data in
the light of better equipped Quaternary studies from those regions were hard to obtain in order to verify the older conclusions. As regards the Sohanian of Punjab recent efforts by Paterson and Drummond (1962) and Graziosi (1964) have proved very inadequate because when Graziosi's work is more concentrated towards exploration and collection of more artifacts, Paterson and Drummond's leans heavily over the reclassification of the older material. In India during the last two decades Sohanian localities have been found in the sub-montane regions of the erstwhile Punjab by Sen (1955), Lal (1956) and Mohapatra (1966).

Jammu was a terra incognita as regards prehistoric cultures till a press report relating to the occurrence of few lithic artifacts in the outer Ravi region in 1966 (The Tribune, Aug. 14, 1966). In the mean while the first detailed report of the occurrence of various types of lithic artifacts in the Kangra Valley was brought out by Mohapatra. These discoveries encouraged the author to embark upon a plan of explorations in Jammu region. For this the geomorphological investigations done by DeTerra and Paterson in this area and discovery of half a dozen flakes from below the Potwar silt above Akhnoor on the Chenab provided very encouraging lead. However, the author had to work under great handicaps resulting out of the two events of Indo - Pakistan hostilities in 1965 & 1971 which imposed severe restrictions on movements in this area.
for the purpose of mapping and exploratory digging. Despite this the data presented in this work has been collected at first hand by the author himself which comes from widely distributed sites and all conceivable types of Pleistocene formations. This work is the first serious study pertaining to the Sohanian of India in which the author has emphasised more on critical attribute analysis of the artifactual types in an evolving matrix. Interpolated with this the stratigraphic evidence indicates the existence of four industries of the Sohanian in this region spanning a period from Middle to Upper Pleistocene. The polished stone celts discovered by the author indicate the presence of a Neolithic culture in Jammu. Being very few in number they have not been included in the main body of this work but as an Appendix. So far there is no evidence of a Mesolithic (Microlithic) culture in this region.

A point which clearly emerges at the conclusions of the author's analysis is that the Himalayan foothill zone had been the peculiar habitat of the Sohanian. In order to appreciate this Chapter I gives detailed account of the Geography and the Geology of Jammu. It is mostly gleaned from the works of geologists and geographers in which the author claims no originality. Of particular mention is the work of DeTerra and Paterson which provides valuable information helpful in clearly understanding the ecological set up of the lithic industries and their ages
within the Quaternary which forms the subject matter of the next chapter (II). In Chapter II the author records the extent of the survey, location of sites and interprets the stratigraphy. Although in this Chapter the author leans heavily over the works of various Quaternary geologists in general and DeTerra and Paterson in particular, still a fair part of it is author's own observations and deductions thereof. Chapter III is the sum and substance of the author's work as regards the lithic industries which is, as will be seen, not only original in collection and assimilation of data but also is his contribution to the prehistoric researches of India as a whole and, so far neglected, this region in particular. Chapter IV deals with comparisons; Part A with industries outside India, Part B with industries within India. The work has been brought to an end with Bibliography and an Appendix. The line drawings of the artifacts and the maps have been prepared by the author himself. Most of the photographic plates, barring a few, for which the author is grateful to Sh. Vishwa Mittar, have also been prepared by the author.

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Note on Spellings:

Some of the recognised and familiar words are spelt variously by different authors. The spellings of such words, as adopted in this work, are given below against their alternative forms, to avoid confusion:

Shiwalik  Siwalik
Sohan    Soan
Sohanian  Soanian