Chapter-3
Megalithic Past Tradition
The archaeological research on megalithic has been going on in Chhattisgarh for more than forty five years. Recent discoveries indicate some interesting results for solving some of the enigmatic problems. The region of Chhattisgarh is distinct from both geographical and physiographical aspects. Prolific social scientific investigation into the Chhattisgarh region has been conducted from the 20th century A.D. and the earliest such attempt was taken by M. G. Dikshit\(^1\) of the Department of Archaeology, Madhya Pradesh at Dhanora. His excavation was limited. Though, he reported 500 megalithic monuments in 1956.

When the area was visited in June 2006 by the researcher, not a single monument was standing in perfect order. All the monuments were destroyed by the stone contractors for road construction. Another excavation was conducted by A. K. Sharma\(^2\) in 1990 at Karkabhat of district Durg. Yet the number of megalithic sites explored in Chhattisgarh was numerically less, which their chronology and nature deserves to be thoroughly analyzed.

**Typology of Megaliths in Chhattisgarh:**

There is some difference amongst the construction of megaliths monuments of South India, central India and other part of the world due to geographical and technological influences. Most of Chhattisgarhi megaliths were non-sepulchral nature like Dolmen, Menhirs, etc. Here an attempt has been made to discuss the various types of megalithic monuments found during the exploration in Chhattisgarh. The following are the typology of megalithic monuments the researcher explored in Chhattisgarh:
Stone Circles: (Photo-3)

It is a non-sepulchral monument. In this monument the small dressed or undressed stone are kept on the burial in a circle. In this burial, one may find the skeleton, pottery and iron objects. One can generally find ten to fifteen stone circles in a place.

Dolmen with Two Slabs: (Photo-28)

It is also a non-sepulchral monument. The small slab boulders are put in a two-side figure or rectangular plan underneath a small flat stone. The back side of the flat stone and the flat stone is kept like a wall. The villagers call it due pathri in Gondi dialect.

Cap-Stone: (Photo-8, 9, 14)

There is a big flat stone lying on support of many boulders. Under the flat stone one can find many small boulders packing. There are many small boulders kept throughout the circle area. One can find merely three cap-stone in this region.

Small Boulder with Single Menhirs :( Photo-26)

This is a unique type of Menhirs in Chhattisgarh. A big stone surrounded with the small boulder. Here the area of cairn circle is very less around 2.00 mts. diameter. The similar type of Menhirs, one can also find at the University of Hyderabad campus.

Alignment: (Photo-13)

The menhirs are in the alignment consisting of a cautiously oriented row and series of standing stones in horizontal line. In Dantewada and Bastar region, one can find five to six small stones, within the line.

Pyramidal Menhir: (Photo-11)

In this monument the small boulder is kept in the same way like the pyramid. Inside the small boulder, there are menhirs. This is the common type in Dantewada
region of Chhattisgarh. This is erected for the memorial purpose in the name of their ancestor. According to ASI, Prehistory Branch, Nagpur report, the chronology of the monument goes back to third century A.D.

**Twin Menhir : (Photo-1, 2, 25)**

In this type one can find two menhirs within same place and there is large cairn circle around the menhirs. The villagers state that this is the double burial of men and women. The researcher was found an iron implement close to the monuments. The villager was not allowed to take the iron weapon. Hence, it is kept in the village *mukhia* house.

**Anthropomorphic Menhir: (Photo-28)**

This is only an anthropomorphic figure in the form of menhirs which have been reported from Karkabhat. The most amazing and important finding are the sculptured menhirs. This is the biggest menhir have been sculptured creating the profile of the head of a man. The sculptured menhirs carved out of granite have been put in the center of the heap. Above the cairn heap, the available height of the menhirs is 2.57 mts. and the width is 1.19 mt.

The following are the types of monuments at Karkhabhat on the basis of morphological facial appearance. The detailed distribution pattern has been mentioned in the distribution map in the last part.

a) Stone cairn circle with loose packing and low cairn heap. (Photo-39)

b) Stone cairn circle with high cairn heap. (Photo-40)
c) Stone cairn circle with a single menhir at the centre and surrounded with heaped cairn packing. (Photo-26) d) Stone cairn circle with two Menhir erected side by side in the Northern half of the circle, surrounded with cairn heaped packing. (Photo-25)

In Dhanora, there was information of four types of megalithic monuments. The following are the types:

1. Apsidal stone enclosure with a cap stone lying flu’s on a heap of cairn.
2. Apsidal stone enclosure around menhirs at its centre.
3. Alignment of apsidal stone enclosure.
4. Menhirs with often a huge proportion.

But when the present researcher visited the site in June 2006, at Dhanora, a single cap stone (Photo-9) was found at that place.

Exploded Megalithic Site:
District-Dantewada, Gammewada: (Photo-12, 13)

Gammewada is a muria dominated village. It is located 12 km from the Dantewada district headquarter, on Dantewada-Bailadila road. There is a nala near the village. To the West of the road, we find large number of upright stones. The place is famous for the megalithic burial. In Gondi, the Megaliths are called uraskal. These types of grave-stone made of single block of stone are presently also erected by the muria Gond of the village in memory of their departed souls.

The size of the stone varies from huge to small ones measuring 1.00 mt. to 2.50 mts. There are six stone concentrate in single line. The stone are facing North-South direction. The maximum height of the menhir is 1.19 mt. The menhirs are erected in vertical or upright positions. The pyramidal menhir is a unique type in this region. Here we found huge amount of small boulders gathered like a pyramid. In between the
boulders we found a single menhir. The height of the menhir from ground level was 0.58 mt. and the monuments were fully covered with vegetation which the villager refused to clear. Some of the menhirs are datable to third and fourth century A.D. Since it is situated on the road side, it is destroyed by the road contractor for the construction of the Bailadila main road. Even the immigrants of the village use this stone for the construction of building. The main water source in this area is the Indravati River. The land where the monuments are located is forest land.

**Timmelwada: (Photo-28, 41)**

The village is situated in dense forest. The site is located 29 km from the Dornapal, in South of the Dantewada district. In this site the megalithic graves are in the form of cist-circle with a cap stone over it and five dolmens are there. The cap stone are located inside the forest. The three capstone (Photo-41) the stone slab is placed on the four small boulders and the remaining two slabs (Photo-28) placed on the three small boulders. The maximum length of the slab is 2.08 mts, the width is 1.25 mt and the height is 0.28 mt., the monuments are concentrated in single place. The monuments are in good condition because of the dense forest. There is no proper road communication to reach safely to the village. This village is dominated by the muria and dhurwa tribes.

**Sankanpalli :( Photo-31)**

The village is dominated by the muria tribe. Most of the villagers are immigrants from the Bhopalpatnam area. The site is located 11 km from Madded. In this site two cairn circles are in disturbed state. The cairn circle consists of about 15 to 20 small boulders placed like a circle. The monuments are in a disturbed condition and it is difficult to identify whether it is a megalithic monument or not.
Nelakanker: *(Explored by researcher)* *(Photo-33)*

The site is located 30 km from the block headquarter Usoor and 5 km from the pujharikanker. From Pujhari Kanker, on the road side, the Megalithic remains are available in the form of menhir. The monuments in this site are in good condition, there is fear of wild animals and presence of *salva judam* anti-naxalite movement. There is information about a menhir in this site. The diameter of the menhir from East-West, 4.15 mts., North-South is 3.40 mts., height of the menhir above ground level. 2.70 mts., width: left is 0.17 mt. and right is 0.54 mt., the maximum length is 2.10 mts.

Mundrapara: *(Explored by researcher)* *(Photo-42)*

The site is located 15 km from the Dantewada, on the Dantewada-Bailadila road. One can find four small menhirs as alignment positions, which are locally called the Uraskals. The size of the stone varies from huge to small ones measuring 1.00 mt. to 3.20 mts. There are four stones concentrate in single line. The stones are facing North-South direction. The maximum height of the monuments is 2.08 mt. The menhirs are erected in vertical or upright positions. The place where the monuments are placed is locally called *marghat*.

Murdanda: *(Explored by researcher)* *(Photo-34)*

The village is dominated by the *muria* tribe. The site is located 10 km from the South of Avapalli of Usoor block. On the West of the road site, we find a stone circle in disturbed condition. There are nine small boulders concentrated in a circle.

District-Bastar, Mothe: *(Photo-36)*

The village is on Dhanora-Dongar road of North of Godma. To the West of the road, we find a menhir. The following is the details of the monuments:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East-West-Diameter</td>
<td>4.00 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-South-Diameter</td>
<td>4.20 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Height of the Menhirs above G.L.</td>
<td>2.70 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Width: Left</td>
<td>0.17 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>0.19 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length on G.L.</td>
<td>1.58 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length on Top</td>
<td>1.38 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of Cairn Circle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East – West</td>
<td>2.00 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North – South</td>
<td>2.15 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Height of Cairn Heap from G.L.</td>
<td>0.09 mt.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Parond: (Photo-37)**

The site is situated in the Bisrampuri-Banskot road nearly 8 km South of Bisrampuri town. To the West of the village there is a menhir in disturbed condition. The polished side of the stone faces the South. The following is the details of the monuments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diameter East-West</td>
<td>1.45 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-South</td>
<td>2.15 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height of the Menhirs above G.L.</td>
<td>3.00 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Width</td>
<td>0.34 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thickness</td>
<td>0.33 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length from G.L.</td>
<td>1.07 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length on Top</td>
<td>1.07 mts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
District-Rajnandgaon, Kalari:
A. K. Sharma⁵ and his team explored this site in 1990. The site is located 10 km South East of Dongargarh town, which is famous for the tribal goddess bimaleswari. On the Dongargarh-Rajnandgaon road via, Tumribod and nearly one and half km from the village Dundera and right bank of the mula nala the cairn circles are identified. These cairn circles are similar to the Vidarbha cairn circle. These days people are taking away all these stones for road construction.

Murhipar:
A. K. Sharma⁶ and his team was explored this site in 1990. The site is located East of Rajnandgaon and 24 km of Rajnandgaon town. To one km East of the Murhipar railway station, in the foot-hills of Chirai-Dungri hillock on the both side of Mumbai-Howarh railway line, a large number of cairn circles were present. When the researcher visited this site in May 2005 not a single monument was present there. The monuments may have been destroyed by the stone contractors.

District-Durg, Dhanora: (Photo-9)
The site is located 21 km from the Balod-Dhamtari road. In this site excavations were carried out by M. G. Dikshit in 1956-57. During the time of excavation nearly 500 megaliths monuments (cairn circle, menhirs) were located. At present there is a cap-stone present in disturbed condition. The monument had been converted in to ballast and used in pitching the recent dug canal. The details of the monuments are mentioned in the plan drawing part.

Tengna : (Photo-5, 6, 7, 43, 44)
The site is located 5 km South of Dhanora, on the right bank of Chora-Nala. The site consists of several type of Megalithic monuments like menhirs, cairn circles etc.
Majority of them have been destroyed for obtaining ballast. One can notice five standing menhirs. The details of the photo- 5, 6 and 7 are mentioned in the plan drawing part. The following are the details of the monuments:

**Photo- 43:**

The menhir is located in the agricultural land. The direction of the stone is North South.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diameter East-West</td>
<td>1.50 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-South</td>
<td>2.00 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height of the Menhirs above G.L.</td>
<td>3.00 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Width: Left</td>
<td>0.20 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>0.25 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length from G.L.</td>
<td>2.10 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length on Top</td>
<td>1.50 mt.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Photo-44:**

The menhir is located inside of the agricultural land. The direction of the stone is North South.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diameter East-West</td>
<td>3.00 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-South</td>
<td>3.00 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height of the Menhirs above G.L.</td>
<td>2.50 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Width: left</td>
<td>2.50 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>0.33 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length from G.L.</td>
<td>2.20 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length on Top</td>
<td>2.15 mts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Karkhabhat: (Photo-26, 29, 39, 40, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50)
The site is located 16 km from Balod on the Balod-Dhamtari road. The site is spread over both sides of the road. There are seven megalithic types and about 500 monuments such as menhirs, dolmens and cairn circle densely concentrated near the two perennial springs. The burials are located in the high rock bench and thin soil cover area in a monsoon fed laterite zone. Nearly, there are large numbers of low natural rock shelters. This site was excavated by A. K. Sharma in 1990.7

Photo-26

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Menhir with big boulder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diameter: East-West</td>
<td>5.00 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-South</td>
<td>6.10 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height of the Menhirs above G.L.</td>
<td>2.10 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Width: Left</td>
<td>0.32 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>0.42 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length from G.L.</td>
<td>0.85 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length on Top</td>
<td>1.54 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of Cairn Circle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East – West</td>
<td>3.00 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North – South</td>
<td>3.29 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Height of Cairn Heap from G.L.</td>
<td>0.40 mt.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Photo-29

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Anthropomorphic Menhir</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diameter East-West</td>
<td>3.00 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-South</td>
<td>3.50 mts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Height of the Menhirs above G.L.  2.45 mts.
Width: Left  0.30 mt.
Right  0.26 mt.
Length from G.L.  1.50 mt.
Length on Top  0.20 mt.
Area of Cairn Circle
East – West  4.15 mts.
North – South  4.00 mts.
Maximum Height of Cairn Heap from G.L.  0.42 mt.

**Photo-39**

Type  Menhir with small boulder
Diameter East-West  4.19 mts.
North-South  4.25 mts.
Height of the Menhirs above G.L.  1.35 mts.
Width: Left  0.40 mt.
Right  0.34 mt.
Length from G.L.  0.80 mt.
Length on To  1.50 mt.
Area of Cairn Circle
East – West  2.25 mts.
North – South  3.00 mts.
Maximum Height of Cairn Heap from G.L.  0.19 mt.

**Photo-40**

Type  Menhir with very small boulder
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diameter East-West</td>
<td>4.50 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-South</td>
<td>4.00 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height of the Menhirs above G.L.</td>
<td>1.65 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Width: Left</td>
<td>0.40 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>0.45 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length from G.L.</td>
<td>1.20 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length on Top</td>
<td>0.30 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of Cairn Circle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East – West</td>
<td>2.50 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North – South</td>
<td>2.50 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Height of Cairn Heap from G.L.</td>
<td>0.50 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Photo-45</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Menhir with small boulder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diameter East-West</td>
<td>7.00 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-South</td>
<td>3.90 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height of the Menhirs above G.L.</td>
<td>1.65 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Width: Left</td>
<td>0.15 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>0.22 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length from G.L.</td>
<td>1.08 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length on Top</td>
<td>0.46 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of Cairn Circle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East – West</td>
<td>3.00 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North – South</td>
<td>4.10 mts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Maximum Height of Cairn Heap from G.L. 0.60 mt.

**Photo-46**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Cap stone with small boulder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diameter East-West</td>
<td>5.00 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-South</td>
<td>4.50 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height of the Menhirs above G.L.</td>
<td>3.20 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Width: Left</td>
<td>0.32 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>0.29 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length from G.L.</td>
<td>1.30 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length on Top</td>
<td>0.50 mt.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Area of Cairn Circle**

| East – West                      | 5.00 mts.                     |
| North – South                    | 8.00 mts.                     |
| Maximum Height of Cairn Heap from G.L. | 0.19 mt.                  |

**Photo-47**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>cap stone with cairn circle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diameter East-West</td>
<td>3.00 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-South</td>
<td>2.50 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height of the Menhirs above G.L.</td>
<td>4.20 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Width: Left</td>
<td>0.60 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>0.50 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length from G.L.</td>
<td>1.55 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length on Top</td>
<td>1.00 mt.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Area of Cairn Circle**
East – West                3.00 mts.
North – South 5.00 mts.
Maximum Height of Cairn Heap from G.L. 0.50 mt.

Photo-48

Type                                                                 Menhir with small boulder
Diameter East-West 3.50 mts.
North-South 2.90 mts.
Height of the Menhirs above G.L. 1.70 mt.
Width: Left 0.19 mt.
Right 0.21 mt.
Length from G.L. 0.70 mt.
Length on Top 0.52 mt.

Area of Cairn Circle

East – West 3.00 mts.
North – South 3.53 mts.
Maximum Height of Cairn Heap from G.L. 0.35 mt.

Photo-49

Type                                                                 Menhir with small boulder
Diameter East-West 3.00 mts.
North-South 4.50 mts.
Height of the Menhirs above G.L. 1.45 mt.
Width: Left 0.55 mt.
Right 0.50 mt.
Length from G.L. 0.80 mt.
Length on Top 0.60 mt.

Area of Cairn Circle

East – West 2.50 mts.
North – South 2.10 mts.

Maximum Height of Cairn Heap from G.L. 0.23 mt.

**Photo-50**

Type Menhir with small boulder

Diameter East-West 5.80 mts.
North-South 6.20 mts.

Height of the Menhirs above G.L. 3.00 mts.

Width: Left 0.25 mt.
Right 0.20 mt.

Length from G.L. 1.60 mt.
Length on Top 0.55 mt.

Area of Cairn Circle

East – West 6.15 mts.
North – South 6.50 mts.

Maximum Height of Cairn Heap from G.L. 0.42 mt.

**Majgahan:**

A. K. Sharma explored this site in 1990. The site is located 14 km from Balod and just one km from the Karhibhadar. Here, one can find the stone circle in disturbed condition. Nearby, there are large numbers of low natural rock shelters located.
Karhibhadar: (Photo-1, 2, 3, 8)

The site is located 13 km from Balod. To the south of the village there are many menhir and cap-stone in a disturbed condition. Nearly, seven menhirs, two cap stone and two cairn circles are present. The details of the monuments are mentioned in the plan drawing part.

Chirchari:

A. K. Sharma was explored this site in 1990. The site is located 12 km from Balod and the Majgahan village in nearby. He found many menhirs in disturbed condition. Now, the Megalithic monuments are totally wiped out because of the establishment of nurseries by the forest department and due to indiscriminate quarrying operation for the sake of ballast and building stone.

District-Mahasamund

Baratia Bhata: Photo-10, 37(1)

The site is located 16 km North of Baisna on Baisna-Sagarpalli road and was visited by researcher in May 2006. A cluster of 200-300 menhirs are found located at the West of the village. As the road passes over a part of the site, a large number of Menhir cover the road. A hostel building has been constructed by the government right over a part of the menhirs.

The Menhirs are from 1.00 mt. to 2.00 mts. tall having been erected in East-West direction with the dress surface facing east. This is the total departure from the normal practicing of erecting megaliths in the North-South direction. There are no cairn heaps and circle around the menhirs. They appear to have been erected in distinct group. A number of them have been dressed in the form of anthropomorphic figures. The sources of the raw material are the twin hills known as Mama-Bhanja, located nearby 2 km North
of the village. In morphological features the cluster very much resembles to the menhirs of Nagaland and Manipur.

**Photo- 37(1)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Menhir</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diameter East-West</td>
<td>2.00 mts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-South</td>
<td>1.30 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height of the Menhirs above G.L.</td>
<td>1.40 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Width: Left</td>
<td>0.40 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>0.40 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length from G.L.</td>
<td>0.30 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length on Top</td>
<td>0.12 mt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Villagers mention that during the excavation for laying out the road and during construction of the hostel building, a large number of iron object like daggers, spearhead, knives, arrowhead, etc., were recovered from these menhirs.

**District-Raipur**

**Aroud-Lilar-Bhawanmara: (Photo-11)**

The site is located 56 km from the Raipur town and is in the Dhamtari tahasil. It is situated on the bank of the river Mahanadi. This is a nucleus area for the megalithic people of the Mahanadi valley. Due to construction of *Pandit Ravi Shankar Sukla* dam nearby, majority of the menhirs and cairn circles have been destroyed. Presently, only one menhir is available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Menhirs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diameter East-West</td>
<td>1.20 mt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-South</td>
<td>1.50 mt.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Height of the Menhirs above G.L.  
2.50 mts.

Width:  
0.40 mt.

Right  
0.58 mt.

Length from G.L.  
1.40 mt.

Length on Top  
1.20 mt.

**Sonbira**  
The site is located 40 km from Raipur. In this village one can find menhirs in disturbed condition. There are many stone hedges. Eight blocks of stones have been set up on each end. The villagers worship these stones as their symbol of village goddesses. Some stones are painted in a modern form of lord *śiva*. Even the villagers are taking these stones and converting into boulders for the construction of house.

**Balapura**  
The village Balapur is situated 29 km East of the Bilaspur. The majority of the population of this village is gonds and they are more modernized compared to other tribes of Chhattisgarh. In this village one can find menhirs inside the agricultural land. The villagers found many iron implements such as axe and knife when they dug the land for cultivation. The iron implements show the existence of the megalithic phase in this region and its cultural links with the Vidarbha region.

The iron axe is a flat wedge shaped tool having a sharper cutting edge. The butt end is slightly narrow and for fastening the axe with a handle, two rings were provided. These rings are fixed diagonally and for this reason they are known as cross-rings. This is a typical megalithic tool reported from megalithic site in Maharasstra and Karnataka.
(Table- 1) List of Megalithic Sites in Chhattisgarh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village/Site</th>
<th>Block/Taluk</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Cultural Assemblages</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gammewada</td>
<td>Dantewada</td>
<td>Dantewada</td>
<td>Menhirs</td>
<td>13 km from Dantewada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timmelwada</td>
<td>Sukma</td>
<td>Dantewada</td>
<td>Cap-Stone, Dolmen</td>
<td>10 km from Dornapal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sankanpalli</td>
<td>Madded</td>
<td>Dantewada</td>
<td>Menhirs, Stone-Circle</td>
<td>12 km from Avapalli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nelakanker</td>
<td>Usoor</td>
<td>Dantewada</td>
<td>Cairn-Circle, Menhirs</td>
<td>5 km from Pujharikanker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mundrapara</td>
<td>Dantewada</td>
<td>Dantewada</td>
<td>Menhirs</td>
<td>15 km from Dantewada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murdanda</td>
<td>Usoor</td>
<td>Dantewada</td>
<td>Dolmen</td>
<td>10 km from Usoor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothe</td>
<td>Kondagaon</td>
<td>Bastar</td>
<td>Cairn-Circle</td>
<td>5 km from Godma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parond</td>
<td>Bisrampuri</td>
<td>Bastar</td>
<td>Cairn-Circle</td>
<td>8 km from Bisrampuri Town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalari</td>
<td>Dongargarh</td>
<td>Rajnandgaon</td>
<td>Cairn-Circle</td>
<td>10 km from Dongargarh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murhipar</td>
<td>Rajnandgaon</td>
<td>Rajnandgaon</td>
<td>Cairn-Circle</td>
<td>17km from Rajur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhanora</td>
<td>Balod</td>
<td>Durg</td>
<td>Cairn-Circle</td>
<td>21 km from Balod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tengna</td>
<td>Balod</td>
<td>Durg</td>
<td>Menhirs, Cairn-Circle</td>
<td>5km from Dhanora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karkhabhat</td>
<td>Balod</td>
<td>Durg</td>
<td>Cairn-Circle, Anthropomorphic Figure</td>
<td>16 km from Balod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karhibhadar</td>
<td>Balod</td>
<td>Durg</td>
<td>Menhirs</td>
<td>13 km from Balod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majgahan</td>
<td>Balod</td>
<td>Durg</td>
<td>Menhirs</td>
<td>14 km from Balod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chirchari</td>
<td>Balod</td>
<td>Durg</td>
<td>Menhirs, Rock-Shelter</td>
<td>12 km from Balod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baratia-Bhata</td>
<td>Saraipali</td>
<td>Mahasamund</td>
<td>Menhirs</td>
<td>5 km from Sagarpali</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Karkhabhat: The Memorial Sites

The Megalithic site at Karkhabhat (Latitude 20° 41’18” and Longitude 81° 19’07”)
are located around 16 km from Balod on Balod-Dhamtari road. The site is spread over both the sides of the road and presently there are nearly 170 monuments. This is a major burial site in the whole of Chhattisgarh. All the megalithic monuments are located on the rocky outcrops and on high area.

There are three types of Megalithic sites:

(i) The Habitation

(ii) The Factory

(iii) The Memorial

It is for the first time in India, one can find that all the three types of sites have been located at one particular site, adjacent to each other.

Habitation Site:

There are two habitation areas in this site:

1. Low rock shelter area

2. The open air habitation area

In the South and SouthWest of the Megalithic area, on the Southern bank of the natural spring, there are a number of low rock shelters on a slowly-rising granite outcrops. The length and width of these rock shelters vary from 1.00 mt. to 2.00 mts. and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dhamtari</th>
<th>Raipur</th>
<th>Cairn-Circle</th>
<th>Near P. R.S.S Dam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sonbira</td>
<td>Raipur</td>
<td>Raipur</td>
<td>Menhirs</td>
<td>38 km from Raipur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balapura</td>
<td>Bilaspur</td>
<td>Bilaspur</td>
<td>Menhirs</td>
<td>29 km from Bilaspur</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


2.50 mts. to 3.00 mts. respectively. These rock shelters clearly show that they were under constant use.

The open air habitation is located in the village Sorar (20°41’18” North, 81°19’07” East). In this village one can find two extensive mounds rising to the height of nearly 4.50 mts. Abundance of potsherds dating back from Megalithic period to historical period lies scattered all over the two mounds. Due to availability of black-and red ware pottery (Fig-2) one can assume that probably a vast habitation of megalith time lies under these mounds.

**Factory Site:**

There is a rock factory area, just close to the Karkhabhat megalithic site. There is a thick deposit of uniform granite outcrops, out of which it was easy to cut out and shape menhirs. Transportation of these huge blocks was easy to the adjoining burial area. They were made of different sizes as per the requirement depending on the status of deceased. Different shapes were needed according to the month and time of the death of the deceased person.

**Memorial Area:**

The Karkhabhat memorial burial site is located North of the factory site, which was the source of the constant supply of water. The total area of concentration in which menhirs with cairn circles are is spread over one km and now 70 Megaliths are in good condition. On the basis of morphological features of the Menhirs and their layout, seven types have been identified.

In Karkhabhat, twelve Megaliths of different shape were excavated in order to ascertain their sepulchral nature and to find out the difference among them. The
excavation report clearly shows that these menhirs and cairn circle are not associated with any sepulchral rite. They are almost invariably of granite. They have been raised in shallow pits and were propped up all-round by a ring of rubble packing.

**Finding Materials: Pottery**

In this Megalithic site less ritualistic offering were made by people, probably according to the status of the deceased. In this site three varieties of pottery are recovered:

(i) all black

(ii) black and red

(iii) burnished and coarse red ware

The small and medium size vessels are on black and black-and-red ware, whereas generally large sizes are on red ware.

Pottery both from burial and habitation are common in type. All the ware is well turned and medium to thick in fabric. The shape ranges globular pot with flared rim, bowls, dishes, shallow bowl-cum-cover, large and deep basins with collared rim, bowls-cum-lid, large and medium vase with carinated neck, handi or cooking vessel. The lower exterior of the pot is rusticated. A few sherds with burnished have also been found. The black-and red ware, which is fine to coarse in fabric include, the hemispherical, ovaloid and sub-ovaloid bowl, dish, shallow dish-cum-basin, trough and vase. The black slipped ware, generally of fine to medium fabric and thin section, is represented by the hemispherical ovaloid and sub-ovaloid, carinated bowls, dish and basin. In some pots the black-slipped ware in general appearances is found. Though the bulk of the pottery is plain, some sherds with incised and appliqué designs are also available. Incised
decoration consists of dots. Strokes, wary, vertical and horizontal line, criss-crosses, zigzag, thumb-nail impression forming chain or cord pattern are seen.

**Iron Objects:**

The megalithic people of the area had the knowledge of indigenous smelting of iron technology. Even today, the tribes like “Agaria” of Bastar, Sarguja and Durg district, smelt their own iron for their use which is of high quality. There are seventeen iron objects recovered from the excavation. These objects from the burial suggest that the Megaliths people of the area had warrior quality, which were constantly under attack from alien and animals. The large number of iron object in the Megalithic grave indicates a definite role of iron in agriculture. The placement of various objects in the burial became a part of their offence.

The iron object could be divided into two categories:

(i) Purpose of offence.

(ii) Purpose of agricultural and domestic use.

The objects of offence material are daggers, bladders, arrow heads, spike, spear head. Those objects are very small. The agricultural implement like ploughshare, the copper object like bangles, the stone bead along with bangles are used too. There are three types of bangles viz. open end type, overlapping end type, end melting type. The other objects like two gold rings, one silver wire nose ring in three pieces; terracotta objects are recovered from the site.

**Copper Objects:**

Copper objects recovered are mostly in the form of rings and bangles of different sizes. They are all solid. The rings and bangles are not joined at the end but are of open
type to facilitate increase or reduction in their diameter according to the requirement. In the female burial one can find these types of ornaments.

**Gold Objects:**

Two rings were found in this site. One is of single coil, closed type while the other is of open end wire type spiral ear ring. They are in very pure form.

**Main features:**

If we see the total Menhir excavated in the Karkhabhat region, there are various shapes of Menhir. The following are the various shapes:

1. Fish shape: in this type, one end is pointed whereas the other is bifurcated in the form of tail of a fish. In case of standing menhir of this type, the bifurcated end is towards the top, whereas in case of cap-stone, it is towards the North.
2. Obliquely Pointed: the top of the menhir is obliquely pointed, with the pointed end towards East or West.
3. Conical: the top of the menhir is conical and erected in such a way that the magnetic line passes through the pointed end of the menhir.
4. Straight: the top of the menhir is horizontally straight and flat with magnetic line passing through the center of the width.

The excavation report shows that, all the cairn-circles are in the places of North-South direction, whereas all the menhirs are having their smooth surface facing North. In the entire site, the Northern fringes of the cairn circle, up to at least 1/3 of the circle is lined with bigger size of boulders. This indicates that the front of each burial was towards North and amongst the four directions North was given more importance. The presence of multiple stones circles of smaller size in the main cairn circle, with one or two stump
stone in the center. In one case, these smaller circles belonging to different phases have been noticed. From some of these smaller circle, pottery of thin grey colour ware and rough black-and red ware have been recovered. The erection of multiple menhir within one cairn circle at different time intervals is indicated by differences in the level of foundation pits and subsequent enlargement of the outer lining. The cairn circle of big boulders indicates the family burials. Moreover, separate group of offerings below the different menhir are also indicated in this direction. The evidence indicates that the offerings were normally kept inside the small stone cairn circle around one of the menhirs.

**Idea towards the Direction of Monuments:**

All the menhirs of this site have been so erected that the finished surface faces North and the unfinished surface is towards South. These menhirs have also been subjected to East or West dimension. They have been shaped in such a fashion that they are either conical pointing upwards or the top end is fashioned obliquely. The pointed end points either to the East or to the West. The angle of deviation from the magnetic North indicates their sense of direction and solar position. It is not necessary that these memorial menhirs were erected right away after the death of the person. They might have been erected even after a lapse of time but their position indicates the time and period of the years when the deceased left the human race.

The Chhattisgarhi Megalithic people had an advanced knowledge of erecting sepulchral architecture involving cutting, shaping, transporting and erecting huge menhirs as memorials. They transported huge quantity of boulders and arranged around the menhir in the Northern half and then at the bottom level and a distinct circle of stone was
made. In the case of single menhirs the successive larger boulders were arranged in a pyramidal fashion from another circle. In this way a number of circles were created filling the whole area. Right from the bottom the entire space around the menhirs and cap-stone was filled with boulders arranged in circle with a central stone. This is the new method, one can observe in this site. This shows that the megalithic people of this region adopted a good knowledge of architecture for creating cairn heights.

**Description of Some Selected Megalithic Monuments with Plan and Elevation Drawing:**

The megalithic monuments of Chhattisgarh had different feature, style of structure and placing of direction of stone. All the monuments are situated in the hilly and forest area. Nine megalithic monuments from the three sites are thoroughly studied in order to ascertain their typological nature and to find out the difference between each other. The study obtained from the explored sites show that these menhir and stone circle are not in sepulchral in nature. They are only in commemorative and it is known as secondary burial. Most of the directions of the monuments are concentrating on North-South. The monuments are focused in the similar place and distance between each other is approximately 10.00 to 20.00 mts.

All menhir has been so erected that the polished surfaces look North and the unfinished South. The outline of the menhirs is either they are conical pointing upwards or the top end is obliquely fashioned. The position of the magnetic North shows that they were consciously erected to point out the direction and solar position. The menhirs were not essentially erected immediately and they might have been erected after some break of
time. The nearest water source one can find in these sites is river Mahanadi. The detailed
of the selected monuments are as follow:

**Type A**

**Twin Menhir 1 : (Figure-1, Photo-1)**

In this monument both the stone are in elliptical shape. The stones are in the
refined formed facing each other. The distance between two menhirs is 8.60 mts. The
diameter from North to South is 17.00 mts. and from East to West is 8.40 mts. Both the
menhir is inclined to each other. A large amount of small boulders are kept throughout
the circle areas. There was some big stone kept below the menhir but villagers had taken
away the stone for their use. These menhirs are called as twin menhir. The direction of
the menhirs shows that these might have been erected during same time and by the same
family.

The maximum height of the menhirs (left) is 2.40 mts., thickness is 0.05 mt. and
width is 1.17mt. The maximum height of the menhir (right) is 1.25 mt., thickness is 0.40
mt. and width is 1.00 mt. The size of the stone shows that the stone was taken from the
nearby factory area and regulated in their home. Originally the stone was in straight
position but due to climatic problem and soil erosion the right side of the stone is in the
breaking and hanging position.

According to villagers, three generation back the monuments were worshiped by
the people in every new moon (amabasya) and full moon day (purnima) day in memory
of their ancestor. But nowadays due to influence of modernization they have stopped the
worship. Just near the monument one can find a village goddess temple which was
worshipped on every festival day. The villagers’ believe that below the monuments huge
amount of gold and ornaments was placed by their ancestor and the gold and ornament is
under the guidance of some devil and village goddess. To further they construct a temple near by monuments. Due to lack of conservation the monuments are partially in disturbed condition.

**Twin Menhir 2 (Figure-2, Photo-2)**

Within this monument both the menhirs are of elliptical shape. The stones were polished by the people. The distance between two menhirs is 6.60 mts. The diameter from North to South is 14.16 mts and from East to West is 8.00 mts. The directions of the menhirs are in North-South and are approximately same in size. The thickness of the left side menhir is 0.30 mt., the maximum height is 1.70 mts. and the width is 1.50 mt. The thickness of the right side menhir is 0.18 mt., the maximum height is 1.00 mt. and the width is 0.90 mt.

Therefore, one can say that the twin menhir 2 might have been erected in later the period after the twin menhir 1. The distance from the twin menhir 1 to 2 is nearly 10.00 mts. So, it shows that these menhirs belong to the same community or same family.

**Type B**

**Stone Circle :( Figure-3, Photo-3)**

This is the unique type of monument in this area. Here one can find stone circle with distinct cairn heap rising. The huge amounts of small boulders are kept throughout the area. The diameter of the cairn circle is 8.00 mts. There is smaller boulder around border of the circle. One can find a small stone circle consisting of seven to eight small boulder centre of the area. It shows the identification of the middle point of the circle. The whole circle looks like a moon around the stars.

The monument seems to be a secondary burial. After keeping the used material inside the circle they also keep the small boulders. The area of boulder shows the area of
the digging soil. The cairns are loosely arranged rubble covering 8.00 mts. of diameter. From the ground level the boulders slowly rise in a mound form. The maximum height of the boulder is 0.30 mt.

**Type C**

**Menhir: (Figure-4, Photo-4)**

There are four menhirs of this kind. The menhir-1 is located inside the village on the bank of the pond. The pond had been constructed in the modern time. The area of the cairn circle around the menhir from East-West is 3.05 mts. and North-South is 3.50 mts. The height of the menhir from ground level is 2.60 mts. The thickness of left side is 0.25 mt. and the right side is 0.35 mt., the width is 1.50 mt.

There were more boulders around the stone. The villagers have taken most of the boulders for their home use. The finished surface of the menhir faces North and the unfinished is South. The boulders slowly rise to the centre of the menhir in a pyramidal manner. The direction of the menhir shows that the soil is dug in East at depth of five to six feet. It seems to be a secondary burial erected in memory of their deceased. It shows that first they dug the soil, kept some material and then they placed the stone just near the dug area.

The menhir 2, 3 and 4(Photo-5, 6 and 7) are located inside the forest area. There is a rock shelter located 6 km from the site. People seems to have taken this stone from this rock shelter. The finished side of the menhir 2 (Figure-5) is facing North. There are huge amount of boulders throughout the area. There are some big boulders kept closely to the menhir. The diameter of the cairn circle is 5.00 mts. the height of the menhir is 3.45 mts, the width is 2.10 mts, the maximum thickness is 0.50 mt. The shape of the menhir looks like an arrow head. It seems that people first decorated the stone and then placed in
the field. There is some speciality in their decoration. According to the villagers, there was some picture on the stone but some people destroyed the stone, hence the picture got damaged.

The menhir 3 (Figure-6) is located inside the forest in the plain area nearly 100 mts from the menhir No. 2. It seems that all the menhirs from this site belong to the same group of people. The sense of direction and the beautification of all the menhir are same. This menhir looks like an anthropomorphic figure like a head of human being. Though the menhir does not reveal any sexual figure, on the basis of facial expression it appears to be a man head. The menhir carved out of granite has been put in the centre of the cairn circle. It has been erected in the North position; it means the finished surface is facing the North. The diameter of the cairn circle from East-West is 10.00 mts and North-South is 9.50 mts. The height of the menhir is 3.30 mts., the length from the ground level is 2.20 mts. and the maximum thickness is 0.27 mt.

The menhir 4(Figure-7) is located inside the forest near the cultivated land. This is the big menhir from the Chhattisgarh area. This menhir was erected in the name of some respectable person. The finished surface of the menhir faces North and unfinished is on South. There are many small boulders around the stone. There were many big boulders close to the stone but the villagers have taken away for their use. Now one can find a big stone near the menhir. The diameter of the cairn circle from East-West is 2.00 mts and North-South is 2.20 mts. The height of the menhir from the ground level is 4.40 mts., the width (left) side is 0.22 mt. and the right side is0.42 mt., the length of the menhir from the ground level is 1.80 mt. The nature of the monument shows that it is a secondary burial.
Type D

Cap-Stone:

The cap stone 1(Figure-8, Photo-8) is located in the plain area near the village. The cap stone is around the small boulders and in the centre resting over many cairns heaps. The cap-stone is oriented North-South and the border end is toward the South. The diameter of the cairn circle East-West is 5.60 mts. and the North-South is 6.40 mts. The length North-South is 2.25 mts., the width East-West is 1.30 mts., the thickness is 0.20 mt.

The cap stone 2 (Figure-9, Photo-9) is located in the plain area just on road side of the national highway. The stone is an elliptical shape. The cap stone is around the small boulders and the boulders the below the stone are not properly visible. Due to soil erosion the boulders were inside the soil. The road construction has also led people take away the boulders using them in the road. The approximate diameter North-South is 10.00 mts. and East-West is 7.00 mts. The length of the stone is 4.40 mts., the width is 1.80 mts. and the maximum thickness is 0.60 mts. The characteristic of these cap stone shows that it is a memorial stone non-sepulchral in nature.

Thus, the megalithic people of Karhibhadar, Dhanora and Tengna adopted the circle and pyramidal form for creating cairn heights, conical and oblique form of pointing for the menhirs. The similar monuments are found amongst the gonds of Bastar region who presently erect the menhirs, capstone and cairn circle at one particular place and adopt the same method. They also worship the monuments on a particular festival day. The new feature observed in these sites are raising the cairn height with circle and filling huge amount of small boulders. Consequently, it is concluded that the practice of megalithic monuments in Chhattisgarh region is still a living tradition.
The Sculptural Menhirs: (Photo-29)

The important Megalithic monuments found in Chhattisgarh are sculptured menhirs. One of the biggest menhir was found to have been sculptured creating the figure of head of a man. The sculpted menhir carved out of granite has been put in the center of the cairn heap. Above the cairn heap the available height of menhir is 2.57mts. and width is 1.19mt. It has been erected in North-South position. The masterly fondle of the sculpture has brought out a magnificent facial view of a man having a receding broad forehead with prominent glabellas point, sharp long nose, broad and prominent ridge in the upper lip below nasal spine, pronounced lower lip and protruded chin. On the Northern face, an eye has been carved out. On the top of the head, in the center there is a domical projection to show the bun or tuff of hair.

This is the only sculpted menhir in the form of a human figure, showing facial profile and giving three dimensional perspectives. It does not reveal any sexual feature and on the basis of facial expression it appears to be that of a male. This sculpted menhir is placed at the center of the area of Megalithic memorials. Such sculptured menhir is also available at Bartia-Bhata and Tengna but most of them have now been totally destroyed by stone contractors.

The anthropomorphic figures in form of Menhirs have been reported from a number of Megalithic sites in India. Mostly in South India, one can find the anthropomorphic figure. In Andhra Pradesh, one can find at Medimala\textsuperscript{14} in Chittoor district, Domada\textsuperscript{15} Dongatogu\textsuperscript{16} Galabha\textsuperscript{17} and Tottigutta\textsuperscript{18} in Khamman district, Kaperlaguru\textsuperscript{19} Murgapet\textsuperscript{20} Malur\textsuperscript{21} and Katapur\textsuperscript{22} in Warangal district and Lingala\textsuperscript{23} in Krishna district, Vedayapalem\textsuperscript{24} and Golagamudi\textsuperscript{25} in Nellor district. In Karnataka, A.
Sundara,\textsuperscript{26} has reported a crude small monolithic anthropomorphic figure without arms from Rajankolur in Gulberga district, Kumali and Maribetta in Bellari district.

On the basis of the shape and figures, K. P. Rao,\textsuperscript{27} classified anthropomorphic figure into five categories (plate-1)

1. A small thick rectangular stone block is carved with a small, squishy projection at top to represent the human head. The body maintains a uniform dimension up to the bottom and thus avoids suggestion of lower limbs.

2. The second category looks like blocks and represent the human body. The body and the lower limbs are suggested by a uniform projection below the hands.

3. The third category has a round head and curved outward shoulders. Though, the head is clearly shown, the upper limbs are probably depicted by an outward projection from the shoulder area.

4. The fourth category displays female feature in the form of bulged breasts or they are suggested by two circles.

5. The fifth categories of anthropomorphic figures look like the copper hoard figure. These figures are usually carved out of a thick stone slab. They have like two head. There is no head in this category.

Generally, one can find the anthropomorphic figure near the megalithic monuments and some times with a part of the monuments. There are some important characteristic which one can find from the anthropomorphic figure; the figure is usually associated with the Dolmen and Dolmenod cists but in Chhattisgarh, it is associated with the menhirs with cairn circle. The upper part of the figure is looks like the human form but the lower part does not look like human form, but it can be compared with legs. The
figures are not distinctly sexually identifiable, if it is identifiable; it is only the female figure. Most of the figures are depicted in the same direction with megalithic monuments.

**Survival and Settlement Pattern:**

The megalithic period of Chhattisgarh represents a different culture. The megalithic farmers of Chhattisgarh shared the traits of sedentary settlement and were engaged in animal domestication, manufacture of pottery, cultivation, iron smelting etc. The agricultural implements like plough share, sickles etc, too indicate that the megalithic people of this region were mainly agriculturists.

The human groups are settled around the perennial water sources. The settlement pattern is not only based on their economy but also an important aspect of their socio-cultural life. The people generally; chose to live near the river valley in hilly terrain area, where they got natural resources like, iron ore, gold bearing reefs, granites, gneisses, copper etc. They lived in thatched houses. The floors were plastered with lime covering the stone and *murram* (one type of red sand). The houses were generally circular and oblong. They may have also used rocks like granite, gneisses, laterite, and basalt in large number.

**Location:**

The location of the megaliths of this region could be based on physical condition. The megaliths are concentrated on high rock-bench areas, where the large quantity of iron ore and traces of gold is available. The burials are noticed over rocky high land near the water sources. In this region they lived near by burial, where the bounties of stone were available. One can find both habitation and burial sites within a small distance. The majority of megalithic site of this region are only burial in nature.
**Art and Architecture:**

The Chhattisgarhi megalithic architectural constructions depend on the environmental factors. The people had advance knowledge of sepulchral architecture. With the knowledge of iron technology, quarrying of stone was a continuing activity, like cutting, shaping, transporting and erecting huge menhirs as memorial monuments. The monuments were built of locally available stone and sometimes transported from far off tracts. Granite stone was available for the composition of boulder circle. The enormous quantities of boulders were arranged around the menhir.

The stone circle was enlarged with great accuracy with the inclusion of more menhirs in course of time. Even in the case of single menhir the succeeding layers of boulders were arranged in a pyramidal manner slowly going up to the top. All the menhirs are arranged in circle with a central stone. The pyramidal and circular formation of the structure was the main aspects of the architecture of the people of this region.

**Economy:**

The megalithic people of this region were partly agriculturist and partly hunter as shown by the excavated evidence of iron tools and implements (plate-2). Most of the settlements are noticed close to water sources and in hilly areas. All the above evidences show that, they were primarily agrarian. Pottery was another profession they adopted. The people were expert in different profession to fulfill the demand of the whole community. Even, now-a-days, the Agaria community of Kanker and Bilaspur region is involved in the profession of iron smelting. They indulged in community hunting of different animals and birds as shown by the implement of offence found, like arrow-head, spearhead etc. The people were knowledgeable in iron ore smelting and in gold mining.
Tools and Weapons:

They used different type of tools and weapons for agriculture and hunting purpose. It included dagger blades, arrowhead, spikes, spearhead etc. The literary evidences bear the view that, iron was known to the people of East by early first millennium B.C. *Rg-Veda* mentions the word ‘ayas’ as metal and it has been recognized as iron. The work of metal was accepted by a particular guild of ‘karmaras’ or blacksmith. The megalithic people of this region were technologically sophisticated is shown from the excavated monuments.

Ceramic Tradition:

The evolution of Indian ceramics began with the Harappan age and the art of shaping and baking clay articles as pottery, earthenware and porcelain has endured through the ages. Pottery was the most significant accessory in their daily life. In Chhattisgarh, Karkhabhat site comprises mainly three types of pottery- all black, black and red burnished and coarse red ware. There is evidence of pottery making, both handmade and wheel-thrown, from Karkabhat site. The most important characteristic ceramic industry of the megalithic culture is black and red ware. It is usually of fine fabric and does not contain tempering material. Very limited number of decoration is found on the Chhattisgarhi Megalithic pottery.

Food Habits:

The archaeo-botanical remains have not been recovered from the megalithic site of Chhattisgarh. The agricultural implement found in the Karkhabhat site has given in formation about their agricultural activities. It is a fine example of iron plough-share,
which was used by megalithic people. Due to the accessibility to rivers and canal they may have cultivated rice, barely etc.

We have not found any irrigation system in this area. On the basis of their economy they were primarily a pastoral community. There is an evidence of pottery making, both handmade and wheel thrown. The discovery of some pottery like bowl tells that it may have been used for cooking. The pottery bowls which were used for snacks are one-dimensional while those used for eating a full-course meal are deep with a thicker rim.

**Belief System:**

In every community there is a belief system behind their burial ceremony. Megaliths represent a form of ancestral worship and it seems to have been accompanied with elaborate rituals and a complex system of beliefs including the existence of soul and life after death. These belief systems are still practiced by the Gonds of Bastar region. The megalithic people believed in rebirth “punarjanma” and post-death life. Due to this belief they placed many materials such as pottery, iron implements, foods, etc. in the burial ground for use in the life after death. If the soul (atma) is not satisfied, then it is converted into the ghost (bhut). Due to fear of ghost they provided some shelter in the shape of menhirs, dolmens etc.

In Bartia-Bhata of Mahasamund district, the people have different belief systems towards the menhirs. They believe that, thousands years ago the marriage procession (barat) of a zamindar came to this village and stayed there at night. Due to some magic all the people were converted into stone and are still lying on the floor. Whatever position
they were in that night the stone shape is adapt as the original position. The shape of the stone also has been decreasing day by day.

Now the villagers worship the stone every festival day. They believe that the village goddess (gaon devi) stays in the stone. When the present researcher tried to dig one of the stone, he found an iron implement below the stone. The stones are what their ancestor had erected as a memorial for their death ritual. The stones are preserved in this area in village mukhia’s house.

**Burial Practices:**

The most characteristic feature of the society is the mode of burying the dead. The burial practices of the megalithic people show a wide variety. There are many type of burial one can find in Chhatisgarh, such as single, double, multiple, primary and secondary. In Chhattisgarh most of the burials are secondary where one cannot find any skeletal remains. Even *Rg-Veda* points to the two types of burial, cremation and primary burial such as *Agnidagdha* and *Aa-nagnidagdha*. There are a few sites in South India were the burials are marked by carved monolithic known as anthropomorphic figure.

The death rituals are very important for the tribals of India of past and present. These practices are strictly followed from generation to generation, particularly in tribal society of Chhattisgarhi megalithic People. The megalithic people observed certain funerary customs such as single burials, double burials, child burial etc. The reason behind such varied practices could not be understood from the archaeological data. However in the next chapter I have discussed the ethnological perception toward the belief and practice of the tribal people what they practicing today in Bastar region. As the megalithic burials contain skeletal remains of several people, it was thought that they
represent communal burial. In such cases the erection of monuments must have been taking place at significant occasion or when skeletal remains of large number of persons are available. Similar kind of practices still exists in tribal community of Dantewada region.

**Origin and Chronology:**

The initial study of skeletal remains suggest that the megalithic people belong to proto-australoid, negroid and Mediterranean groups. The iron using megalithic culture was an incursion into the earlier neolithic-chalcolithic culture. The carbon dates suggest that the megalithic culture of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh had an earlier beginning than those of Kerala. The megalith of Vidarbha generally falls between 600 BC-200 AD. In the Vindhyan region, however the so-called “chalcolithic-megalithic” have been assigned to 1500BC-1000BC. At Gufkral in Kashmir, the megalithic remains are dated to mid second millennium BC.

Based on the method of disposing of the dead, it could be said that there are three stages of transition; burying the dead individually inside the pits with full articulation, exposure of the dead and collection of skeletal remains, cremation of the dead and collection of important bones for interring in family vaults. If we see the case of Chhattisgarh, it has not so far yielded any proper evidence of chronology as the monuments of every village under study are considered as living monuments and they are protected by the respective villagers. As such the anthropomorphic figures and sculpture menhirs can be given dates 1000 BC to 500 BC.

**Comparison with Other Parts:**

From the above information one can conclude that the megalithic culture occupied a larger area in Chhattisgarh. The similar culture spread North and Eastwards
and prospered as is evident from the occurrence of sites in Hazaribagh, Palamu and Singbhum districts in Jharkhand, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur and Meghalaya etc. If we see the monumental similarity with peninsular region, one cannot find Urn-burial, barrow and sarcophagus in this region. Another distinctive element of this pottery lies in graffiti marks, which one could not find here. There is an absence of micaceous red ware and russet coated white painted ware pottery in this region which one can find in Malabar area. The menhirs are mainly found in plan area near hill mountain area. In Malabar, one can find menhirs in sea board area. If we go to the Vidarbha region most of the monuments typologically belong to a single type that is pits bounded by a cairn circles. The megaliths appear with the end phase of the Chalcolithic painted pottery culture. The megalithic people adopted the local disposition of painting model from the existing earlier culture. The megaliths of North-East are closely related with the Chhattisgarh. All the megaliths are mostly remembrance rather than sepulchral.

The iron implement such as hoes and plough share shows that megalithic people of this region were agriculturist. Such kinds of iron implement have also been recovered from Mahurjhari, and Ramapuram. In the North, Burzuham has given a megalithic phase succeeding the Neolithic without black-and-red ware.

The dissimilarity in the type of megalithic monuments is not constricted and one type is limited to one region. In comparison with other parts S. B. Deo argued that “the diversity of material culture is brought out by certain features which are peculiar to certain region. For instance, the painted black-on-red pottery which is met with the Vidarbha megaliths of Maharashtra has no parallel in megalithic in further South. Similarly, the highly glossy black-and-red wares were typical of South Indian megaliths.
are rarely met with in Vidarbha megalith. The variety of funerary architecture that one comes across in the South is absent further South.”

**Cultural Similarity:**

The erection of memorial stone in the name of ancestor is still followed by many tribes of India. The Gonds of Bastar region, the *khasis* of Assam and Meghalaya, *nagas* of Nagaland, the *todas* of Nilgiri still erect stone monuments as a commemorative in nature. The present day gond belief and tradition of such method of erecting menhirs, their sacrificial belief and way of understanding towards life are similar with the *nagas* and *khasis* of Nagaland and Meghalaya. The accessibility of various equipments and the homogeneity of groups within the megalithic people have contributed to the uniformity in the model of production of different monuments.

The megalithic monuments are found in large numbers among the nagas of Manipur comprising, eleven ethnic groups, such as the *kabui*, the *kareng*, the *liangmais*, the *mao*, the *marams*, the *maring*, the *paumais*, the *thangal*, the *tangkhul* and *chakhesangs* which have been studied by P. Binodini Devi. Each group of megaliths distinguish by their distinct dialects, cultural traditions, dress and ornaments.

The megalithic types found among the *Nagas* of Manipur consists of menhir, alignments, avenues, dolmens, cairns with or without a stone-circle, capstone over the burial pit, stone-circles and stone seats raised in the memory of dead ancestors and some miscellaneous types, such as megaliths associated with head hunting, small menhir erected in alignment called lovers stone by a person or his sons in recognition of the love affairs, a person may have had during his life time. In Nagaland, the megalith is a living tradition and among the *Nagas* it is closely related with the great social event called
‘feast-of-merit’. A person desiring to erect a monolith or menhirs is required to offer a series of feasts-of-merit in order to attain the status to quarry a stone pillar or monolith for erecting the same in memory of his dead ancestors or in the name of living husband and wife or even to commemorate some social events. The similar type of ritual we find in Dantewada region. The megalithic remain found in this area consists of menhir, alignment, avenue and miscellaneous types such as stone platform, stone-walls, stone-chamber tombs and stone gate.40

If we see the chronology of present monuments it is yet to be dated scientifically. Based on the above information the megaliths of Chhattisgarh have specific common features, which make all of them representative of one wide-ranging cultural tradition. Consequently, it can be concluded that there are similar culture of megalithic monuments found in this region in a developed stage.
Notes and References

1 *Indian Archaeology - A Review*, 1956-57, p. 35.


3 *Indian Archaeology- A Review*, 1956-57, p. 35.

4 The scholar has found a board written the chronology of the menhirs. It is preserved by ASI, Prehistory Branch, Nagpur circle in the year 1991.


6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.


13 This site was excavated by A. K. Sharma and his team *Indian Archaeology- A Review*, 1991, p. 36


16 Ibid.


20 *Ibid*.

21 *Ibid*.

22 *Ibid*.


25 *Ibid*.


32 Agarwal, D. P. *Bronze and Iron Age in South Asia*, New Delhi, 2003, p. 244.


34 *Indian Archaeology- A Review*, 1963-64, p. 57.


