

Mystery of the Similarities of Indian, European and British Megaliths: a Consideration of Possible Influences in Antiquity

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ABSTRACT

India is a treasure house of a wide variety of megaliths created by separate tribes at different time zones. Surprisingly among this colossal hoard of megaliths across the large landmass of India there are many which have their identical in Europe and Britain. The paper investigates these similarities in architectures of a few megaliths in the lands of Europe, Britain and India. These similarities are indeed a mystery. Why are so many megalithic monuments in these lands identical or nearly so? Could it be that it was the same people who created them or may be these are result of contacts between the people of these countries in some unknown antiquity?

The paper studies the causes that may have given rise to these similar megaliths in India, Britain and Europe. In the process it delves into the oral traditions of a few megalith making proto-australoid Kolarian Mundari tribes of India who recount sagas of their traversing for centuries during much ancient times in many far-off countries which many tribal *gurus* presume to be various regions of ancient Europe. This may sound preposterous but many European vernaculars as German, Flemish, Greek, Irish and English strangely consist of many words which are indeed Mundari in origin. Many human and place names in Europe shows similarity with austrian Mundari words. The paper also discloses that several Mundari tribes in India and many European countries use exactly the same word for the same object. In addition, particular discussion centres on the meanings of the Mundari *sasandiri* and the folklore place-name *Sasanbeda*.

All these indubitably advocate that such resemblances are not upshot of a meagre happenstance but has materialised as a consequence of a contact subsequent to the arrival of these tribes in Europe perhaps during the European Neolithic Era. This proposes that the tribal folklores of the proto-Australoid Kolarian Mundari tribes is possibly inherently correct and therefore deserve in-depth study. These types of Indian megaliths that are similar to that of Europe and Britain either remain to be dated or have been found to be of much later date than their western counterparts.

Key Words: Dolmen, Indian megaliths, birdiri, hargarhi, Kolarian, Mundari, sasan, sarsen.

INTRODUCTION

Britain, Europe and India along with the rest of the world have quite a number of megalithic monuments which are stunningly similar. It is an enigma why and how the prehistoric humankind build such similar architectures in countries so far away? Although several papers have been authored on the subject yet a conclusive resolution has yet not been reached. This

perhaps is because that the subject has not received as much academic attention and discussion as it deserves, especially in recent times, when our understanding of megaliths, especially in the subcontinent of India, has grown tremendously. The hypothesis that India, UK and Europe during the Neolithic or Metal Ages had perhaps established a connection among themselves which resulted in the construction of the similar megalithic architectures has been snubbed. But a profound study indeed suggests that such a contact did really transpire between these places which could have led to the creation of the matching megalithic structures both in Europe and India.

Terence Meaden considers that “*Neolithic India bore similarities with Neolithic Britain and Ireland...*” (Meaden 1992). Quite a few Indian scholars too find this similarity of megaliths to be quite remarkable which they believe “...*point out towards a cultural link in the distant past.*” (Thapar & Sharma 1994). That India and UK had an alliance in the prehistoric times was also perceived by many Indian scholars of the colonial era. As the tribal and the megalithic perspectives were unknown in those days; many scholars viewed this contact from the Aryan perspective. The arrival of the British into India persuaded scholars like Keshab Chandra Sen affirm, “...*we see a reunion of parted cousins, the descendents of two families of the ancient Aryan race...*” (Thapar 1975).

MEGALITHS IN INDIA

From the mountains of the picturesque Kashmir in the north of India to God's own country of Kerala in the south and from the fascinating hills of Manipur in the farthest east to the industrial state of Gujarat in the west a large terrain of India is dotted with various architectures of megalithic monuments raised by different tribes from the prehistoric to the present times.

The conventional belief is that the largest concentration of megaliths is found in the peninsular section of the subcontinent. However this notion is gradually getting outmoded as more and more megaliths from the states as that of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh etc are being discovered.

Megaliths of South India range from cairn circles, dolmens called *valivadu* or *moriyerramana* etc, menhirs locally known as *nedunkal*, *virkol*, *virakallu* etc, rock cut burials locally called as *muniyara* to hat-stones and umbrella stones called *topikallu* and *kodaikallu* respectively. The chambered tomb types having cist and dolmenoid cist burials and the non-chambered tombs types with pit burials, sarcophagi and urn burials are among the prime burial modes in the region (Das 2014). Brahmagiri, Maski, Hanamsagar, Vibhuthihalli, Nilaskal and Hire-Benekal *et al* are among the most significant megalithic sites of the region.

Junapani in the Vidharbha province around Nagpur in Central India is a very significant megalithic site comprising over 300 stone circles many of which are non-sepulchral in origin. Garchioli, Chakvitralwada and the Hirapur region are a few famous megalithic sites among several in Central India.

Karkabhat near Raipur houses various menhirs, stone circles etc. Excavation of the monuments have yielded many iron implements as daggers, arrowheads, spikes, ornaments and objects of copper and silver etc (Sharma 2010). Many stone circles here have been found without any burials (Deglurkar and Lad 1992). Megalithism among the Bhils and the Gondis are a continued tradition. To them menhirs are *uraskal* and stone circles *sindibor*.

Jharkhand is a treasure house of megaliths and several regions of the state as Pathalgadda in Chatra district reveal heavy concentration of megaliths. Megalithism in the state is still practiced

by various tribes as the Mundas, Oroans, Hos and the Asurs. In the austic Mundari speech dolmens are called *sasandiri* and menhirs are known as *birdiri* or *burudiri*. Every tribal village in the state houses a burial ground called *jangarhi*, *hargarhi*, *harsali* etc which comprises of the *sasandiris* or the *birdiris*. The main entombment mode in the state is that of pot burial (Das 2018).

The Vindhya also accommodate plentiful megalithic burials around Allahabad, Mirzapur, Bandi and Varanasi. The sites comprise cists, cairn circles, cist within circles many of which are rectangular or oval shape and have an East West orientation (Mishra 2000). Dolmenoid cists and urn burials were excavated in Jainaula in the district of Almora in Uttarakhand. Large number of cist burials in Ladyura having North-South orientations was found inside pits dug into the shale of bed rock (Thapar & Sharma 1994).

During the British period Archaeological Survey had found numerous sepulchral cairns on the ridges of hills and forests covered tracts in the vicinity of Agra. Carleylle, an assistant to Sir Alexander Cunningham discovered megaliths in Satmas near Fathehpur Sikri (Banerjee 1993).

Excavation in the Burzahom megalithic site in Kashmir has revealed no funerary relics. The Leh megaliths are much different than the ones of Burzahom in Kashmir. The burials are generally cist or underground chamber of undressed stones. Megaliths such as menhirs as cairn and stone circles have been reported from Northern Gujarat. The Aravalli region of Rajasthan was home to quite a variety of megalithic architectures. Jhalawar district of Rajasthan is also home to quite a number of megaliths that have still not been destroyed. Gordon reported the find of four stone circles at Deosa at the centre of one circle he found a stone cist (Gordon 1960).

The North Eastern part of India is thoroughly megalithic and the region has been extensively studied. Megalithism here is a practicing tradition among several tribes of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Manipur etc. The Garos call their menhirs *Kima* whereas for the Khasis call them with varied names as *Kinmou*, *Mounam*, *Moulaniti*, *Mongni* or *Moukni* depending on the particular purposes for which they are raised. The Khasi dolmen is known as *maokinthayi*. The large slabs are known as *Ka-Yobayi-Tismen* which normally is raised as a tribute to the Mother Goddess *Ka-Yobai*. Clan members of the Garos erect a set of menhirs whenever a new village is set up (Marak & Jangkhomang 2012).

The diverse architectures and names of the megalithic monuments across India testify of their construction by different tribes at different times.

SIMILARITIES

Among the large multitude of megaliths described in the above a few has revealed stunning resemblances with several ones in Britain and Europe. The resemblances do not merely confine to megalithic architectures but spreads to myths, humans and place names as well.

To begin with, there are a few legends in Europe and India which are surprisingly identical. The fable of Stanton Drew of England speaks of wedding guests turning into megaliths (Grinsell 1973; 1976). How amazing that the same legend of a wedding party getting petrified is prevalent in many megalithic sites even in India. One other legend in Stonehenge suggests that the stones for the complex were ‘*flown*’ in from Killarus in Ireland (Grinsell 1975: 5-15; 1976). It is astonishing that many peasant communities and tribes in India term stones as ‘*Pankhuni*’ or ‘*Pankhuri*’: words deriving from the word ‘*pankh*’ meaning wings, suggesting flying.

A few motifs at rock art sites both of Europe and India are identical, and for that matter many rock art symbols across the world are similar. To some extent this may be due to the fundamental nature of the human psyche leading to like symbols and images, but as regards Eurasia many scholars regard that such occurrences may have stemmed from common origins or from the phenomenon of ideas and symbols having the capability of travelling on their own. That the similarities of rock arts could be an outcome of contacts of primitive societies in remote lands cannot be ignored because primitive people, being nomadic, are known to walk very great distances.



Plate 1

The image on the left depicts a game board in Italy while the image on the right is of a near similar game board in India



Plate 2.

(The image on the left) Templebryan, County Cork. In Ireland such stones are called 'bullaun'. They are found at Neolithic sites both in Scotland and England. Rain waters collected in the indentation at the middle of the artefact are held sacred. Credit: G. T. Meaden.

(The image on the right) Similar to "bullauns" of Ireland stones with depressions in the middle are found even in India. Such stones are considered to be mortars in India. Old villagers deem rain waters gathered in the dents in the middle of such relics to possess magical powers. Several scholars consider these to be vulva stones that were used in certain fertility rites in the past. Credit: Author.

Several game boards as the one of three squares incorporating into one another can be viewed on many flat stones across Europe and Britain. It indeed is staggering to find matching boards sculpted on many a recumbent megalith, outcrops and horizontal stones even in India (Plate 1). Such similarities may be ascribed to the manner in which rock art had once travelled during primitive times. Nonetheless that human contact in the past may have had led to the creation of such game boards both in Europe and India cannot be ruled out.

A particular shaped stone with a depression in its middle is known as ‘bullaun’ in Ireland. Rainwater gathered in the indentation is deemed holy and presumed to possess healing powers (Weir 1980). Strangely such stones can be located in many parts of the Indian countryside including in and around many ancient megalithic sites (Plate 2). Old timers in villagers conveyed to the author that rainwater gathered in the depressions of these stones possessed fecundity powers. Archaeologists in India regard these stones as querns and mortars, the term *bullaun* is not known to them.

Reverting to megaliths, one learns that Britain and Ireland are home to many erect holed/ring stones. Kenidjack Common (Cornwall) has several; Avebury and Totterdown (in the Avebury Hills) are three sites among many dozens that have survived the ravages of time and deliberate destruction. The megalithic complex of Punkri Burwadih in the Jharkhand state of East India accommodates two holed stones that are surprisingly near replicas of the British holed stones at Kenidjack and on Totterdown (Plate 3).



Plate 3

(The image on the left) A perforate/holed stone at Totterdown, near Avebury, in Britain. The concept of similar holed stones is found too at megalithic sites in India. Credit: G. T. Meaden.

(The image on the right) A perforated/holed stone at the Punkri Burwadih megalithic complex, Jharkhand India. This holed stone forms part of this megalithic complex. Credit: Author.

Several rock sculptures of human heads, reptiles and animals in India, among which the author has discovered several, demonstrate that the profiles complete with mouth and eyes, are hewn only on one side of the visage. In Britain, too, Meaden (1999: 6) had earlier discovered many similar sculptures of heads (humans and animals) with eyes carved on one side (“...some of the stones reveal profiles of human heads or faces, or more rarely animal heads ... usually one side only and always with an eye.”) (Plate 4)



Plate 4

(The image on the left) An animal head at the entrance to West Kennet Long Barrow, Avebury, in Britain. The barrow dates from 3600 B.C.E. Credit: G. T. Meaden.

(The image on the right) A lizard head at Banadag in Jharkhand East India. The sculpture is part of a capstone of a commemorative dolmen. The head is 'bent' to point the Kanhari Hill to the east. The head comprises a slit eye, a ridge on its neck, and the 'bend'. As that in the animal head sculpture of Avebury this sculpture too is in profile on one side of the stone. Credit: Author.

As more and more rock sculptures of animals, reptiles and birds are being brought to light in India and Europe we are finding that their eyes and mouths are indeed sculpted at one side of their heads suggesting the stylistics that had emanated from some ritualistic beliefs was prevalent all over.



Plate 5

(The image on the left) This propped stone structure is in Pembrokeshire in Wales. These constructions have their duplicates in distant India. Credit: The Heritage Trust.

(The images on the right) These structures from Purni Mandar and Rahriya Tand in Jharkhand East India although typical to this region reveal a startling similarity to the ones in England and Wales. The author names them "Lean-Support Structure". Credit: Author.

In the Chatra, Hazaribagh and the Santal Pargana districts of Jharkhand state in East India one encounters a rare two-stone megalithic structure where one menhir rests inclined on a relatively

smaller erect stone (Plate 5). The author has nicknamed these uncommon megaliths as “*lean-support menhirs*”. Meaden called them propped stones. It is indeed strange that the very same type of lean-support megaliths can be seen in distant Neolithic and Bronze Age Pembrokeshire (Wales) (Plate 5) and Cornwall (England)—as for example at Bronze Age Leskernick on Bodmin Moor (Bender et al. 1997: 152-153).

Hat and Umbrella or Mushroom Stones also known as the *topikallus* (Plate 6) and in the local vernacular are typical to Kerala state of South India and a few districts of its adjoining states. It is believed that these were memorials of landlords who while living, surveyed their farming fields holding their umbrellas or donning hats to shade themselves from the scorching sun. After the death of these landlords such dolmens of dressed laterites were erected in their memory; the capstones symbolic of their hats and umbrellas having their convex sides facing the sky are placed either directly on the ground or on four orthostats respectively facing the four cardinal directions (Krishnaswami 1949). *Kodaikallus* are actually pit or underground burial chambers belonging to the phase between the Iron Ages and the historical period. Interestingly Neolithic Britain displays near similar crude structures as that in Chun Quoit, Cornwall, England (Plate 6). These monuments are usually thought to be related to funerary practices (Joussaume 1988) and these monuments could be possible precursors to the much improved *Kodaikallu* dolmens in India.



Plate 6

(The image on the left) *Chun Quoit, Cornwall, England. The presence of such constructions in Neolithic Britain may testify to the birth of the Kodaikallu type architecture in this land which was perhaps perfected much later during early historical times in India when the Kolarian tribes subsequently arrived there. Credit: G. T. Meaden.*

(The image on the right) *Kodaikallu, the Umbrella or Mushroom Stone typical to the state of Kerala in South India. These memorial dolmens comprise a hemispherical capstone with convex side facing the sky supported by four stones. These lithic settings mostly belong to the phase between the Iron Ages and the historical period too is remotely identical to the image of the monument on the left. Credit: bagndpak.blogspot.com.*

Petroglyphs of pecked concentric circles as that of the noted Heygate Stone, the Ballochmyle Walls or of Achabreck are quite widespread across Britain and Ireland. India too has revealed a large treasure of a similar kind of concentric circles. Among them are those in Sopore in Kashmir in India, dated to the Neolithic Age (Mishra 2013). Such petroglyphs continue to be made in an uninterrupted manner that has lasted thousands of years among many Hindu and non-Hindu tribal communities of India. One menhir in Mizoram in India which seems relatively new possesses such concentric circles. On specific auspicious days both the Hindus and the tribals still

draw concentric circles on the floors and walls of their homes using a gruel of rice and water, substantiating the theory of the continuation of this very ancient rock-art form till the present day. Scholars in many ways have tried to interpret the enigmatic symbol of the concentric circle. Ram Dayal Munda, the noted tribal scholar and ex-Vice Chancellor of Ranchi University, has construed that these circles denote life and human manifestation (Munda 2000) where as Maria Gimbutas believes such concentric circles represent regeneration.

Scholars have learnt that megaliths of the Neolithic times were temples of the now obsolete fertility cult of the ubiquitous Mother Goddess. Mother tribes all over ancient Britain, Europe and the Middle East raised megaliths in honour of the Great Goddess (Gimbutas 1991). The burial practices of megalithic tribes across India also reveal fertility customs (van Exem 1982)(Das 2018) and their traditions show their conviction towards the Mother Goddesses. These burials also disclose that akin to corresponding monuments in the British Isles and France these were also built as symbols of the Great Goddesses' wombs, hence were shrines that also celebrated her glory (Das 2009). Pit burials are referred to in the Rig Veda as "*mrinmayam graham*" with an appeal (RV X; 18, 11) to Mother Earth to rise up and cover the dead with her garment like a mother to a child (Sundara 1975).

Akin to many megaliths of Britain as Newgrange, Stonehenge and Callanish etc, several of these monuments in India too have been found to be oriented towards the significant sunrises and sets and the cardinal points. In 1956 F. R. Allchin, the noted archaeologist authored a ground-breaking paper called "Stone Alignments of Hyderabad" (Allchin 1956) which mentioned 40 megaliths including Nilurallu, Hanamsagar and Vibhuthihalli etc in the region of South Hyderabad that verified astronomical alignments. Gordon quite aware of astronomical significance and the measurements of many megaliths in UK was startled to see precise dimensions of the similar kind of a few stone circles in Deosa in Rajasthan of which no trace now remains (Gordon 1960). The author's discoveries of a several megaliths also reveal alignments towards sunrises and sets of the equinoxes and the solstices much similar to several archaeoastronomical megaliths in Britain and Europe (Das 2018).

RESULTS AND POSSIBLE INFLUENCES OF THE MIGRATION OF THE TRIBES

India is a land of numerous tribes; many of who have adopted the Hindu, Islam, Buddhist, Jaina or the Christian faiths today. There are indeed many who still pin their primeval faith in the omnipresent Mother Goddesses of the antiquated fertility cult.

The Gonds, Bhils, Mundas and the Santals are the largest tribes of India among numerous others. Anthropologically speaking the former two are Dravidian whereas the remaining two are labelled as proto austroloid Kolarian tribes speaking the different austric Mundari languages (Verma 1990) The Mundas are a megalithic tribe who still build megaliths on their dead since the Neolithic/Chalcolithic era. Their sister tribes the Sabara, Baiga, Ho, Birhor, Santhals and the iron smelting Asura *et al* speak separate variants of the austric Mundari language. However among these tribes today only a few have retained megalithic burial practices. Prior to the Aryanisation of India the various Kolarian Mundari tribes were such a predominant force in prehistoric India that S.C.Roy, the doyen of Indian anthropology and ethnography insisted that ancient India should have been named *Kolvrata* instead or the Aryan *Aryavrata* (owing to the predominance of the Kolarian tribes in ancient India) (Roy 1912). The eminent linguist Suniti Kr. Chatterjee determinedly believed that the tribal Mundari speech extended from the Ganges valley and the Himalayan slopes though Bengal right up to the Mekong valley.

Both the dark skinned Kolarian proto-austroloid tribes and the Dravidian Kudukh speaking Oraon tribes have folklores of their own and each has their different accounts of their origin and journey narratives that speak of their traversing across scores of cities, jungles, lakes, mountains and rivers and subsequently arriving in India where they eventually settled. It indeed is surprising that they tenaciously trust that their original homeland was outside India.

Santali traditions also talk of their meandering into unknown lands prior to their entrance into India (Guru Kisku 2003). Tribals having no script of their own could not document their history but they have them well preserved in their songs and lores which they recite during their diverse festivals and also in their varied rituals of marriage, childbirth, naming of new borns *etc.* Therefore these songs and folktales held sacrosanct by them can very well be regarded as their oral history. Their tradition speaks of cities which they build, wars they fought and mountains on which they took refuge *etc.* Basing on their traditions one learns that the homelands of every Kolarian tribe in India are different which they firmly believe to be outside of India. Talking of a few, the Santals' homeland was in *Hihiri Pipri*, whereas *Hirapur* and *Azovgarh* were the abodes of the Khadia and the Munda tribes respectively. The Santal *gurus* hold that their abode *Hihri Pipri* was in Sumeria/Chaldea (Kisku 2000). Many scholars studying the early migration of the Munda tribe consider their original home of Azovgarh to be Azamgarh in UP but several researchers contradicting this hypothesis equate Azovgarh with the region of Azov beside the Sea of Azov near the Caspian Sea.

The Rg Veda refers to the Chaldeans as Kaldis (Choudhary 1974), with the *Ch* of Chaldea being pronounced with a K (*as in Chemistry*). Chaldea in the olden days was also expressed as Culdea, Kaldea, Keldio, Koldea, C(K)eldea or may be just Koldiha (Das 2009). Due to their origin in Chaldea/Koldea/Koldiha the proto austroloid Santals got designated as *Kols*, a title which today corresponds for all the Mundari tribes. Wherever in India the tribals resided the place names were prefixed with the word 'Kol' as "*Koldi*", "*Koldiha*", "*Kolchi*", "*Kolihan*", "*Kolghatti*" and "*Kolhua*" *et al*; testimony of the tribe's or the community's presence in the region sometime in the past.

The Kolarian tribes migrating from Chaldea/Koldia/Koldiha entered the region of the middle-east. Much analogous to names of tribal villages in India as Banadag, Jandag, Kasmar and Konar etc the middle-east still retains ample of similar tribal place names as Kumdag, Nabitdag, Jandag, Kopetdag, Quasmar and Kunar etc as evidence of their stay in the region in the deep past. The native populace being totally ignorant of the fact that these place names were named by the proto austroloid Kolarian tribes during their presence in the land in antiquity tender different connotations to these place names today which are indeed austriac in origin.

The Santali tradition is extremely alluring; in which they refer to a region called *Jarpi Disom* where in they had once sauntered to. Many Santali researchers believe that *Jarpi* of their *Jarpi Disom* apparently is "Europe" while in the Santali speech *Disom* is "country" (Kisku 2000). Indeed there is a faint familiarity between the names of "Europe" and "*Jarpi*." The Mundas surprisingly have no *Jarpi* in their migratory accounts.

Scholars have firmly scoffed at the journey narratives of the tribals believing these having no scientific foundation hence deem them purely as myths. But the existence of many austriac Mundari words in quite a few European languages as that of Flemish, German and Latin *et al* not only astonishes but also affirms the presence of certain nomadic Kolarian megalithic tribes in these regions during Neolithic times who conversed in austriac languages. Given below is a small list of Mundari words of many which has been acquired from Kisku's book (Kisku 2000) who had apparently borrowed them from Fr. John

Hoffman's iconic Encyclopedia Mundarica (Hoffman 1930).

MUNDARI	EUROPEAN	MEANING
Kui	Kuh(Ger) Cow (Eng)	Cow, calf
Da	Da (Latin)	to give
Men	Mean (Eng) Meenen (Flem) Meinen (Ger)	to mean
Durang	Duang (Irish)	song
Bulu	Bil (Flem)	thigh
Nare	Nah (Ger) Near (Eng) Nader (Flem)	near
Ma (Mundari) Mak(Santhali)	Maaein (Flem) Mahen (German) Mow (Eng)	to cut
Logo	Liagen (Germ)	to lie
Golad	Gulpen (Flem) Gulp (Eng)	to swallow
Pahal	Plough(Eng) Pflug (Ger) Ploeg (Flem)	ploughshare
Asi	Ask (Eng)	to ask
Buru	Burg, Berg (Ger)	mountain

Table 1. A few among many Mundari words that can be found in several European languages.

So many loan words are unlikely to be mere coincidences but phonetic testimony of an interaction between the wandering bands of megalithic Kolarian tribes and European communities which may have taken place during their stay in this land possibly in the Neolithic era. Surprisingly Germany has a family name of Kol—apparently written as Kohl, Kole, Kohli, or even Cole. This term could suggest the one-time habitation of the tribal Kols in the region during the Neolithic era. It is startling too learn of a set of holy men in Ireland who call themselves Culdees, Colidees, Celedi, Keledio (de Paor & de Paor 1958). Could the origin of these people be traced to Chaldea ? Would the presence of the Culdees be further evidence of the Kols' stay in the British Isles?

In India these Kolarian austic tribals address themselves as Hor, Hoar, Hour and/or Horko. The term has originated from the confluence of two names of *Ho* and *Ur*. *Ur* was the tutelary deity of the city of Ur, the capital of Chaldea who lent her name to the city (Cope 1998) while *Ho* in the austic language means man. Therefore Hor, Hoar or Hour implies to *Ho* of *Ur* plainly translating as “*Man who reveres Ur*” or “*Man of Ur*”.

These once itinerant Kolarian Austric tribes are finally leading a settled life in India many of whom still designate themselves with the archaic term of *Hor*, *Hoar*, *Hour* or *Horko*. The word 'horde' seems to have its origin in their name of 'Hor'. The Collins Dictionary describes the term 'Horde' as "a nomadic group of people, especially an Asiatic group." From this viewpoint it can be surmised that the 'nomadic Asiatic people' would have been the tribal Kolarian Hors whom we are discussing and who entered Europe from Asia.

Britain has quite a few megaliths that are yet called Hoar or Hor stones. Plate 7 is an example. The general belief has been that these stones were raised in honour of the fertility Goddess Hoeur (Cope 1998). The Kolarian Hors are a forgotten entity in Britain today. I speculate that the naming of these megaliths as Hor stones by the ancient British in most probability was for the reason that they may have had been raised by the Kolarian Hors in memory of a significant departed person of their tribe.



Plate 7

The Hoar/Hor Stone at Enstone, Oxfordshire, in England. Strangely, Britain has a few stones called Hoar or Hor Stones. Could they have been erected by the nomadic Kolarian tribal Hors? Credit: Barry Teague.

We have already discussed the surprising resemblances of a variety of megaliths in India, England and Europe while probing that these couldn't have been a chance fallout but must have been created by the same set of people both in Britain and in India or the both may have been influenced from one another as a result of physical connections.

In their migratory folklores the Santals mention a place of their stay called *Sasanbeda* (Guru Kisku 2003 & Kisku 2000). The Santal tribe may not be megalithic today but there are evidences that they had once practiced megalithic disposal of their dead. Their legends of the dim past cite a place called *Sasanbeda*.

The Munda tribe in India still continue with the megalithic tradition since hoary times and they call their megaliths *sasan-diris*. Strangely, they are no citation of *Sasanbeda* in their migratory tales but they recount a place called Haldinagar where they had once resided in the past (Banerjee 1993). The term *Haldi* means turmeric; hence *Haldinagar* translates into English as *City of*

Turmeric. The name Haldinagar seems to be a Hinduised rendition of the austic *sasan* which other than megalith also implies to turmeric (Kisku 2000 P 56). To my understanding both *Haldinagar* of the Mundas and *Sasanbeda* of the Santals may have been the same place neither why would the assumed “turmeric” be common in the both?

For the Santal tribe turmeric therefore is *sasan* but that it also means a megalith is forgotten by them as unlike the Mundas the Santals today have abandoned the megalithic custom and they barely remember megalithism and *sasan-diris*.

Sasanbeda was indeed a very significant place for the austic Kols as it was here they were divided into various clans. This occurrence is proposed in a line in one of the traditional Santali songs “...*sasanbeda arebon jatena ho...*” which translates in to English as “...*in Sasanbeda were we divided into septs...*”

The name *Sasanbeda* seems to have been formed by the merger of two words *sasan* and *beda*. *Sasan* as we have seen in the above signifies a megalith where as the word *beda* both in Aryan and austic languages stands for a fence. *Sasanbeda* therefore would literally mean ‘*fence of megaliths*’.

Is *Sasanbeda* of their tradition a specific megalithic site? The conjecture that *Sasanbeda* of their folklore may be a particular megalith setting in Britain is supported by a legend prevalent in the Callanish megaliths that speaks of black men arriving there with a high priest who guided them to raise the megaliths (Swire 1966; Ponting & Ponting 1984; Cope 1998). Is *Sasanbeda* of the Santali tradition and *Haldinagar* of the Mundari folklore actually referring to the Callanish megaliths, or instead the legendary Stonehenge—which can be looked upon as a circular ‘*fence of megaliths*’?

The German term *Sazzen* which sounds very close to *sasan* also implies to megaliths and in Latin *Saxum* denotes a big stone. U.K. despite so many years having gone by has still retained the primeval name *sarsen* or *sasan* for its megaliths. Surprisingly various megalithic Mundari Kolarian Hors in Jharkhand dubs a particular type of megalith as *sasan-diri* (Plate 8).



Plate 8

(The image at the top) *Stonehenge* with its multiple vulva-like openings between the *sarsens*. Many stones across Southern England are called *sarsens*, or in Wiltshire dialect *sasans*. Credit: G.T. Meaden

(The image below) *Chokahatu*, India. This setting is called a *sasan-diri* (of the Munda tribe. With its dwarfed standing stones and a long capstone similar to the lintel of *Stonehenge* the *sasan-diri* here indeed reveals a faint resemblance with

*Stonehenge. Also note that Jharkhand and Southern England phonetically share the same name “sasan” for megaliths.
Credit: Author*

Sasan is the name for megaliths both in Jharkhand in East India and Britain; if this isn't evidence of the interaction between the Mundari and the European tribes during the former's stay in Europe and Britain in the Neolithic era that is being discussed, then what is?

Quite startlingly many *sasan-diris* in Jharkhand as that of one in Chokahatu do reveal a faint semblance with Stonehenge. (Plate 8).

That people in the prehistoric era did travel to the British Isles from the vicinity of Central Asia and the Middle East is helped by the archaeological find of a skeleton of a youth near Stonehenge dubbed as the “Boy with the Amber Necklace.” Isotopic analysis of his teeth revealed that the boy hailed from distant regions like the Mediterranean. Archaeologists believe that since the Bronze Age, people like this boy whose skeletal remains have been dated to 1550 BC, were travelling to Britain specifically to see Stonehenge (Evans et al. 2012). Again, archaeologists have shown by tooth analysis that the Amesbury Archer—a man buried about 2400 BC with a trove of high quality grave goods—was born in the Alpine region of Europe (Fitzpatrick 2013).

CONCLUSION

The folktales of each tribe which incorporate their migratory narratives are deemed holy by them. Lest the posterity forget their history these have been conserved in the form of songs and are rendered during different religious festivals and various social and cultural ceremonies. The Santali folktales convey to us that subsequent to their prolonged settlement for many centuries in Jarpi Desh the tribes embarked on their journey towards the south-east, more precisely towards the place from where they had once set off; Sumeria/Chaldea. One very ancient Santali song which the author could lay his hands on, describes this mass exodus of the tribals from this fabled land of Jarpi which goes as under:

*Jarpi Disom Khonak in do
Sin duar bahi duar
Disom horko nondonakana*

Once translated into English the meaning of the song stands as;

*From the land of Jarpi, I here declare
through the entrance and the egress gates
the whole nation
on made a marching exodus (Kisku 2000).*

Many of these Kolarian Hors marched South-East heaving with them their own and their newly acquired wisdom of megalith making from UK and Europe. They hauled along with them the magnificence of the omnipresent Mother Goddesses; appendages of the fertility cult. The tribes who were megalithic erected megaliths on their deceased to celebrate the return of the dead to the womb of the Great Goddesses on lands they inhabited; on the migratory course towards their onwards journey to the South-East.

There must have been subsequent waves of migrations of the different Kolarian austic tribes towards the East undertaking different routes. The temporal yet a prolonged dwelling of the Kols around prehistoric Carnac must have enthused them to construct a monument of the similar kind at Vibhuthihalli in Karnataka in South India at a much later period (Plate 9).



Plate 9

(The image to the left) Carnac. France, Credit: en.kerfetan.com

(The image to the right) Vibhutihalli. Karnataka. South India. It is astounding that this parallel stone alignment complex is a near exact copy of Carnac (as in the image on the left).

That certain dolmens in Karnataka in South India are unerringly identical with the ones of the Caucasian region of Russia (Plate 10) could be a likely proof that one faction of these megalithic Kolarian Hors may have had used this route Eastwards. This splinter group that inhabited this region for quite a period during prehistoric times may have been influenced by the constructional designs of the dolmens of this region. Centuries later when they finally entered and settled in South India their descendants constructed similar monuments on their dead. These South Indian dolmens (Plate 9) therefore belong to the much later dates ranging between the Iron Ages and the early historical periods whereas their Caucasian counterparts (Plate 10) are of a much early date.

Many megaliths of the Annamalai region in South India too have their duplicates in Ireland.



Plate 10

(The image on the left) A dolmen from Caucasia, Russia. Credit: Russia-photo.com.

(The image on the right) A dolmen in Karnataka, India. The architectural style is identical with several dolmens in the Caucasian range of Russia. The reason is that the Kolarian tribes during their stay in the region while on their return journey eastwards from Jarpi Desh may have been influenced by the Caucasian dolmen typology. The Indian dolmens belong to much later days ranging between the Iron Ages and the historical period. Credit: Moti Shem Tov.

According to their legends while one group set off towards China and another eventually rambled into India trekking through the passes of Gupar, Babusar, Harpola, Gomal, Khyber and Bolan (which according to Mundari tradition is known as *Bolo ete ghati*) of the Hindukush, Karakorum and the Himalayan mountain ranges. Once in India, these people continued the erection of the megalithic monuments on the migratory route into Jharkhand in the east which they had known from archaic times and even constructed the megalithic architectures which their ancestors had learned from the indigenous populace of Europe and Britain.

On this track they went on naming the villages, rivers and hills in memory of the villages, rivers and hills in Europe and Asia from where they came.

I assume that there are more questions than there are answers to this riddle but these particulars of tribalism and its associated facets like their traditions of folktales and megalithism mentioned in the above presumably expound to the readers the rationale behind identical megaliths in Britain, Europe and India.

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Subhashis Das apart from being an educationist is also an Individual Researcher on megaliths of India for more than two decades. He has brought several megaliths of the tribals of the country to the forefront. Subhashis Das has authored many papers on many national and international journals of India and abroad. He has also authored many books on his discovery and research of tribalism and megaliths which are as under:

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- b) SACRED STONES IN INDIAN CIVILIZATION. KAVERI BOOKS. NEW DELHI.
- c) UNKNOWN CIVILIZATION OF PREHISTORIC INDIA. KAVERI BOOKS. NEW DELHI.
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