

MODULE - 1

Ancient India



Notes



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2

THE GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING AND PRE-HISTORIC CULTURES OF INDIA

The history of any country or region cannot be understood without some knowledge of its geography. The history of the people is greatly conditioned by the geography and environment of the region in which they live. The physical geography and environmental conditions of a region include climate, soil types, water resources and other topographical features. These determine the settlement pattern, population spread, food products, human behaviour and dietary habits of a region. The Indian subcontinent is gifted with different regions with their distinct geographical features which have greatly affected the course of its history.

Geographically speaking the Indian subcontinent in ancient times included the present day India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Pakistan. On the basis of geographical diversities the subcontinent can be broadly divided into the following main regions. These are:

- (i) The Himalayas
- (ii) The River Plains of North India
- (iii) The Peninsular India



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the physical divisions of Indian subcontinent;
- recognize the distinct features of each region;
- understand why some geographical areas are more important than the others;
- define the term environment;
- establish the relationship between geographical features and the historical developments in different regions;
- define the terms prehistory, prehistoric cultures, and microliths;
- distinguish between the lower, middle and upper Palaeolithic age on the basis of the tools used;
- explain the Mesolithic age as a phase of transition on the basis of climate and the

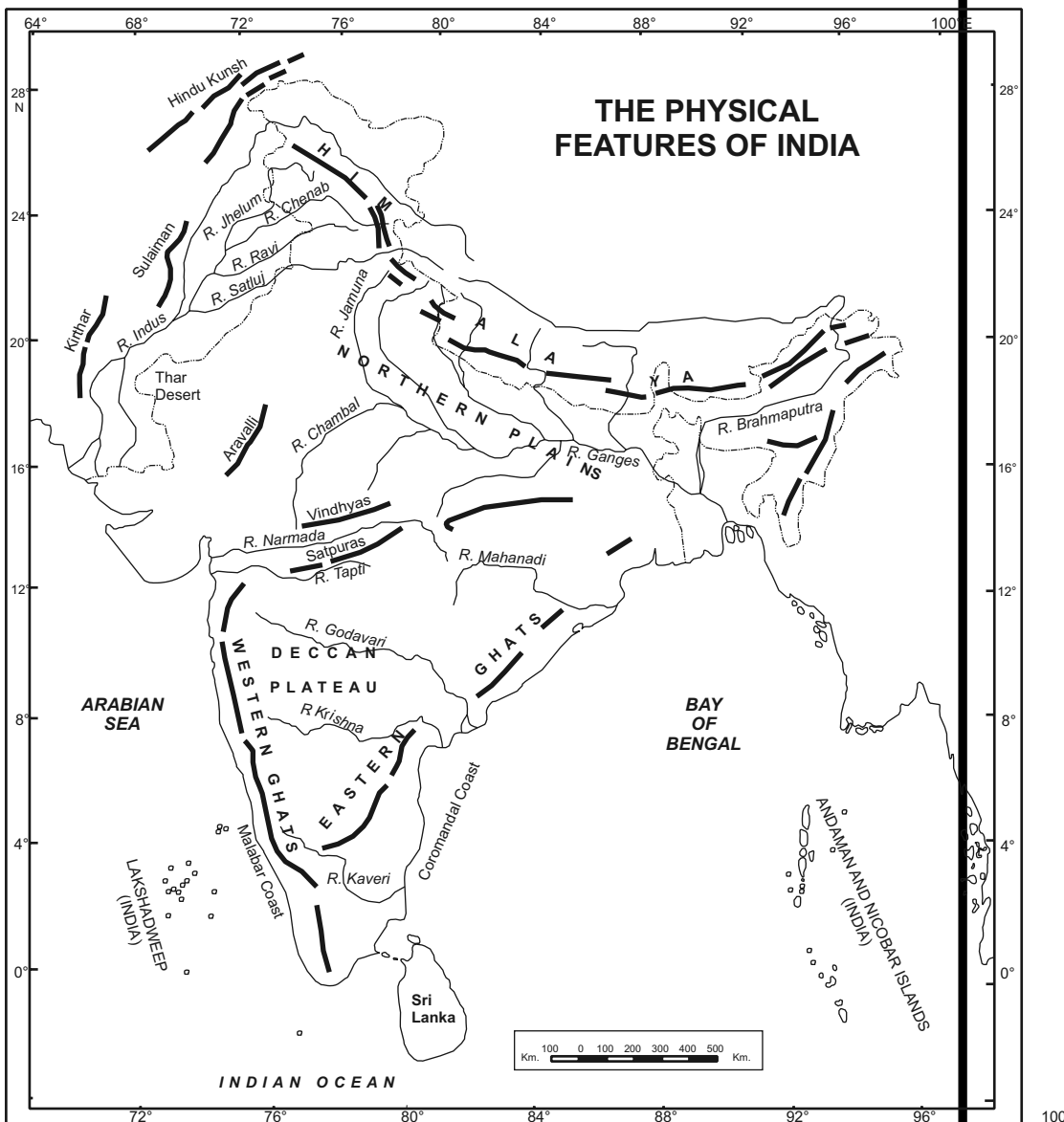


tools used;

- explain the Neolithic age and its chief characteristics;
- differentiate between Palaeolithic and Neolithic periods and
- learn about the Prehistoric Art.

2.1 THE HIMALAYAS

The Himalayas are the world's largest and the highest mountain ranges. These are approximately 2,400 kilometers long. (Map 2.1). These ranges have not only checked invasions but have also protected us from the cold winds coming from north. They also stop the monsoon winds from the seas which results in rainfall in the northern plains. However, there are some mountain passes which, though difficult, have



Map 2.1 The Great Northern Mountains



provided access to determined invaders, traders, missionaries. These have helped in developing cultural contacts with Central Asia, China and Tibet in ancient times.

In the north-western direction the broken Himalayan ranges contain the major routes linking the Indian plains with Iran and Central Asia through Afghanistan. These pass through the Gomal, Bolan and Khyber passes. The Greeks, Shakas, Kushanas, Hunas and other foreign tribes reached India following these routes. Likewise, Buddhism and other Indian elements were carried out to Afghanistan and Central Asia through these mountain passes.

2.2 THE RIVER PLAINS OF NORTH INDIA

The Himalayas also provide India with three river systems dominated by the Indus, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra. These rivers made their respective regions fertile and attracted both settlers and invaders.

The Indus plains include the regions of Punjab and Sind. Irrigated by the tributaries of the river Indus, they form a vast fertile plain which have made the region the 'bread-basket' of the subcontinent. It is called so because this region is very important for wheat cultivation. The strategic location and richness of the Punjab region has attracted foreign invaders since ancient past. The Sind region includes the lower Indus Valley and the delta. It is the Indus plains which witnessed the development of an urbanized culture called the Harappan culture for the first time in the subcontinent. (see lesson 3)

The Gangetic basin receives more rainfall and is more humid than the Indus region. The Gangetic plains is divided into three sub-regions: Upper, Middle and Lower. The Upper plains of the river Ganges constitute the western and southern parts of Uttar Pradesh. This region has seen active cultural developments since the ancient period. This was inhabited by the Aryans in the Later Vedic period, during which they practised agriculture. The Middle Gangetic plains, which is more fertile and has more rainfall, include eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. It is the region where *mahajanpadas* (territorial states) like Kosala, Kasi and Magadha were established in the 6th century BC. The two main religions of India, Jainism and Buddhism, also took their birth here.

The lower Gangetic plains constitute the Bengal region. Its northern part is irrigated by the Brahmaputra. The high rainfall in this region created dense forest and marshy land which made it difficult for the development of settlements in the beginning. But its coastal areas served as important channels of communication with other regions of the subcontinent and also with the South-east Asian countries. Tamralipti or Tamluk was an important seaport of this region which played a significant role in commercial activities.

The Eastern India normally refers to the coastal plains formed by the river Mahanadi and other streams. The fertile coastal plains of this region helped in the development of agriculture, society and culture. This came into contact with the Gangetic culture from the time of the Nandas and the Mauryas (4th century BC). Around AD 1000 Orissa began to develop her distinct linguistic and cultural identity.

The Western India refers to the regions of the modern states of Rajasthan and Gujarat. It is known for its black soil which is good for cotton cultivation. The Thar desert of Rajasthan, surrounded by the semi-arid regions, was not as fertile as the Gangetic plains. As a result, this region was not much favourable for cultivation. However, later in the 8th century AD, with the growth of irrigation mechanism in the form of Persian

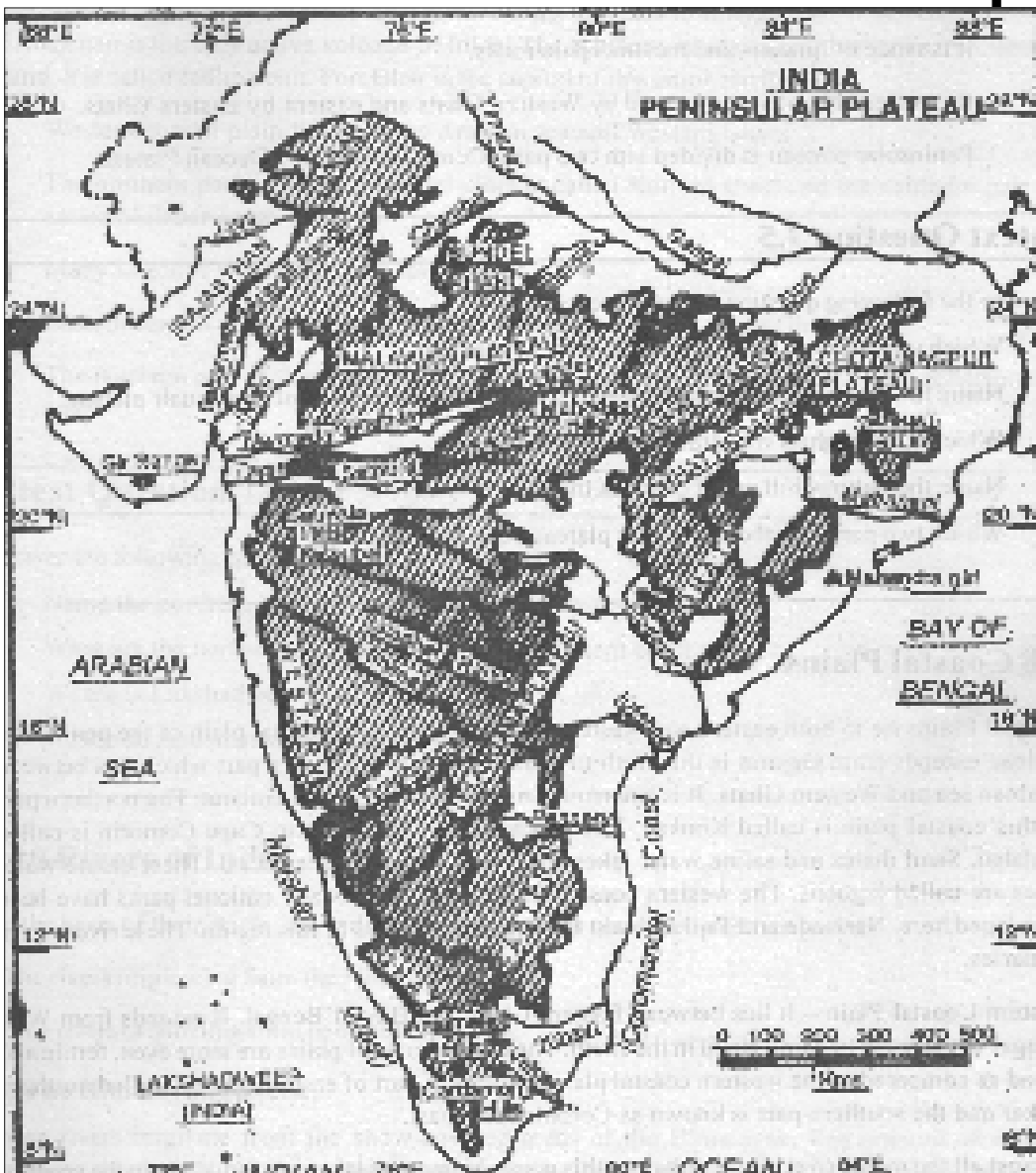


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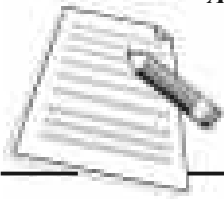
wheel (*rehat*), many settlements emerged here. Rajasthan is also the home of the Rajput clans. In Gujarat the fertile plains of the rivers Sabarmati, Mahi, Narmada and Tapi brought prosperity. A very long coastal line too helped Gujarat to develop contacts with other countries through its ports. The most important sea port of this region has been Brigukaccha or Bharuch (Broach).

2.3 THE PENINSULAR INDIA

Peninsular India includes the Deccan plateau and the coastal plains of South India (Map 2.2). The plateau is situated to the south of the Vindhya mountains. It is divided into three major regions which largely correspond to the modern states of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. The northern Deccan plateau comprises of a part of Maharashtra. A number of Chalcolithic sites inhabited by people using copper and stone tools have been found in this region. Karnataka includes the southwestern



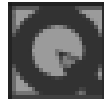
Map 2.2 Peninsular India

**Notes**

Deccan. This region with the availability of water and other resources had been more suitable for human settlements than the northern part. The Raichur doab for its rice cultivation has been known as the 'rice-bowl' of South India. It has been the bone of contention between different kingdoms. These regions were inhabited right from the prehistoric times.

The plateau region also has hilly terrains in the Western and Eastern Ghats. The Western Ghats rise sharply close to the western coast, tapering eastwards into the plateau. They are cut by a series of passes at Junnar, Kanheri and Karle. These served as trade routes connecting the ports along the west coast. At the southern end of the Western Ghats is the Palghat pass which linked the west coast to the Kaveri valley and played an important role in the Indo-Roman trade in ancient period. The Eastern Ghats merge more gradually into the plateau and the coastal plain.

The coastal plains constitute the states of Tamil Nadu in east and Kerala on west. In Tamil Nadu the rivers are seasonal. As a result, the people of this region have depended more on the tank irrigation since the early times. However, Kaveri delta has been the major region of human attraction. It provided opportunity for the cultivation of rice and witnessed the flourishing of the Sangam culture in the early historical period. The ports such as Arikamedu and Kaveripattinam gave impetus to the Indo-Roman Trade in early centuries of Christian era. The Tamil region evolved a distinct linguistic and cultural identity of its own.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.1**

1. Name the important mountain passes in the north-western part of the Indian subcontinent.

2. Who inhabited the upper plains of the river Ganges during the later Vedic period.

3. What were the two important religions which took birth in the middle Gangetic plains.

4. In which state has tank irrigation been popular since the ancient period.

5. The Kaveri delta is famous for which crop?

6. Name any two foreign tribes that reached India through north-western mountain passes in ancient times.

7. Which region is known as the 'breadbasket' of the subcontinent?



Notes

2.4 INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENT

The settlement of people in any region is very much dependent on its environmental conditions. Environment is taken as the surroundings or conditions in which various species (men, animals and plants) exist and function. The environment mainly comprises of elements such as climate, landscape, rivers, species of plants and animals (flora and fauna), etc. Now, let us see how environment has influenced the life of people and their history since ancient past.

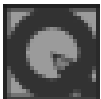
A semi-arid region is advantageous to people for settlement purpose. For example, the Sind region having this type of climate in ancient period, resulted in the flourishing Harappan civilization. It also helped the growth of urban settlements. Similarly, the rise of Pataliputra and the importance of Magadha in Bihar can also be explained in relation to its physical features and environment. Pataliputra was surrounded by the rivers namely the Ganges, Son and Gandak which provided natural defence as well as internal communication. Moreover, the fertile Indo-Gangetic plains helped in the maintenance of a strong population base.

The environmental conditions also determine the resource potential of a region. The forested region can be a rich source of timber, whereas the coastal regions yield the sea products. The hilly regions with rocks containing the mineral ores can lead to the development of metallurgy. The extraction of metals and their use for tools and other purposes may add to the standard of living. For example, Magadha was located in proximity to the iron ore mines and sources of stone and timber in the region of Chhotanagpur plateau. This strengthened the position of Magadha.

The subsistence pattern is also influenced by the environmental conditions. The regions covered by the river plains have alluvial soil. The fertility of soil helps in surplus production. The type of soil also determines the crop pattern. For example, black soil is good for growing cotton. The surplus production results in exchange activities which develop into trade on a larger scale.

An area gifted with navigable rivers has well developed trade and communication networks. Our ancient literature like the *Jatakas* and other texts, mention many riverine routes in ancient India. Similarly, the coastal routes promote the long distance trade with different countries. The mountain passes are also very important in this context. For example, the Palghat pass linked the east and west coasts and thus helped in the growth of Indo-Roman trade in ancient times.

Thus, we find that the physical features and environment help us to unfold the historical processes of a region. The diversity of Indian subcontinent presents an uneven pattern of historical developments. The areas which were rich became important while those with less resources lagged behind. It is important to observe that the settlement pattern and mode of life depend on the local resource utilization which in turn is dependent on the technological developments in that region.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.2

1. Name the rivers which provided a natural defence to Pataliputra (modern Patna).

2. Which region supplied iron ore and timber to Magadha?



3. Which type of soil is good for growing cotton? (Black / Red / Sandy).

4. Which famous mountain pass linked the east and west coasts of India?

2.5 PREHISTORIC CULTURES

Prehistoric period is that period of our ancient past for which we do not have written records. Therefore our knowledge of the cultures, which developed in this period, is based only on the materials found in the archaeological excavations. The earliest man living during this period made tools and implements of stone found in his surroundings. These tools helped him to hunt and gather food in order to satisfy his hunger. Since the earliest tools used by humans were made of stones, this phase of human development is known as the Stone Age. In this lesson we shall trace the evolution of prehistoric man from a hunter and food-gatherer to a food producer. This change did not take place all of a sudden and took several hundred thousand years. On the basis of the different type of tools and techniques the stages of human development in prehistoric period are described as the Palaeolithic or Old Stone Age, the Mesolithic or Middle Stone Age, and the Neolithic or New Stone Age.

2.6 THE PALAEOLITHIC CULTURES

The term Palaeolithic is derived from the Greek word '*palaeo*', which means old and '*lithic*' meaning stone. Therefore, the term Palaeolithic age refers to the old stone age. The archaeologists have dated this culture to the Pleistocene period about two million years ago. The Pleistocene period is the geological period of the age when the earth's surface was covered with ice, and weather was so cold that human or plant life could not survive. But in the tropical region, where ice melted, the earliest species of men could exist.

The people lived near the hillocks and used only stone tools for hunting and their protection. However, the choice of raw material used for tool-making varied from region to region and depended upon its availability. The material used was quartzite available in hilly areas of different regions, basalt found in Maharashtra region and limestone in Karnataka region. On the basis of the nature of progress made in tool types and techniques the Palaeolithic cultures have been divided into three phases. These are – (i) Lower or Early Palaeolithic, (ii) Middle Palaeolithic, (iii) Upper or Late Palaeolithic. These phases covered a long period ranging broadly from 5,00,000 to 10,000 B.C.

(a) Tools of the Palaeolithic Period

The main tools of lower Palaeolithic phase were handaxes, cleavers and choppers. (Fig 2.1) These are called chopping tools. These were rough and heavy and were made by chipping the sides of the stones. Gradually, sharper and less heavy tools came to be made.

The flake tools or chipped pieces were the chief tools during the middle Palaeolithic period. (Fig 2.2) The tools of the upper Palaeolithic period primarily consisted of burins and scrapers. (Fig 2.3)

Let us now discuss in brief the chief features and uses of some of the tools mentioned above. In handaxes, the butt end is broader and the working edge is narrow. These



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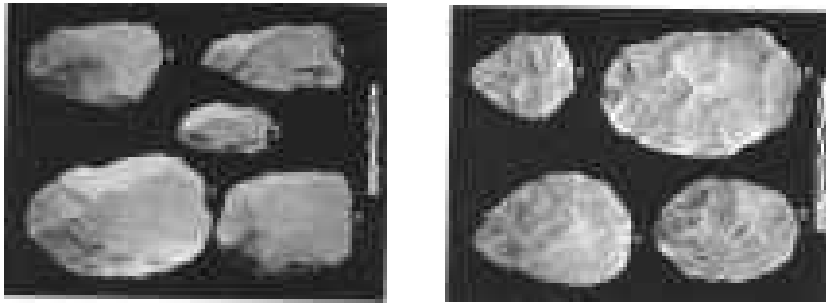


Fig 2.1 Chopping Tools & Hand Axes of Lower Paleolithic Age

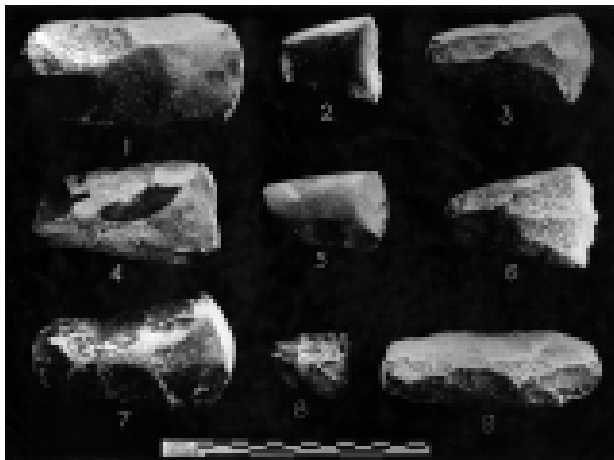


Fig 2.2 Chopping Tools & Hand Axes of Lower Paleolithic Age

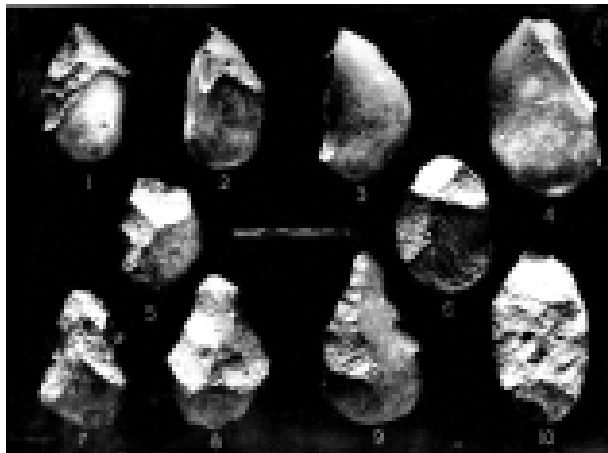


Fig 2.3 Chopping Tools & Hand Axes of Lower Paleolithic Age

were used for cutting the trees or digging the roots. The cleavers had a bifaced edge. These were meant for splitting objects like the trunks of trees. The choppers were the massive core tools with a unifacial working edge, and were used for chopping purposes. The burins were like flakes or blades. These were used for engraving on soft stones, bones or rocks. The scrapers were also made of flakes. These tools served the purpose of obtaining barks of trees and skins of animals.

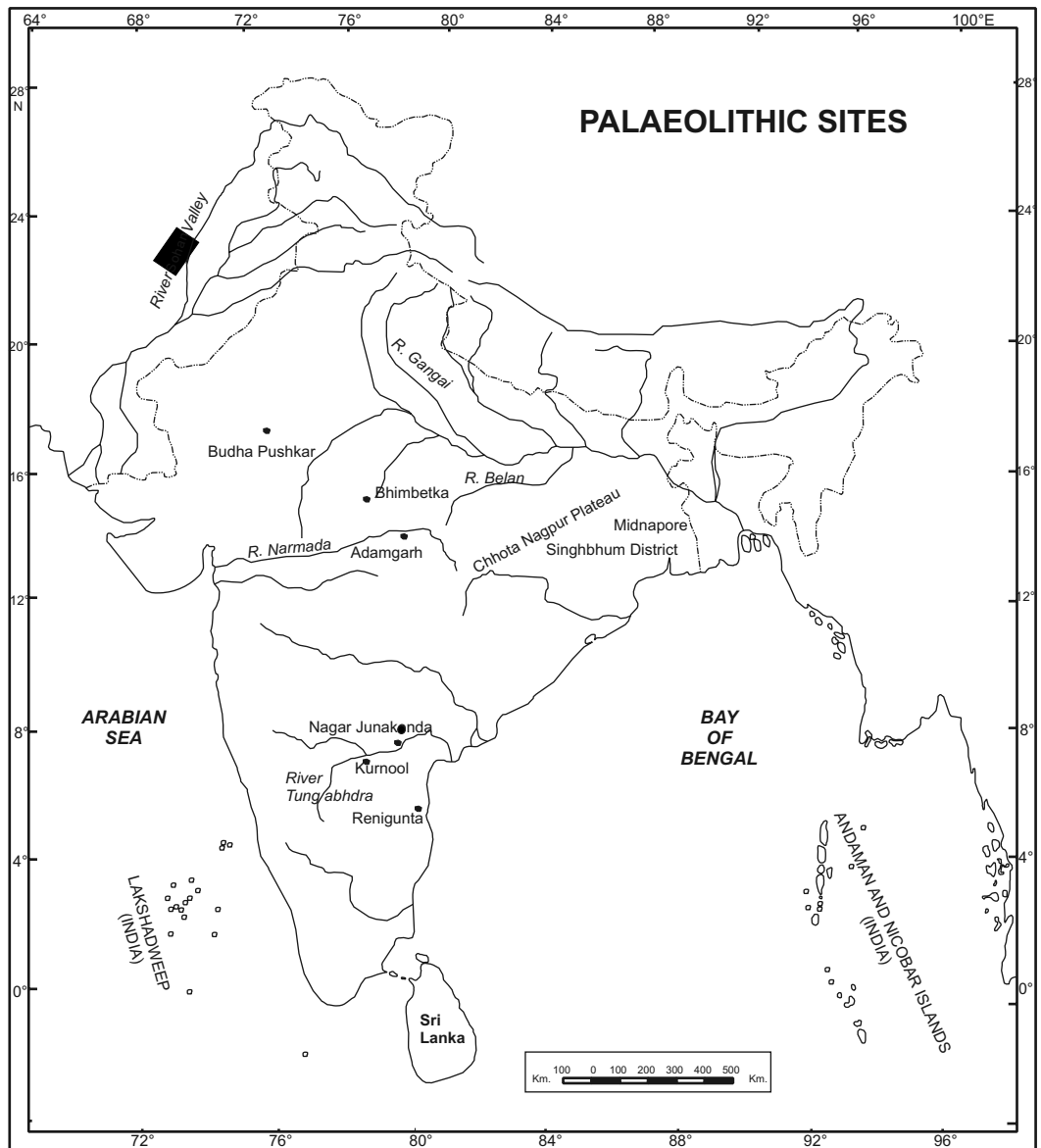


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(b) Geographical Distribution of the Palaeolithic Sites

The geographical distribution of the Palaeolithic sites suggests that this culture was spread throughout the length and breadth of the Indian subcontinent. (Map 2.3) In the north, Kashmir Valley and the Sohan Valley in Rawalpindi (now in Pakistan) have yielded Palaeolithic tools. In Rajasthan, Palaeolithic tools were found at the sites along the river Luni. In Western India, the Palaeolithic tools were also discovered from the sites of the rivers Sabarmati, Mahi and their tributaries in Gujarat. In Maharashtra, the most important sites are Nevasa on a tributary of Godavari and Patne in the Tapti river system. In Madhya Pradesh, the rock shelters at Bhimbetka (near Bhopal) and Adamgarh in the district Hoshangabad have yielded tools from the Palaeolithic to the Mesolithic period.

In Uttar Pradesh, the Belan Valley (the region broadly from Allahabad to Varanasi) is the most prominent site. It shows human occupation of the area continuously from the Palaeolithic period.



Map 2.3 Paleolithic Sites



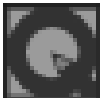
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Towards the east, Assam and neighbouring areas including Meghalaya (Garo Hills) have yielded prehistoric artifacts. Palaeolithic tools have also been found at various sites in Bengal, Orissa and Bihar. In Peninsular India, Palaeolithic tools have been reported from Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. In Tamil Nadu, an important site is Attirampakkam in Chingleput region. The subsistence of the Palaeolithic cultures was based mainly on hunting animals and gathering fruits and roots. In other words, the people were primarily hunters and gatherers with no settled habitation.

On the basis of above discussion, we can conclude that the Palaeolithic cultures of the prehistoric period were wide spread throughout the Indian subcontinent. The study of the tools indicates a gradual progress in tool technology which must have led to better availability of resources.

(b) Subsistence Pattern

The Palaeolithic people practised hunting and food-gathering for their subsistence. They made simple stone tools for hunting, cutting, digging and other purposes. They led a nomadic life and migrated to places where plant and animal resources along with water were easily available.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.3

1. Which were the two main occupations of man in Palaeolithic age?

2. What were the various purposes for which prehistoric man made tools?

3. Name the main tools of the Lower Palaeolithic age:
(a) _____ (b) _____ (c) _____

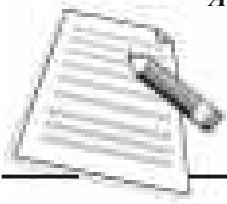
2.7 THE MESOLITHIC CULTURES

The term Mesolithic is the combination of two words, *meso* and *lithic*. In Greek '*meso*' means the middle and '*lithic*' means stone. Hence, the Mesolithic stage of prehistory is also known as the Middle Stone Age. It was the transitional phase between the Palaeolithic and the Neolithic Ages. On the basis of archaeological discoveries, the beginning of the Mesolithic Age in Indian subcontinent is dated to around 10,000 BC.

This period witnessed the rise in temperature, as a result of which the climate became warm. These changes further resulted in melting of ice of the earlier period and brought about changes in flora and fauna. Though man was still in hunting-gathering stage, he now started fishing and some domestication of animals. The main tools they used are called the microliths or small stone tools. The Rock paintings found at Bhimbetka (near Bhopal) belonging to the period indicate the artistic taste of the people.

(a) Tools of the Mesolithic Period

The microliths used during the mesolithic period were very small in size varying in lengths from 1 to 8 centimeters and were largely made out of chipped or flaked pieces. (Fig 2.4) Some of these tools have geometric forms such as triangles, lunates and trapezes. These tools could be tied or fixed in other objects to form an arrow or a spear.



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(b) Geographical Distribution of the Mesolithic Sites

The distribution of Mesolithic sites indicates that the Mesolithic cultures covered almost the entire India from north to south and east to west. Important sites of this culture are Langhnaj (District Mehsana) in Gujarat; Bhimbetka (near Bhopal) in Madhya Pradesh; Chopani Mando (near Allahabad in Belan Valley) in Uttar Pradesh; Birbhanpur (District Burdwan) in West Bengal; Sanganakallu (District Bellary) in Karnataka; and Tuticorin in southern Tamil Nadu.

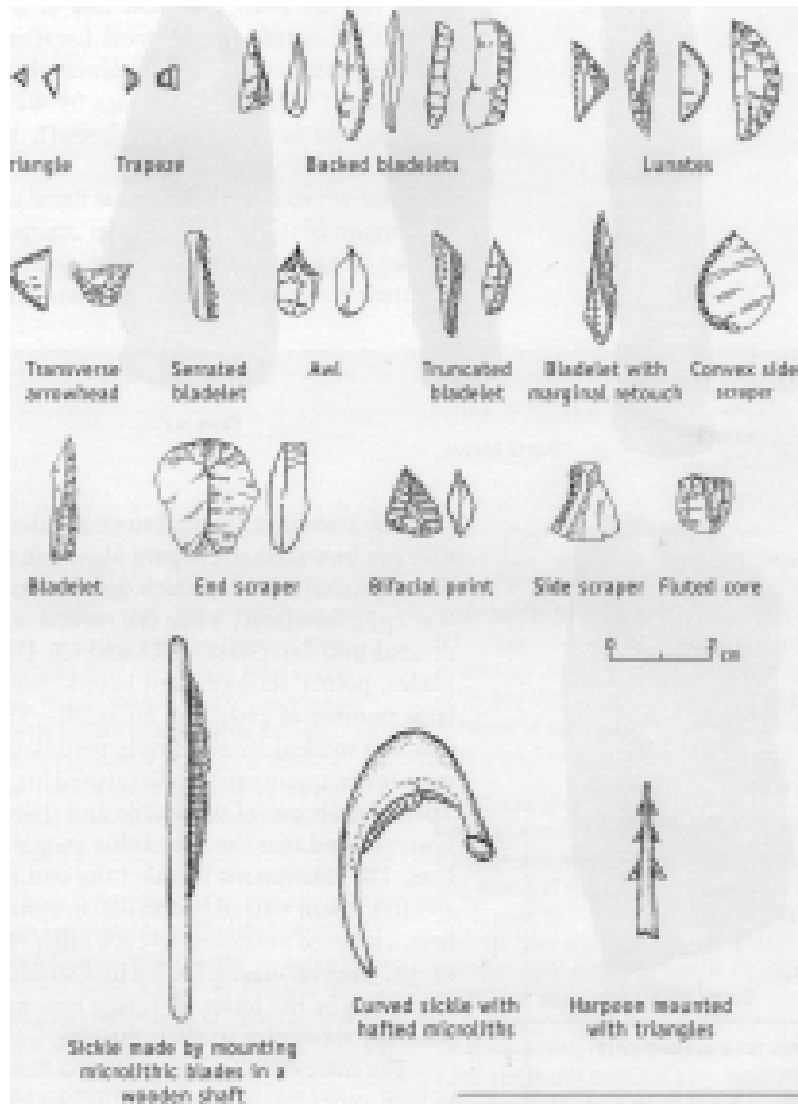


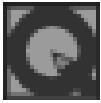
Fig 2.4 Tools of the Mesolithic Age

(c) Subsistence Pattern

The Mesolithic people still subsisted on hunting and gathering, but now there was a shift in the pattern of hunting from the big animals in the Palaeolithic period to the smaller animals which could be attacked with the help of bows and arrows. In addition to this, fishing and fowling also became important. The faunal remains of cattle, sheep, goat, buffalo, pig, rat, bison, hippo, dog, fox, lizard, tortoise and fish etc. have been found from different Mesolithic sites.



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INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.4

1. What name has been given to the tools of the Mesolithic Age?

2. Name a few tools made during the Mesolithic period?

3. Name any two sites of the Mesolithic period?

2.8 THE NEOLITHIC CULTURES AND THE ADVENT OF FOOD PRODUCTION

The last phase of prehistory is termed as Neolithic. The term Neolithic is derived from Greek '*neo*' which means new, and '*lithic*' meaning stone. Thus, the term 'neolithic Age' refers to the 'New Stone Age' of human culture. In Indian subcontinent it is dated back to around 8000 BC. The term 'Neolithic' was coined by Jonn Lubbock. The chief characteristic of this age was the new type of ground and polished stone tools. This period also marked the beginning of cultivation of plants and the domestication of animals. It led to the beginning of settled life and the growth of village settlements. The Neolithic culture had following characteristics:

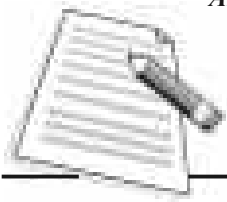
- (i) Beginning of agricultural activities
- (ii) Domestication of animals
- (iii) Grinding and polishing of stone tools having sharper edges
- (iv) Use of pottery

(a) Meaning of the 'Neolithic Revolution'

Some times this period is termed as the 'Neolithic Revolution' on the basis of important changes in man's socio-economic life. The use of the sharp and polished neolithic tools made it easier to cultivate the soil. It was accompanied by the practice of domestication of animals. These changes in turn resulted in the emergence of settled agricultural communities. The Neolithic people also produced pottery for the purpose of storing grains. As the redevelopment in the Neolithic phase greatly affected the human life, some scholars have used the term "the Neolithic Revolution" to signify those changes. But most of the scholars believe that these changes though significant, should be viewed in the context of earlier progress during Paleolithic and Mesolithic ages, and thus, should be considered as 'evolution' rather than 'revolution'.

(b) Tools of the Neolithic Period

The Neolithic tools consist of the ground tools having smooth surfaces, and well-rounded and symmetrical shapes. The grinding made the tools sharper, polished and more effective than those in the earlier period. (Fig. 2.5) The ground stone tools of the Neolithic period included different types of axes called 'celt'. Besides the stone tools, the sites of this period have also yielded various types of bone objects such as needles, scrapers, borers, arrowheads, pendants, bangles and earrings. (Fig 2.6)



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(c) Geographical Distribution of the Neolithic Sites

The Neolithic sites were spread over almost all the regions of Indian subcontinent. (Map 2.4) In the northwestern region Mehrgarh is a classic site in the Kachi plains of

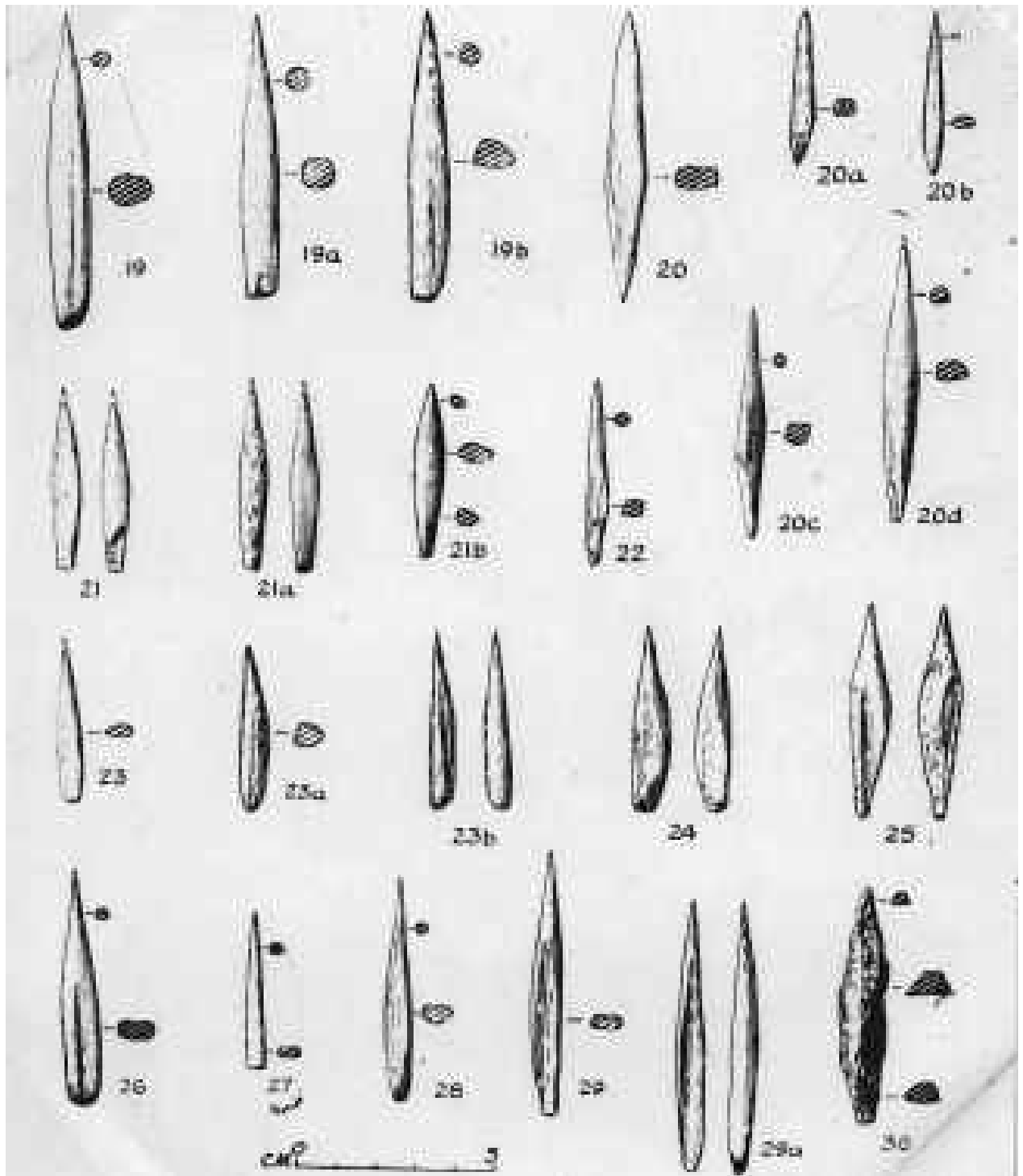


Fig 2.5 Neolithic Age tools



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Baluchistan. The excavations at Mehrgarh have revealed the evidence of houses built by Neolithic people. These were built of sun-dried bricks. These houses were divided into small rooms. The evidence of cultivation of crops like wheat, barley and cotton were discovered from here. The important sites in Kashmir Valley include

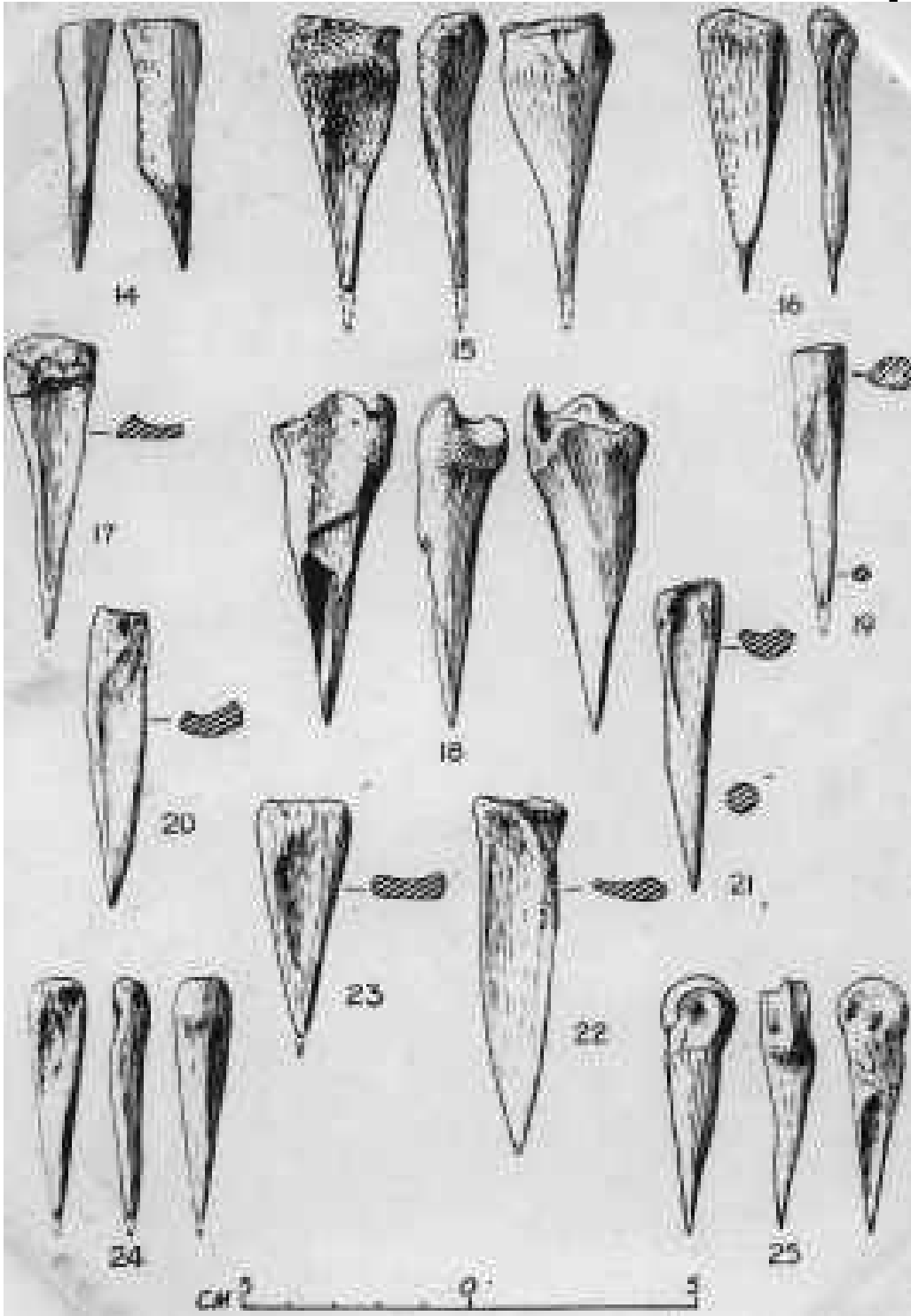
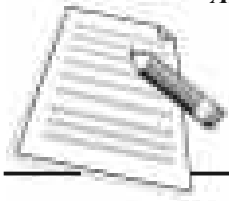


Fig 2.6 Neolithic Bone tools from Burzahom

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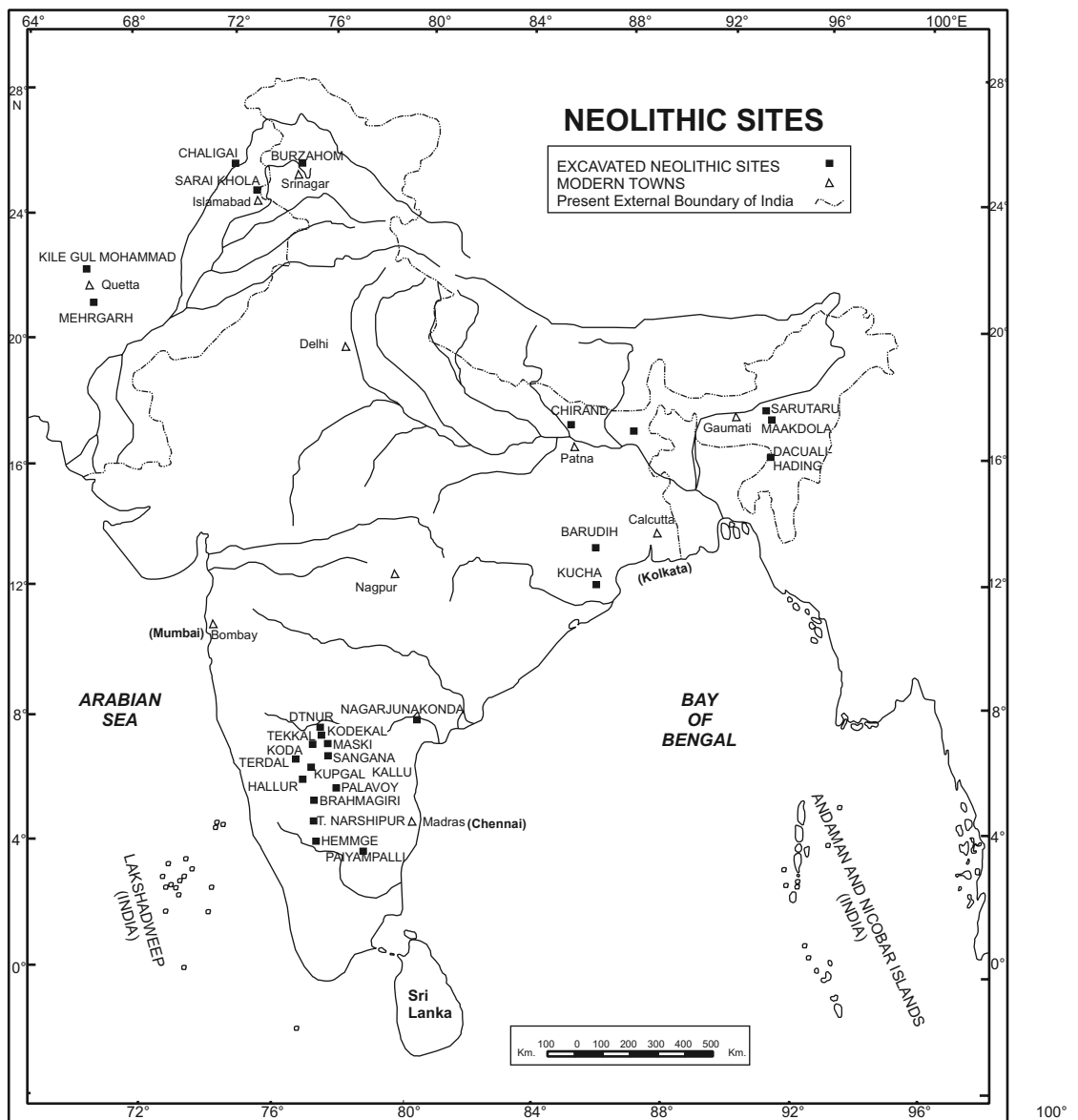
Ancient India



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The Geographical Setting and pre-historic

Burzahom and Gufkral. The dwelling pits, either circular or rectangular, at these sites form an important feature of Neolithic culture. The Belan Valley along the edge of Vindhyan plateau near Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh also has many Neolithic sites such as Koldihwa and Mahagara. The Neolithic tools (both stone and bone), pottery, other artefacts, floral and faunal remains have been found from these sites. In Bihar and mid-Gangetic Valley region Chirand is the most popular Neolithic site. Several Neolithic sites are present covering the hills of Assam, Meghalaya and Nagaland. The tools like Neolithic celts, small ground axes alongwith the remains of pottery have been found from this area. In South India the Neolithic settlements were discovered along the rivers Bhima, Krishna, Tungabhadra and Kaveri. Some important sites are Sanganakallu, Brahmagiri, Maski, Piklihal, Hallur in Karnataka; Utnur, Nagarjunakonda, Budihal in Andhra Pradesh; and Paiyampalli in Tamil Nadu. These sites have yielded dwelling pits alongwith the evidence of cultivation of cereals and domestication of



Map 2.4 Neolithic Sites



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animals. Millet (Ragi) was one of the earliest crops cultivated by the villagers of South India.

(d) Subsistence Pattern

The advent of agriculture marked a significant change in Neolithic phase. The people cultivated various kinds of crops such as wheat, barley, rice, millet, lentils, etc., depending on the geographical conditions. Agriculture gave impetus to animal domestication. Hunting still remained an important occupation. The people domesticated animals which included sheep, goat, cattle, etc. and also hunted wild animals such as boar, nilgai, gazells, etc. Different kinds of stone tools were made by Neolithic people, which has already been discussed. The Neolithic people also manufactured pottery, which was initially hand made and later turned on wheel and fired in large kilns. These were the major means of storage for grains. In nutshell, we can say that the Neolithic cultures were characterised by change from hunting and gathering to cultivation of plants and domestication of animals. The new polished tools made it easier for humans to cultivate, hunt and perform other activities in a better manner. It led to greater availability of food resources as well as to an increase in population, which in turn resulted in the increase in the number of village settlements. The Neolithic cultures created the conditions which helped in the growth of towns in the later period.

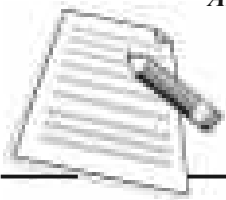


INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.5

1. Who coined the term 'Neolithic'?
2. Mention the chief characteristics of Neolithic cultures.
 - (a) _____
 - (b) _____
 - (c) _____
 - (d) _____
3. Name an important Neolithic site of northwestern region.

2.9 THE PREHISTORIC ART

The rock paintings were an important and distinct feature of the Mesolithic people though their beginning may be traced to the upper Palaeolithic period. These paintings are made on the walls of rock shelters, maximum of which have been found at Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh. These throw light on the social and economic life on Mesolithic people. The main subjects of paintings are hunting, fishing and food gathering. Animals like boar, buffalo, monkey and nilgai are often depicted in these paintings. (Fig. 2.7) The social activities like the child birth, rearing of a child and burial ceremony are also shown in the rock paintings. The scenes of hunting in a group suggest that Mesolithic people lived in small groups. Thus, we can say that the

**Notes***Fig 2.7 Prehistoric Art*

Mesolithic society was more stable than the one in Palaeolithic age, though hunting-gathering still remained its main preoccupation.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.6**

1. Rock Painting or Rock Art was a distinct feature of which period?

2. Name the site in Madhya Pradesh which has the maximum number of rock paintings in India.

3. Point out the main subjects highlighted in prehistoric rock art.

**WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT**

The history of India has been greatly influenced by its geographical features and environmental conditions. Different regions are characterized by their distinct topographical features which determine the historical changes in those regions. The Himalayas have protected us both from the invaders and harsh cold winds. The mountain passes have provided the ways for political, social, economic and cultural interaction. The fertile River Plains of North India have helped in rich agricultural production



Notes

leading to the emergence of powerful states in the 6th century BC. The Plateau region, the Coastal Plains and the hilly terrains of Peninsular India have encouraged the agricultural settlements and foreign contacts since ancient times. Different environmental conditions and varying availability of resources have resulted in distinct socio-economic and cultural formations in different regions.

Since his appearance in Prehistoric period, the humans have passed through many stages of cultural growth. Archaeological sources show his existence and subsistence pattern at various sites in different parts of the subcontinent. He was a hunter-gatherer in the Paleolithic and Mesolithic periods. By the Neolithic period he learnt cultivation of crops and domestication of animals. He could also manufacture pottery by then. These developments led to the establishment of village settlements. The stone tools used in different periods also underwent change. The crude and blunt tools of the Palaeolithic period were developed into sharper and polished ones in the Neolithic period. The Mesolithic period was characterized by very small stone tools called the microliths. In other words, the hunter-gatherer of the Paleolithic period evolved into the food producer of the Neolithic period.



TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. On a map of India, mark out the following:
 - (i) The Himalayan ranges
 - (ii) The Eastern and the Western Ghats
 - (iii) Rivers -the Ganges, the Narmada and the Kaveri
 - (iv) Arikamedu (Pondicherry), Tamruk (Tamralipti) and Bharuch (Broach)
 - (v) Pataliputra (Patna) and Palghat
 - (vi) Adamgarh, Bhimbetka and Koldihwa
2. Assess the influence of the geographical features of India on its history with special reference to the Himalayas and the Peninsular India.
3. How does the environmental conditions of a region determine the resource potential? Give examples.
4. What were the chief features and uses of the tools used during the Palaeolithic period?
5. How did the climatic changes during the Mesolithic period result in the shift in the pattern of hunting?
6. Describe the geographical distribution of Neolithic sites.
7. Give an account of the life of the Neolithic people.
8. Why do some scholars use the term 'Neolithic Revolution' for this period?



ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

2.1

1. Gomal pass, Bolan pass and Khyber pass
2. Aryans
3. (a) Jainism (b) Buddhism

**Notes**

4. Tamil Nadu
5. rice
6. Kushanas and Huns
7. Punjab and Sind in the Indus plains

2.2

1. The Ganges, Son and Gandak
2. Chhotanagpur
3. Black
4. Palghat pass

2.3

1. hunting, gathering
2. hunting, cutting, digging and other purposes.
3. (a) handaxes (b) cleavers (c) choppers

2.4

1. microliths
2. triangles, lunates and trapazes
3. Bhimbetka and Chopani Mando

2.5

1. John Lubbock
2. (a) Beginning of agricultural activities
(b) Domestication of animals
(c) Grinding and polishing of stone tools
(d) Use of pottery
3. Mehrgarh

2.6

1. Mesolithic
2. Bhimbetka
3. Hunting, Fishing, Food gathering, Child birth, Rearing of a child and Burial ceremony.

HINTS TO TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. See Maps 2.1 and 2.2
2. Refer to the sections 2.1 and 2.3
3. Refer to the section 2.4
4. Refer to the section 2.6(a)



Notes

5. Refer to the section 2.7(c)
6. Refer to the section 2.8(c)
7. Refer to the section 2.8(d)
8. Refer to the section 2.8(a)

GLOSSARY

Aryans	–	the nomadic groups of people who came from Central Asia.
Butt end	–	the portion of the tool, which is generally broad and is used for holding it.
Celt	–	a type of stone axe made during the Neolithic period.
Fauna	–	the animal life of any region.
Flora	–	the plant life of any region.
<i>Jatakas</i>	–	Buddhist texts with tales related to Buddha's life.
Microliths	–	very small and narrow tools used by man in the Mesolithic period.
Mountain pass	–	the gap between mountains which help in easy access to the other side.
Prehistory	–	that period of our past that does not have written records.