CHAPTER-I: PRE-ARYAN RACES AND CULTURES OF SOUTH INDIA

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GEOGRAPHICAL BACKDROP OF SOUTH INDIA

The region South of the Vindhyas, comprising the linguistic states of modern India, such as Orissa, Andhrapradesha, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamilnadu, Kerala and the Union territories of Goa and Pondicherry, is considered an ideal geographical unit for this study.

The peninsular region which is popularly known as the Deccan, is an inverted triangular stretch of landmass with plateaux and coastal plains bounded by the Arabian sea in the West and the Bay of Bengal in the East, the apex lies roughly 8^{o} North of the equator and points to the Indian ocean.

The Deccan plateau is bounded by low hills (Satpuras and Mikhilis) in the North and East. The Western ghats form the Western boundary. The valleys of the Godavari, Krishna and Bhima are flanked by escarpments in their catchments. The South western and Eastern ghats bound the broad table-land of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The coastal plains of India are washed by the seas. The Eastern coast is much wider and drier than the West.

While the Himalayas are characterised by high table-lands, deep river valleys and rugged slopes, the Indo-Gangetic plains on the other hand, are characterised by vast stretches of

alluvial sheets formed by the deposition of detrital material transported by the fast flowing rivers rising in the Himalayas whereas the peninsular region South of the Vindhyas is characterised by narrow coastal plain on the West and a series of escarpments stretching along the Western coast form a plateau which slopes from West to East. On the East, the Eastern ghats are a chain of an irregular series of ranges of hills which separate the plateau from the relatively wider coastal plain. Both the Western and Eastern hill ranges meet at the Nilgiris in Tamilnadu. The plateau is drained by mature graded streams flowing in the easterly and southeasterly direction and debouch into the Bay of Bengal.

While the peninsular India is considered a part of the most ancient landmass called Pangae, the geomorphic variety that we see on it is as recent as today and various natural phenomena are still operative in moulding and remoulding the landscape. The landscape evolution is controlled by the geological structure of the landmass as well as river activity which facilitates erosion, transportation and deposition.

GEOLOGY

Geologically, Southern India is represented by[1]

1) Pre-cambrians
   a) Dharwad, sedimentaries
   b) Granite intrusives,

	c) Kaladgi series,
	d) Bhima series, and
	e) Kurnool series.
2) Cretaceous-Eocene	a) Deccan Trap, and
	b) Inter Trapeans.
3) Quaternary	a) Laterites,
	b) Alluvia, and
	c) Soils.

1) Pre-Dharwarian Archean series of rocks that are found as relicts in some parts of South India were originally subjected to deformation and as such they formed the basis of all the subsequent sedimentary series of rocks. An estimated two-thirds of South India is represented by igneous rocks. Their minerology is akin to Dharwad sedimentaries. The Archeans are found exposed in parts of Orissa, Tamilnadu and Karnataka. The basement complex of Southern India is represented by the Dharwad sedimentaries which are in a metamorphosed state. The Dharwad metamorphics consist of mainly quartzites, quartz-schists, quartz-porphyrites, disbasic schists, ferruginous schists, talk schists etc. They are found exposed as linear lands in Karnataka, Central India and Chotanagpur area. The Dharwad's are gold bearing rocks, which are being mined in India. The famous ones being the Kolar Gold-fields and the Hutti mines, both in Karnataka.

Charnokite group of rocks are a variety of granite intrusives which are found in most parts of South India, particularly in the Nilgiris, Shevroy hills, Annamalai and the Cardamum hills of Tamilnadu and in the Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh. The Charnokites are generally represented in the Eastern ghats.

Next to Dharwars are the sedimentary series of lime stones with regional varieties such as Cuddapah, Bhima and Kurnool series. The Kaladgi sedimentaries are comprised of sandstones, cherts, quartzites etc. The Kurnools, the Bhimas and the Kaladgis are restricted to the region between the Krishna in the North and the Kaveri in the South. Their density decreases in the Southern direction.

The above three formations are pre-Cambrian in age and are considered more or less contemporary.

2) The Deccan Traps are Creataceous-Eocene in age. They occur in the Western, Central Maharashtra and parts of Andhra Pradesh. The Deccan Traps, although occurring in a wider geographical area are found to be minerologically uniform. The most common types are amygdoloidal and porphyritic basalts. The Deccan Traps (basalts) are a great storehouse of semiprecious stones such as chart, jasper, agate, chalcedony etc. which were very commonly used for making implements by the early settlers of this region.

The Inter-Trapeans occur as small horizontal deposits occurring in between two lava flows. They range in thickness from one to three meters and are crypto-crystalline in texture. They are found generally in those areas where basalts occur.

3) Quaternaries: Laterites is also called ferrougeneous duricrust which is otherwise an hardened soil profile rich in iron and alluvium. Laterite plateaus are very common in South India.

Alluvium is largely confined to modern channells composed of detrital material derived from the rocks on which the rivers and their tributaries flow. Alluvium may be composed of either pebble gravels or fine sandy silky material or both.

Among the soils, the black cotton soil that occurs to a great extent in many parts of South India is very fertile.

DRAINAGE SYSTEM

The drainage system of the peninsular India has been shaped by the original slope of the land surface, subsequent geological upheavals and periodic climatic changes. The drainage system of the peninsular India can be easily classified into East flowing and West flowing. The two major rivers that run from West to East are the Narmada and Tapi. However, there are a few seasonal streams flowing in the same direction along the West coast, while

the Narmada and Tapi belong to the Central highlands (MP), most of the rivers that rise in the Western ghats flow from West to East and deouche into the Bay of Bengal. The rivers such as Godavari, Krishna, Tungabhadra, Kaveri, Pennar etc. serve as arteries and carry water through the most part of the year. Some of the major early settlements took shape and flourished along these valleys. Even today, the density of population is high along these river valleys and their tributaries. These river valleys have yielded vital information on the life ways of early man and his successors.

HUMAN BACKGROUND

The physiographic division of the Indian subcontinent described above reveals that the entire Southern India was separated from the external world by the seas. Whereas in the North Himalayas proved as a insurmountable as inevitable a region for movement of people across the mountain belt into the mainland of South Asia. This was particularly true of the Northern and North-eastern parts of the Himalayas. Although, there is evidence of culture contact between India and Southeast Asia during prehistoric times, the routes through the Eastern mountains were difficult to negotiate. However, as one moves along the mountains towards Southwest into the Peshawar valley one notices passes and deserted stretches of land. The slopes are found relatively drier and present a barren country towards

Baluchistan. It is here in the valleys of Baluchistan and over the passes run the routes to Central Asia and China on the one hand and to Persia and the West on the other. These have been trade routes from time immemorial and through these corridors the Indian subcontinent was left open to human exodus and cultural cross-currents from time to time. Evidently, history records that military invasions of India first occured in this region. Though many invaders held sway over much of the subcontinent it is found that they could not continue to keep their identity as distinct from the rest of the human population and got effectively absorbed into the Indian society. The glaring examples are the Sakas, Pahlavas, Kushanas and Huns. These people were of different origins racially and geographically and their absorption into the Indian society has led to the formation of an assemblage of physical types.[2]

Races of South India

India is a museum of many races and one cultural group always overlaping the other. To determine these different races of men settled in India is too difficult. Even the analysis of physical features of the present population is also unsatisfactory. However, the reports of the most authoritative anthropologists and linguists are quite hopeful for the study of racial movements of India.

H.H. Risley (1915)[3] recognised three principal types in India, viz., the Dravidian, the Indo-Aryan and the Mongolian. The first two mixed in varying degrees in the different regions with each other while the third was confined to the North-east frontier and Assam. Risley's Dravidian, like the term Aryan, is linguistic group and not racial and at least three races have been found to constitute it. The Scythians who were known to be Mongoloid had little influence in Western India and the extent of Mongoloid infiltration in Bengal has been exaggerated.

A.C. Haddon (1919)[4] does not agree with Risley's racial classification and he advocated his own hypothesis regarding distribution of races in India. The oldest existing stratum, according to him is represented by various pre-Dravidian jungle tribes. The Dravidian might have been the original inhabitants of the Ganges valley in Western Bengal, after many wanderings apparently across India, they settled mainly in Chota Nagpur. The brachycephalic element in Indian population is traced by Haddon to Alpine immigration and the history of this immigration has yet to be written.

J.H. Hutton (1931)[5] without claiming that his views are the final word on race in India, has given a scheme into which the fact at present known about race will fit without distortion as he puts it. According to him, the earliest occupants of India were probably of the Negrito race but they have little trace on

the mainland or peninsula.

B.S. Guha (1938),[6] the most recent authoritative anthropologist, has classified mainly the following racial elements in India, and his classification more or less is accepted at present.

(1) The Negrito

They were immigrants from Africa. A small group still survives in the Andamans, the traces of this race are found among the Kadars and Paniyans of Cochin and Travancore, the Nagas of Assam.

(2) The Proto-Australoids

Proto-Australoids who migrated from the West, form one of the basic elements of Indian population. By admixture with other elements, specially with the Negrito who came before, and the Mongoloids who came after them, they gave rise to Kol or Munda type, the Monkhmer type in Assam, Burma and Indo-China. The speeches of these peoples, scattered in wide areas extending from Kashmir to Eastern Island, belonging to the same Family of Languages known as Austric.

(3) The Mongoloids

The Mongoloids, who divided into sub-groups are surviving in Assam, Chittagong Hills and the Indo-Burmese frontiers.

(4) The Mediterranean

The Mediterranean peoples, with different sub-types all came from the West and spoke Dravidian language, now represented by Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam.

The true Mediterranean or European type, taller and fairer than the Palaeo-Mediterraneans, occurs in the Punjab and upper Gangetic Valley, and is supposed to represent the civilized pre-Aryan "Dravidian" people of Northern India which became aryanised in language and contributed largely to the evolution of the Hindu people and culture of North India.

(5) The Western Brachycephals comprising the Alpine, Dinaric and Armenoids forming sub-groups of one physical type probably came from Central Asia, appear to have spread over the greater part of India. The Alpinoid brachycephals show a greater predominance in Gujarat. Whereas the Dinaric type being well-marked in Bengal and Orissa, in Kathiawar, and in the Kannada and Tamil countries; and in Coorg it occurs in its purest form. The Parsis of Bombay are a lately arrived brachycephalic group allied to the Armenoids - they present a contrast to the long-headed Iranian Zoroastrians still living in Persia.

(6) The Nordic

The Nordic who spoke the Aryan language, of which the earliest specimen is preserved in the Vedas. The Nordics seem to

have been characterised in the European steppe lands and they entered India sometime during the second half of the second millennium B.C.[6] Nordic elements are strong in parts of the North-west-Frontier of India and in the South of the Hindu Kush range. In the Punjab and Rajaputana and in the upper Ganges Valley Nordic elements are present, particularly among the higher castes or groups. The Nordic type predominates, e.g., among the Chitpavan-Brahmans of the Maratha country. The original Nordic type is supposed to have been tall, fair-skinned, yellow or golden-haired and blue-eyed: such a type seems to have characterised the true Aryans of ancient times, but owing to miscegenation and to climatic conditions the complexion of the body and the colour of the hair and the eye have been modified or eliminated by natural selection to light-brown or brown and to black.[7]

Thus, the above classification of B.S. Guha affirms that there is a considerable admixture of all the six groups in the present population. The result is no race is pure in India. These admixtured groups adopted one or the other of the four distinct languages, viz., the Austric, the Tebeto-Chines, the Dravidian and the Aryan. Again, the people speaking the same language do not belong to the same race.

PHYSICAL TYPES

The majority of tribal population belongs to the type called Veddoid or proto-Austroloid. These people resemble the native tribes of Australia, though relatively smaller in stature. They are short and slender, dark, brown, dark-brown, have black wavy hair and large dark eyes. They are long headed and have a fairly pronounced brow ridges and depression at the route of the nose. Jaws are generally protruding. In the East (Central India, Bengal, Orissa and Andhra) a mixed proto-Austroloid type and at times a distinct type with short head, slanting at eyes and a wide range of skin colours from yellowish brown to black exhibit similarities with the peoples of South-East Asia. In Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamilnadu yet another tribe characterised by tall, dark, round headed, squarish face with a robust built is common. Some of the physical types akin to Negrito are found in the Western ghats. Besides these there are many people belonging to the range of tribes commonly grouped together as Mediterranean, they are very common in South India. In addition to the predominant Mediterranean and Veddoid tribes there are a great many tribes seemingly closer to the Caucasoid particularly in the Punjab and Gujarat. In Central India the Veddoid types are predominating while the Gangetic valley seems to have been a zone of conflict, where various physical types vie with each other for predominance. There is a distinct change with the physical types from the

East to the West. The Tibetan physical element does not seem to have mixed with main Indian physical types - some of the contemporary tribal society that still maintain a primitive way of life are found in parts of Orissa (District Dhenkanal), Andhra Pradesh (Adilabad, South East coast etc) and Tamilnadu (Nilgiris). These are potential areas for drawing ethonographic parallels.[8]

LANGUAGE

The people in the region of Himalayas speak languages of the Tibeto-Burman branch of Sino-Tibetan family (mainly tribal languages) although a few Dravidian speaking communities are found juxtaposed in this region.

In Central India, the Munda languages belonging to the Monkhmer family of Southeast Asia is common. In the South of the peninsular and Northern half of Ceylon the Dravidian languages are spoken and across the whole of the North and West of India, the population speak the Indo-Iranian branch of the Indo-European family. The oldest Indian literature i.e., Rigveda is an Indo-European language the oldest in a Dravidian language is found in the Sangam literature.

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A SURVEY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN SOUTH INDIA

Beginning of archaeological survey in South India coincide with the geological surveys that were undertaken by Roberts Bruce Foote. The first recorded collection of prehistoric stone artifacts in India came from Lingasugar in the Krishna valley. That was way back in 1842,[9] whereas the most significant discoveries of stone artifacts belonging to old stone age were made by Foote[10] in 1863 at Pallavaram in Timalnadu and followed by William King in the Kortalayar and Naranavaram Valley near Madras. Although in the late 19th century discoveries were as sporadic as they were significant in demanding a thorough scnentific probe into the archaeological protentiality of South India in particular and the subcontinent in general.[11] The other two important discoveries were made by Wynne in 1865 in the Godavari valley (Maharashtra) and by Hackaet in 1873 in the Narmada valley were significantly associated with animal fossils. The evidence of coexistence of fossil fauna led these early scholars to suggest that the early man in India belonged to a much earlier period than in Europe. A vast collection of lithic tools from the Krishna basin was made by Cammiade[12] in 1930's and his collection revealed a chronological sequence among the artifacts which was comparable to those in Africa. In 1932, a bulk of lithic finds were reported from the vicinity of Madras by Richards and Cammiade[13]

Colonel Meadows Taylor brought to light a series of Megalithic burial complexes in the Krishna basin.[14] And since the establishment of the Archaeological Survey under the direction of Alexander Cunningham, more systematic surveys began to come. This not only included the systematic collection of pre and Proto-historic material but also the study of epigraphic, numismatic and art historical aspects of Indian civilization. The unflagging enthusiasm of the British administrative officials and their quest for India's past led to a very scientific approach to the study of Indian Archaeology. By the time Foote had prepared an index to his collection of pre- and proto-historic antiquities from South India, Col. Meadows Taylor[15] had made the first scientific excavation of a couple of South Indian Megaliths. The need for systematisation and periodisation of Indian prehistory on the basis of typo-technological variety was increasingly felt. This led to the periodisation of Indian prehistory on the European model and the use of suitable terminology.

Foote[16] formulated a four old historical model for the classification of antiquities i.e., the Palaeolithic, Neolithic and Iron Ages. Surveys undertaken by various scholars subsequent to Foote's work brought forth a variety of evidence thusfar unknown, apart from the most easily recognisable material such as handaxes, clevers, polished stoneanes and iron artifacts. This led to the realisation that Foote's fourfold model

accommodated only palaeolithic and neolithic and not the intermediate Mesolithic in the Indian stone age sequence.

In 1930, Cammiade and Burkitt[17] proposed a modified scheme of the fourfold sequence of pre-Neolithic stages. They designated these stages as series I, II, III and IV. However the material at their disposal was found inadequate to represent this sequence. Pending discovery of typical representatives of each series, this stratigraphic typologic model roughly corresponded with the European Early, Middle and Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic. This model was applicable until the middle of 20th century. It was Sankalia[18] who faithfully recognised this framework and tried to fit in the archaeological evidence from the Godavari and Pravara valleys. Sankalia distinguished a lithic assemblage which was predominantly composed of flake artifacts from another assemblage which had a preponderence of blade element. These two assemblages were found in a stratigraphical context and were assigned series II and III positions respectively. More intensive surveys conducted in various parts of South India by Banerjee[19] Issac,[20], R.V. Joshi[21] and many others yielded lithic assemblages which could be grouped as series II industry. Later this series II industry was named Nevasian by Banerjee[22] after the type site Nevasa on Pravara. Although contemporary researches brought forth series II industry from various parts of India, an inadequacy of series III industry was very much felt. This

led to attempts to modify the series model in order to best present the available pre-Neolithic group of industries. It was Subbarao[23] who proposed that Indian series II and III industries be grouped together as representing the Indian Middle stoneage. Basing on the South African terminology, he suggested a three tier culture historical model such as Early, Middle and Late Stone Ages. This periodic changes in the periodisation scheme led to lack of consistency in terminological concept as well as easy comparability with those industries from other geographic areas.[24] This model absolutely ignored the fact that much of the Indian subcontinent had remained to be surveyed extensively and intensively on the one hand while ruling out the possibilities of identifying the Indian Upper Palaeolithic.

The last two decades witnessed tremendous enthusiasm and participation in archaeological research by many universities and many State Governments established separate departments for archaeological research. This led to the survey of hitherto unexplored and inaccessible parts of India, particularly South India. This expansion of research enabled significant advancement in the research strategies. Many regional studies were initiated and primary undisturbed localities were located. Consequently, the geographic distribution of stone age industries expanded. Interestingly, archaeologists were rewarded with an

assemblage composed of blades and burins comparable to the European Upper Palaeolithic.[25] In effect, there was an explicit need for reversal to European system of dividing the pre-Neolithic cultures into Lower, Middle and Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic. The blade and burin industry being techno-typologically distinct from its predecessors, occupied the hiatus between the Middle Palaeolithic and the Mesolithic. A series of such industries have been reported from various parts of the Krishna basin, the Southeast coast of India, the foothills of the Nallamalai ranges (in Andhra Pradesh) in South India and elsewhere in the North.

SOUTH INDIAN CULTURES

India is one of the richest counteies in the world for remains of the earliest phases of man's existence. However, original place of the man remains unclear. Generally it is held that man appeared for the first time in the neighbourhood of the Siwalik hills in Northern India. A generalised type of extinct ape related to the Chimpanzee, the Gorilla, and the Gibbon, with upper premolars resembling those of man appeared in these hills. After the survey of Siwalik hills, scientific investigators have arrived at the conclusion that Northern India was probably the first home of man. The patriotic views of P.T. Srinivas Ayyangar and others against this theory that man appeared for the first time not in the North but in the

South are now untenable.

By assuming the erect attitude, says James "man became differentiated from all other animals by being free to pick up and hold or throw stones etc., an accomplishment of the greatest value in the daily quest for food. With a piece of flint he could pound up his roots, berries, etc., scrape with similar weapon the skins of the animals he had killed, dig holes in the ground for store houses.[26]

Man is nearly half a million years old. In the beginning, he was as parasitic on nature as an animal, though, of course, there was a fundamental difference between the two, namely, man's capacity to think and develop. To assist himself in the procurement of food which involved digging out of roots and hunting animals man prepared tools and implements of stone.[27]

Man began to manufacture tools for himself from which he began his career on this globe and artifacts are better evidences of human presence than bones and skulls and teeth. Man has been defined as a tool making animal. At first a stone haphazardly picked up no doubt served for many purposes. The cultural stages of man antecedent to the times when untill metal was first exploited by him are collectively known as the Stone Age, from the material chiefly used by him in fabricating the tools with which he began his career of power

and control over environment. Each stage shows some marked progress in preparing stone for use as tools.

Thus, understanding the prehistoric South India would mean understanding variety of human groups and true culture and the cultural evolution from Palaeolithic stage to Iron Age. This prehistoric period in India can be studied with the help of Archaeological, Anthropological and Linguistic sources.

Here in this chapter an attempt is made to study the prehistoric cultures in to the following successive stages:

a) Palaeolithic culture,
b) Mesolithic culture,
c) Neolithic culture,
d) Neolithic-Chalcolithic culture, and
e) Iron Age or Megalithic culture.

PALAEOLITHIC CULTURE

The rough stone implements, mainly of quartzite, used by man during this period, show different varieties and resemble the Palaeolithic tools in Europe. This age in India may, therefore, be called Palaeolithic, a term derived from two Greek words meaning old stone (Palaio = old, lithos = stone). According to the geological and artifactual evidence this Palaeolithic is divided into (1) Early or Lower Palaeolithic,

(2) Middle Palaeolithic, and (3) Upper Palaeolithic when it is fully discovered and identified.

LOWER PALAEOLITHIC

Lower Palaeolithic is commonly referred to as the Acheulian. The evidence for the Lower Palaeolithic has been obtained from almost all ecological zones of India and particularly of South India. The evidence for the Lower Palaeolithic culture in the primary and semi-primary context is relatively more in South India than in the North. Most of the major river valleys such as Pravara, Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri, Tungabhadra and their tributary streams have yielded hand axes and cleavers which are the hallmark of the Lower Palaeolithic culture.[28] In this Lower Palaeolithic context, Madrasiam industry distinguished from Soanian Industry of Northwest India.

In the region of Andhrapradesh, most of the river valleys such as Tungabhadra, Bhavanasi, Gunjan, Krishna, Lower Godavari, Swarnamukhi and Paleru valleys have yielded Lower Palaeolithic sites. Further South in Tamilnadu at Vadamadurai and Attirampakkam Lower Palaeolithic sites have been excavated. Whereas in Karnataka and Maharashtra the primary Lower Palaeolithic sites such as the one at Hunsgi in the Krishna valley and Chirki near Nevasa in the Pravara valley stand out as landmark in understanding the life ways of Lower Palaeolithic people. The majority of the Lower Palaeolithic tools

in South India were manufactured by using quartzite, quartz, basalt, limestone etc. in order of preference.[29]

How long man remained in this very primitive stage we cannot say definitely. At Attiram Pakkam, near Madras, at Giddalur, District Kurnool, at Anagawadi, District Bijapur, we find tools which are comparatively light and beautifully finished showing that this man, though a hunter-fisher, had developed an artistic sense. At least all over South India as well as in the North we find a definite development in the man's tools, which must be the result of his mental development. Who the people were who manufactured these tools is unknown as no skeletal remains of them are preserved.

MIDDLE PALAEOLITHIC

The Middle Palaeolithic which is often referred to as Mousterian is basically a flake industry. Stratigraphically it succeeds the Lower Palaeolithic. In India there are three regional varieties in the Middle Palaeolithic. These are Nevasan (Deccan and Central India), Luni (Luni valley, Southern and Central India) and Rohri (Indus valley). They are basically typo-technological groups. In South India, the site of Kovalli in the Ghataprabha valley is a noteworthy factory. Some of these sites also occur along the hill slopes. The chief raw material being chert, and occasionally Trap rock. The predominant tool types include scrapers, borers, and notches.[30]

All over South India beginning with Attirampakkam in the South and extending upto Bijapur in the North and even in many parts of Andhrapradesha, the man had given up heavy, but finely made tools of quartz and preferred still better fine grained rocks. His tools and weapons are much smaller than Lower Palaeolithic.

It must be noted that even in this stage man was still a hunter. But the methods by which he hunted must have changed a great deal. Thus, a much larger area than before was penetrated by man. We may call this stage advanced hunting and food collecting stage. They might have migrated into India from Africa, as the same type of tools can be found in the regions North and South of the Sahara.[31] In Middle Palaeolithic India, there is a mixture of several cultures - old and new.

UPPER PALAEOLITHIC

Murthy, for the first time brought to light the occurrence of blade and burin artifacts and animal fragments from the Kurnool caves. The last decade saw an overwhelming number of sites coming to light from various parts of South India.[32] The distinct blade element in the industry assigns a separate status in the Palaeolithic evidence as reported by Issac (1960), Reddy (1970), Madhusudhanrao (1979) in Andhra-pradesha, Paddayya (1974) and Pappu (1959-60) in Karnataka and Sankalia (1960) and Sali (1974) in Maharashtra. Similarly,

Todd reported stratigraphic evidence from Khandivli, near Bombay some of the excavated sites in Kurnool area have yielded bone tool industry. The distribution of sites indicates varied habitats such as forested hilly areas, cave areas and riverine zones.

Instead of large number of points and several kinds of scrapers, man used long flakes called blades. These blades must have been used for engraving on wood and bone. In a more recent comprehensive survey of the Indian Upper Palaeolithic three typo-technological groups, i.e., (1) flake-blade industries, (2) blade-tool industries, and (3) blade and burin industries are identified.[33] So, this stage is a definite advance on the two previous stages of man. However, still he was a food-collector. Same species continued to live. In Southern India the change from Middle to Late stone Age - that is to say, from the flake to the microlithic tradition - appears to have been a process of continuous development rather than of a sudden change.

HUNTING

Man has been called a tool-using animal and no doubt all progress of culture is due to the increased use of tools and implements in the conquest of nature to make life more happy and comfortable. The material history of man is on account of the progress from a 'tool-less' state to the present

state of complicated machinery.

Man began his career on the globe as an eater of fruits and nuts. Gradually, passing through the sub-stages of Palaeolithic period, to satisfy his taste for variety of food he took to hunting. His implements were not highly developed. This is evidenced by the fact that among the tools of offence and defence are found several choppers with sharp edges must have been largely used for providing the meal which was afforded by the hunt.

On the basis of the faunal evidence, it is believed that the Palaeolithic man hunted or domesticated animals such as ox, bison, nilgai, blackbuck, deer, bear, a variety of birds and fishes. Nevertheless, his age-long experience and through skill in hunting taught him a good lesson, viz. how to develop hunting. So he used the bow and the arrow with which he was conversant, to kill from time to time jungle beasts and make a meal out of them. But it is difficult to decide when early man learnt to employ the bow and the arrow. Some times flesh was smoked before being taken. The descendants of these primitive men, now living in interior of the Vindhyan forests, are certainly expert bowmen and could kill a tiger with one arrow. The conditions of primitive life were such that men had frequently to fight with wild animals face to face.

Descendants of Palaeolithic men, follow man's first

occupation of hunting are still found in various parts of India, more especially in the forests where they can exercise their profession.

DRESS

Indian climatic conditions do not require that man should be overburdened with impediments in the form of dress. Primitive man was naked, and even today reversion to complete nudity is an especial mark of super-holiness among several classes of Indian ascetics and in many parts of India. The holiness of nudity is still prevalent among Telugu people and others. When primitive man became a hunter, he began to cover his certain parts of body with the hides of animals. He also wore a garland of leaves round his waist as certain jungle-folk of today do. He also used the thin inner bark of trees called tree-flay. Hence, the skin of the tiger and the deer and tree-flay have continued throughout the ages to be the holiest form of dress, next to nudity, for the Indians. Siva wears a tiger skin when he is not naked; rishis and other ascetics, such as Sri Rama and Sita during their exile, wore bark dress.[34]

RELIGION

How far religion appealed to the Palaeolithic man we cannot say definitely. The absence of graves and graveyards may lead us to believe that the early man had no faith in the

existence of soul after his death. But he seems to have believed in Nature and its doings. He also knew that there was an inner spirit which was the cause of his movements and nativities. But as man is, besides a tool-making, a religious animal. We may well believe that Palaeolithic man had evolved rites of sacrifice to guardian spirits. The lowest stratum of religious life in each South Indian village today is concerned with the propitiation by bloody sacrifice of the goddess or god, who residing in the boundary of village, protect the man and animals, who live therein. There was no plethora of gods and goddesses but the conception of Mother Earth would have profoundly influenced him. All protection which human beings want led the way in later Palaeolithic times to the development of a Mother cult and the worship of a Mother Goddess. In this way the cull of Mother Goddess has gained popularity in South Indian villages.[35] The village deities are more often goddesses than gods. This indicates that the family organisation which grew in later Palaeolithic sub-periods was matriarchal in character. In later times, when Agama theology systematized the Indian Pantheon, these innumerable local goddesses were made the manifestations of the great Mother goddess, Kali, worshipped so largely in India today, especially in these parts of the country where the influence of the Vedic religion did not become paramount.[36] If we trace the cult of Devi to primitive times, there is no doubt that the worship of Devi to which the

Hindus are today wedded so strongly had its origins, probably in Palaeolithic times when man knew only the Mother-goddess.

While the cult of Mother-goddess became popular, these primitive men propitiated their goddess by sacrificing mostly animals and sometimes human beings. They indulged chiefly in sacrificing the buffalo. In the Palaeolithic age when men lived on flesh, which they got by hunting, a number of animals, he offered their mean to their chosen goddess. We can trace it in the fact that one of the names given to the Mother-goddess and worshipped as such even is Mahishasuramardini. This twin epithet is perhaps derived from the primitive custom of killing the buffalo in sacrifice to goddess. It is quite clear that the foundations of the cult of Mother-goddess were laid in the Palaeolithic age and the cult still lingers with us as a vital part of our religion.[37]

ART

Drasings and paintings of men and animals, notable carvings in horn and engravings on stone made by Palaeolithic artist have been discovered in France and Swiss caves inhabited by Palaeolithic man. No such art products have yet been found in India except the Pendants made of teeth, found in the Bill Surgam Cave of the Kurnool district. On this, remarks Foote,[38] similar drawings may have been made by Indians, and have been destroyed by those ubiquitous destroyers of many human

artifacts, the termites, which are known to have attacked and damaged human carnia in ancient Egyptian graves. It is by no means unlikely that the Indian insect ravagers may have done the same and have annihilated the carvings and drawings made by the ole people in this country on bone and ivory. In some of the caverns at Singhanur, near Raighar, were drawings which could be attributed to Palaeolithic times and a close examination of the figures shows that the pictures were drawn with bamboo brushes, bamboo being the material quite accessible to the Palaeolithic man. Though the paintings discovered in these caves do not have high technique, still they resemble those in Egyptian pottery. In some drawings the method of brush work adopted stands comparison with similar paintings in Spain.[39]

Though we have not many examples of pictures painted, still there is enough evidence to indicate that Palaeolithic man in South India was a bit of an artist and he indulged in art expressions.

DISPOSAL OF THE DEAD

It is very interesting to note how the ancient man who had absolutely no knowledge of Pottery, disposed of the dead. Man lived in the mountains, he probably abandoned the dead, whenever they dropped down, the dead body was exposed to carnivorous birds and beasts. A relic of this old method of disposing the dead is even today found among the Parsis and

Tibetans.

Chronologically, the Lower Palaeolithic seems to have flourished from Late Pleistocene to Upper Pleistocene. The Middle Palaeolithic stratigraphically succeeds the Lower Palaeolithic. The radiometric dating of the alluvium bearing this industry gave a time range of 40,000 to 20,000 years B.P. The Upper Palaeolithic succeeds the above two in the Belan valley in Uttara Pradesh. The faunal evidence from the Kurnool caves is indicative of a late Pleistocene stage to this culture, i.e., this culture flourished between 20,000 and 10,000 years B.P.

RACES AND THEIR LANGUAGES

Being really a continent, India is inhabited by peoples of different races, who speak many different languages. The oldest of these peoples are the inhabitants of Andaman Islands who belong to the Negrito branch of Negro race. The Negrito is a diminutive type of Negro which rising in Africa like the Negros, passed through India eastward, and is found in the Andamans associated with a prelithic stage of culture. Negritos are found on the sea coast of Makran between India and Persia, in the Malaya peninsula, and in the Phillippines. Mostly the Yenadis of Telugu country, the Kurumbas, the Irulas, Paniyans and Kadirs belonged to this branch. Formerly they lived along the entire sea coast from Arabia to China, but

now they have been either driven inland or have been exterminated or enslaved and absorbed by people of any other races. These people lived entirely by fishing and hunting. They possessed very rude weapons made of stone and bones of animals.

Philologists believe that the language of early men holophrastic, i.e., the whole sentence, unbroken into words formed the unit of speech. Probably, their extinct in the more inaccessible interior parts of India, a group of allied languages e.g., Santalis, Savara, etc. to which Max Muller has given the name of Mundari, Nishad is a much better name for these people who are the modern representatives of the ancient hunters, and in early Sanskrit literature, were called Nishads. These Nishads are even today in a very primitive stage of culture.[49] We may hence conclude that the speakers of Nishada dialects today roundabout the Vindhyan region are the representatives of the Palaeolithic folk and that these dialects have been evolved from the possibly holophrastic dialects of primitive Indians.

MESOLITHIC CULTURE

In India Mesolithic cultural evidences are scattered throughout the country. They are found in various physiographic situations, such as coastal area, flood plains, outcrop prominances and surface scatters on the table land. The

Mesolithic industry has been obtained only in the open air context in South India. Some of the well known stratified sites are in South India. The excavations of these sites have been made by Cammiade, 1926[41] Munthy, 1970[42] (Kurnool Caves), Todd[43] (Bombay), Subbarao, 1948, and Sankalia, 1969 (Sanganakallu), Rami Reddy[44] (Palavoy), Joshi and Bopardikar 1972 (Hathakhamba, Maharashtra) and Rajendran, 1980 and 1985 (Kanara and Kerala). The famous teri sites occur all over South India either along the coast or on the plateau. There are a few Mesolithic rock shelters in parts of Northern Kerala at Marayur and at Badami in Karnataka. The Microlithic industries that scattered far and wide in India are found to be contemporary with the Neolithic and later Neolithic cultural phases. In some instances microliths appear in dolmens with iron implements, in other with pottery which can be dated to the 4th century B.C. Thus, in different regions, according to their geographical situation and cultural development, microliths have been in use as forming composite tools and weapons at widely different periods. These might extend from Mesolithic to historic times.

A systematic excavation made at Brahmagiri (Chitradurga District) and Langhanaj (Gujarat) have produced evidence to show that at least at these two sites the microliths might belong to the real Mesolithic cultural phase.

At Brahmagiri, both neoliths and microliths appeared at the same level but later eight feet only, microliths were found. Almost similar is the case with microlithic cultures in the rock shelters in the Mahadeo Hills at Panchmarhi[45] and at Uchali near Naushahra in the Punjab. At Panchmari pottery was found in the first few inches and at Uchali microliths were found in association with Neolithic like pottery and skeletal remains of Homosapiens.

In general, the tools were made on jasper, chalcedony and to some extent quartz. Some of the tool types noticed are flakes, blades, lunates, scrapers, points, etc. The animal bones found in excavation include domestic dog, humped cattle, water buffalo, goat, sheep and a number of wild animals such as Samber, Barasingha and spotted deer. The microlithic industries of the Southern part of South India are predominantly based upon milky quartz. The sites at Jalahalli, Kibbanahalli, Sanganakallu in Karnataka, Giddalur in Andhrapradesha and Calicut in Malabar and a few sites in Goa are best examples of quartz industry. On the east coast, the tools are associated with a group of sand dunes. These dunes are locally known as teris.

The Mesolithic industries of India are attributed to the people much like the modern tribal groups who live primarily by hunting, gathering and fishing and who occasionally

practised trade with more advanced communities such as Neolithic or Chalcolithic neighbours.

In this stage man had definitely taken to agriculture and domestication of animals. The small tools were used for various purposes, for hunting the animals with bows and arrows; as harpoons for fishing and also used as sickle-teeth for very primitive harvesting. Thus, these small tools do indicate a very great step taken by man towards what is called economic self-sufficiency. Moreover, he laid the first foundation of agriculture.[46] Thus, this is a very well documented situation from all over South India.

An examination of skeletons indicated that they combine predominantly Mediterranean and Veddoid features. Racially these human skeletons show Hamitic Negroid characteristics and hence might have been of the people akin to those in Northeast Africa and also Proto-Egyptians. They were primarily hunters and subsisted on such game as the cow, buffalo, wild horse, ox, sheep, goat, rat, fish and crocodile. The dog also must have played an important part in the life of these people, as so far two almost complete skeletons have been found near the human remains.

Mesolithic is extremely important and comparatively very well dated now. The oldest Mesolithic site dates back to about 8,000 B.P. This culture seems to have had a time span

of about 5,000 years.

The Negritos were followed by another race, who came from the Southeastern regions of Asia and at one time covered the entire Archipelago, from the Eastern Islands in the Pacific to Madagascar on the coast of Africa. In the North, the languages spoken by them are still to be found in Yasin to the North of Kashmir and in the small valleys of Nepal. They were mostly proto-Austroloid people who migrated from the West and form one of the basic elements of Indian population. By admixture with other elements specially with the Negrito who came before and the Mongoloids who came after them, they gave rise to Kol or Munda type, the Monkhmer type in Assam, Burma and Indo-China.

The Austric languages fell into two broad groups which are called the Austronesian and the Austro-Asiatic. The Austronesian or 'Southern Island' languages are distributed over a very wide area and include almost all the languages spoken in the islands of the Pacific and Indian oceans, with the exception of Australia. The Austro-Asiatic languages, on the other hand, are confined to a smaller area. This group has been divided into three separate sub-divisions. The first consists of the language of the wild Semang and Sakai of Malaya peninsula. The second contains the languages of the Khasi hillmen of Assam, the inhabitants of the Nicobar Islands and

some of the isolated inhabitants of Burma. Such as Palaung, the Riang, and Wa. The third sub-division consists of the Munda or Kolian languages of Central India and group of languages called the Monkhmer which are spoken in Lower Burma and Cambodia.[47]

Thus, it is observed that the Mesolithic culture at one stage has established contact with the Harappans in Western India on the one hand and with the Neolithic in Southern India on the other.

NEOLITHIC CULTURE OF SOUTH INDIA

It is very recently, evidence for Pure Neolithic has been recognised in some of the Southern Indian proto-historic sites. The region South of the Krishna towards Ponnaiyar and Kaveri Valleys comprising Tamilnadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesha has numerous typical Neolithic sites.[48] Further Northwards in the Ponnaiyar estuary, there are a few Neolithic sites with polished stone axe and greyware pottery. In the Upper Ponnaiyar valley and in the Shevaroy hill ranges Neolithic sites are of two kinds, one yielding only lithic material and the other habitational debris. Shevaroy region presents one of the richest clusters of Neolithic sites in South India. A few sites are also found in the nearby Vattalmalai hill range, and in Tamilnadu at Javdi and Tirumalai. However, the foot-hills of Mullikadu, Dailamalai and Togarpallamalai, a few habitational

sites are noticed. The other well known sites in the regions are Paiyampalli, Chandrapuram, Gollapalli, etc. A number of Neolithic habitational sites are also located in the Ponnaiyar valley.

Some of the most important and well documented sites in South India are as follows: Muttalvadi, Hammige, Brahmagiri, Sanganakallu, Tekkalakota, Maski, Piklihal, Palavoy, Kesarapalli, Nagarjunakonda, T. Narasipur, Hallur, Utnur, Veerapuram, Kodekal and Terdal. Of these Utnur is the only one that had a pure Neolithic culture and nothing else. All others started with a Neolithic phase, which in the later stage was found to be associated with a Chalcolithic culture. After the amalgamation the combined culture appeared to have spread North to the Godavari valley, e.g., the sites like Nasik, Nevasa, Tekwada and Daimabad and South to the Kaveri area, e.g., Paiyampalli.

During the later stages, there was a powerful intrusion of painted burnished greyware probably from the Upper Krishna Chalcolithic cultures. At this particular stage, the microliths disappear in the region of Upper Tungabhadra and in the Upper Krishna valleys, whereas in the Raichur Doab one notices the development of Neolithic phase by fusion of the Neolithic culture traits of the lower Krishna and Chalcolithic culture traits of the Upper Deccan. The Neolithic culture of South India is called 'Polished Stone Axe Culture' and 'Food Producing Culture'. In this stage, for the first time men made conscious

attempt to plough the land and prepare the land for sowing the seeds and to harvest and also water the land with some kind of irrigation. Thus, the first steps - conscious steps - towards the civilization were taken on the granite hills in South India.[49] These South Indian inhabited flat areas are the earliest settlements of man. Until then man moved from place to place. But now in this stage, he had chosen to remain at one place.

SETTLEMENT

Neolithic settlers preferred low hill tops and natural rock shelters for habitation. Neolithic man's life was settled one in houses and villages. Bamboo screen, plastered with mixture of clay and cow-dung, went round thick wooden posts[50] are the main features of the construction. The roofs were conical and were thatched. In some sites low dry stone walls were also noticed. The floors were coated with cow-dung and mud plaster. Herths were common as also large storage jars. Besides hill-tops, foot-hills and some times river banks were chosen by Neolithic man for founding his first village settlements. But the settlements once inhabited were continued even during successive stages. The structure at Sanganakallu and Tekkalkota were built on a murram surface.

AGRICULTURE ECONOMY

With the invention of agriculture mankind entered into a revolutionary new phase of its culture which affected all aspects of their life. This revolutionary change is also reflected in the tools which the new cultivators fashioned for their new tasks and needs.

The economy was based largely on animal husbandry and agriculture, though hunting and food gathering to some extent still continued. The domesticated animals were humped cattle, goats and sheep. Another striking feature of Neolithic period was the construction of large cattle pens, generally situated away from the settlements. Agriculture with the aid of artificial irrigation was practised on the terraces and also on the lower ground to produce mainly finger-millet and horsegram. Rice was not known to them.

The food of Neolithic man was very simple. The chief articles of their diet were fruits, roots, nuts, flesh of domesticated animals and wild varieties of cereals and pulses. These people cultivated Hurali (Kannada), Ulavalu (Telugu), Kollu (Tamil), or Kuthi (Hindi) and ragi (horsegram and finger millet respectively).[51] This is a poor man's food, growing as it does everywhere even in poor soil and waterless regions. The history of this grain is not known. However, this is the earliest well-documented occurrence of this grain in India

going back to over 4,000 years.[52]

POTTERY

Many relics of pottery have been found in Neolithic settlements in the districts of Anantpur, Cuddapah, Kurnool, Tinnavelly, Salem, Pudu Kotta, Trichinopoly and Bellary. Pottery appeared for the first time in South India as a Neolithic invention. The typical ware was black or grey burnished or unburnished, some times painted with red ochre. The use of three legged jars to store grain or water were also common. Dishes, bowls and cups were other types. The pottery was mostly handmade, some times on a primitive turn-table and burnt in open air Kiln. The ware was mostly primitive but some times sophistication may be noticed in burnish, handles and bases.

TOOLS AND WEAPONS

Of tools and weapons the most characteristic were stone axes with pointed butt, so well ground as to exhibit a fine polish, on account of which the entire culture is known as 'Polished Stone Axe Culture'. Other stone tools were hoes, anvils, adzes, wedges, chisels, ring-stones, querns, rubbers, hammer-stones, sling-stones and grinding-stones. Besides the heavy tools, there were microlithic ones like arrow-heads, spear-heads, points etc. in association with blades.

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As the cotton plant is a native of the Deccan, the Neolithic man learnt to weave cotton cloth, the hide-dress and bark-dress of the earlier age were reserved for occasions of sanctity. Woolen cloth was also woven by the pastoral tribes of Kurubas, even perhaps before cotton cloth was woven.

BURIAL CUSTOMS

Their sense of organisation as well as community-life and their thought for the next life are indicated by the way they disposed off the dead. From the evidence at Tekkalkota, Brahmagiri and Piklihal, one might infer the burial customs of this period. Burial urns were used either horizontally or vertically for depositing bones after excarnation through exposer. In the case of adult burials more than one urn were used. A number of small pots with food-stuffs were placed in the burial urns. The burials for the small children were made under the house-floors.

ART

The people of this culture, gradually developed some aesthetic sense, and they are supposed to be the authors of the early rock paintings, bruising and etching in Andhrapradesha and Karnataka and their domestic art was comprising painting and pinhole decoration on pottery.[53]

On the basis of available several Carbon-14 dates, this culture called Neolithic or Polished stone axe culture flourished from about 2500 B.C. to about 900 B.C. We may call it the earliest beginnings of civilization.

RACES AND THEIR LANGUAGES

Of the eight Brahmagiri skulls, four were said to represent the Scytho-Iranian and the others proto-Austroloid types. Out of the eighteen broken and deformed Masked Skulls three racial types have been isolated - the Scytho-Iranian, the proto-Austroloid and a type similar to the Al-ubaid skulls. Some scholars think that the proto-Austroloid type represented Neolithic man. The largest group of Austric languages in Central India is Kolian or the Muṇda group. People who speak these languages live in hilly jungled tracts on both sides of the Vindhya range. They are the Santals, Mundas, Bhumigas, Birhars, Kodas, Larkakols, Turs, Asurs, Agars, and Korwas. These people live in the eastern part of Vindhya, a chain, extending from Rajamahal in to certain parts of Chota Nagpur. The group of languages extends up to the West of the Mahadeo Hills. In the hilly tracts of Orissa, a small wild tribe called the Juangs and in the Oriya speaking district of Madras two other wild tribes called the Savaras and the Gadabas speak similar languages. This group of languages, which is commonly called the Munda languages is in existence in these areas. Mostly

the Austric speaking proto-Austroid people came to India from the West as a first wave during the Mesolithic phase. Then the second wave of the Austric race invaded India sometime after, who used polished stone weapons and who were mostly the authors of Neolithic culture. The aboriginal tribes who live the Western portion of the Vindhyas in the Aravali range and the Western Ghats are allied to the Kolians or Austric people, though they have ceased to speak Austric languages. There are the Bhills, the Minas, the Mairs, and the Kolis of Rajaputana and Western India. The wild tribes of Southern India such as the Yenadis of Telugu country, the Kurumbas, the Irulas, the paniyans and the Kadirs, have adopted later on, though they seem to be of Negrito origin or the result of a mixture of the Negrito and the Austric races. The Kurubas of the Madras Presidency belong ethnically to the same stock as the wilder Kurumbas, have taken to agriculture and turned Hindu.[54]

NEOLITHIC-CHALCOLITHIC CULTURE OF SOUTH INDIA

Most of the sites in the region North of the Krishna and South of the Narmada reveal a cultural level with an admixture of traits from the Southern Neolithic and the more advanced chalcolithic elements of Central India and post-Harappan elements from Southern Gujarat particularly of the lower Narmada and Tapi valleys. The use of Copper makes its appearance. This sort of overlap of cultural elements

distinguished the cultures of the Deccan as an amalgamation of cultures that are disignated Neolithic-Chalcolithic but they could as well be called the early farming cultures of this region. The earliest Chalcolithic phase in this region is represented by Savalda culture named after the type site Savalda on the Tapi.[55] This culture is known from another 20 sites in the Tapi valley. The Savalda culture is characterised by what is known as Savalda ware which is a variety of black-painted red-ware. The pottery types include high necked jars with square body, dish, dish on stand, basin bowls, very few examples are red, ochre, brown etc. The painted designs represent animals, weapons, plant motifs and geometric designs. In the Central Deccan, the early farmers belong to the Malwa culture.[56] The Savalda culture is predated. Whereas the Malwa culture is dated to the beginning of second millennium B.C. The successive post-Savalda culture is Malwa culture which flourished between 1700 and 1300 B.C., followed by Jorwe culture which flourished between 1400 and 700 B.C. All these cultures share certain common elements. They were basically village cultures which flourished during the time-span of 1000 years. They are characterised by painted wheel which made pottery mostly black and red and specialised blade flake industry of Chalcedony. Copper was known but was not extensively used.

Excavations conducted at Jorwe, Prakash, Bahal, Tekwada,

Nevasa, Daimabad, Chandoli, Songaon, Bahurupa, Inamgaon, Paithan etc., as village settlements accommodating about 50 to 100 closely set houses. The sites in the Southern Deccan, besides Brahmagiri, Poklihal, Hallur, Tekkalkota, Palavoy, T. Narasipur, Sanganakallu and Maski, may be mentioned, Budidepadu, Singanpalli, Panchikalapadu, Patapadu, Sivavaram, Pusalapadu and Ramavaram in Kurnool District, Belagodanahalu and Lakshmipur in Bellary district, Hadargiri and Kunbev in Dharwad district, Anegondi, Nandihalli and Yabbalu in Raichur district.

SETTLEMENTS

The main characteristics of the South Deccan Chaleolithic had special peculiarities, yet certain traits were common to the whole Chaleolithic. The Chaleolithic fold settled mainly on black soil eminently suited to cotton growing, hence, they must have taken to weaving cloth. These people lived in huts either rectangular or round and pit dwellings were common.

AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY

Their economy was based on animal husbandry, centred mostly round cattle - they also reared sheep, fowls, pigs and dogs - and cultivation of food-grains. Cultivation of wheat was noticed in the Chalcolithic cultures of the Deccan. Wheat grains of the triticum, compactum and triticum vulgare type were found in the excavation. They subsequently concentrated

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on rice, jowar and millets. Several pulses including the lentil, blackgram, green gram, and grass pea were found as also linseed and two fruits i.e., ber (Indian jujube) and the myrobalan. The domesticated animals include cattle, sheep, goat and pig. Deer was hunted. Beads were common. Cotton was very much in use.[57] With slings and sling-balls they chased the birds off their ripening grain and even hunted them for food. Though the copper tools and weapons were scarce, they were generally of fine-grained materials like agate, chalcedony etc.

POTTERY

The characteristic black-on-red pottery was of coarse fabric and generally slender section. It had a red slip on which were executed, usually in black pigment, geometric animal designs. This pottery is called Malwa ware in reference to specimens from Central India, and Jorwe ware - found earlier in Central India then at the type site - in regard to those from the Deccan. From a variety of pottery-forms note may be taken of bowls, basins, jars, dishes on-stand, bowls on-stand, perforated pots, double pots and spouted vessels. The painting repertoire consisted of vertical straight and wavy lines, slanting straight and wavy lines, horizontal straight and wavy lines, dots, triangles, diamonds, circles, Sigmas, lattices, loops, axe-designs, palm-leaf, plants, and animals. Group designs consisted of horizontal bands of single or multiple

decorative elements bordered or separated by one or a group of straight horizontal lines and of space-fillers of different elements.[58]

RELIGION

We know very little about the religious life of the Chalcolithic people of South India, because pure Chalcolithic burials have not turned up. It appears in South India that the Neolithic-Chalcolithic composite culture existed. However, the terra-cottas throw some light on the positive religion of these Chalcolithic people. They used to worship Mother Goddess and male gods. The worship of bull in some form or other was there because it played an important part in the economy of these people.

BURIAL CUSTOMS

The dead were disposed in an interesting manner. Burial within the house floor or just outside was very common way of disposing the dead. The children were buried by enclosing the dead in wide mouthed earthen pots. Some times more than one pots were placed mouth to mouth in order to accommodate the dead. These pots were kept horizontally in shallow pits. Of the 131 burials found at Nevasa and a few at Bahal, Chandoli, Daimabad, Songaon and 50 at Inamgaon, it is clear that dead bodies were buried under the floor of the houses. While in

all cases, the skeletons were kept in an extended but in one case, it was in a flexed pose. These were placed in a North-South direction. It seems that the Chalcolithic people of this region borrowed it from the Southern Neolithic culture.[59] This burial practice was unique to South India and was common among the Neolithic-Chalcolithic cultures of South India.

CHRONOLOGY

Navadatoli has provided us with certain inconsistent dates but the over-all picture is fairly clear. The culture could be deemed to have started in mid-17th century B.C. Songaon's beginnings go back to early 14th century B.C. Chandoli and Nevasa in the Northern Deccan apparently began about the middle of the 14th century and early 13th century B.C. respectively.

While the above mentioned dates are for sites outside the main Neolithic area, in the Southern Deccan, where the Chalcolithic in several sites overlay the Neolithic and mixed with it, especially in the Krishna-Tungabhadra valley, it is difficult to fix the date of Chalcolithic arrival. However, the date of 1610 B.C. for Tekkalkota (Neolithic-Chalcolithic) gives a fair indication. The Neolithic-Chalcolithic culture persisted upto 1105-955 B.C. when the Megalithic took over. Further South in Tamilnadu where the Neolithic-Chalcolithic culture

spread only around the middle of the 1st millennium B.C. And so, the span of the Chalcolithic culture from its start in Southeast Rajasthan to its end in Tamilnadu was about 1300 years from approximately 1800 B.C. to 500 B.C.[60]

Chalcolithic culture which was an imposition on the Neolithic in the Deccan could boast of its own well developed traits. By coming with the Neolithic the Chalcolithic gave a push to cultural progress in the Deccan. The Chalcolithic folk settled on the river banks and thus opened up vast trade communications, water-supply, food etc. This automatically led to the emergence of leisured classes to arts and crafts - Chalcolithic pottery, with its profusion of form and design is a case in point. These advantages the Chalcolithic folk passed on to the Neolithic and thus set up the Deccan on the road to full-fledged urbanization.

RACE AND LANGUAGE

The skeletal material from Nevasa, Chandoli, Brahmagiri, Jekkalkota and Maski will throw some light on the race. A single skull and some skeletal remains from Nevasa have been said to belong to a primitive type. The same case with Chandoli also. The anthropological data from Brahmagiri and Maski seemingly pertained to the mixed Neolithic-Chalcolithic culture. Of the 8 skulls, four were supposed to belong to the Scytho-Iranian type and others to the proto-Austroloid. Though these

skulls could not yield any proper measurements and yet three racial types have been distinguished - the Scytho-Iranian, a type akin to the Al Ubaid skulls and the proto-Austroloids, from these data some scholars have drawn the conclusion that the Chalcolithic element in the combined Neolithic-Chalcolithic culture is of West Asian.[61] The Tekkalkota remains have been pronounced to be Mediterranean like the modern Dravidians.

The earliest stratum of the Tamil language contains words like Paradav, Vellalas, Velis, and Karalars. It means these tribes were inhabited in the Tamil country once. Toda, Badaga, Kurumba and Irula tribes who dominated in the South are proto-Austroloids speaking the dialects akin to Dravidian group of speech.

Again, Kuravar and Mavavar living in the Tamilnadu even between Palaeolithic and Neolithic cultures. The old Bhills, Minas, Yenadis, Kurumbas, Irulas, Paniyars and Kadirs were speaking Austric languages like Munda including Kharia, Juang, Savara, and Gadoba adopted Dravidian languages later on.

If we observe the movements of Chalcolithic people, soon after the fall of Harappan culture, one can safely arrive at a conclusion that these people brought proto-Dravidian dialects to South India and later on megalithic builders, who migrated from Mediterranean region, refined them into Dravidian language.

IRON AGE AND MEGALITHIC CULTURES

In South India iron age coincides with wide spread practice of Megalithism. Megaliths are noticed in almost all parts of India right from Northeastern foot-hills to the Capecomorin. Although there might be some chronological variation among megaliths in India,[62] there is a striking uniformity in material culture and the knowledge of iron technology was acquired by them. South India, especially in the States of Maharashtra,[63] Karnataka, Kerala, Tamilnadu[64] and Andhra Pradesh had an overwhelming concentration of Megalithic monuments spread over in time and space. Megaliths of South India present a picture of variety in their typology and incidentally an oldest iron age Megalithic site so far known is situated in Tungabhadra valley (Kommaranahalli) of South India. It has been dated to about 1200 B.C. and since we have a series of radio-carbon dates available for these Megalithic sites, it is found that these Megaliths continued into the early historic period. The practice of erecting Megaliths survives even today among some tribal communities in India.

It is found that the earliest Megalithic sites in South India were contemporaneous with the later Neolithic chalcolithic cultures, particularly the Jorwe phase. Recent excavations in parts of Maharashtra[65] have provided evidence establishing the fact that the megalithic folk had trade

contacts with the later Chalcolithic culture. Interestingly, majority of the Megalithic burial complexes are not associated with habitational sites of that period. However, in the region of Vidarbha (Maharashtra)[66] and in parts of North Karnataka, a few Megalithic burial sites are juxtaposed with Iron age habitational sites. Investigations at such sites have not yielded convincing evidence to state whether the authors of the Megalithic monuments settled in the vicinity. In some of the well excavated sites the depth of Iron age occupation is less than four feet. At all these sites the introduction of iron takes place at the close of Neolithic-Chalcolithic period. The earliest phase of Iron age is represented at Paklihal, Hallur and Brahmagiri.[67] Some of the burials produced black and red ware and white painted black and red ware. In some of the early Iron age sites stone axes and blade industries continued. In South India, the earliest Iron age levels have not yielded evidence regarding burial practice. But the succeeding phases are typically Megalithic as observed at Piklihal, Sanganakallu, Brahmagiri and Maski. At all these sites the Megalithic phase is followed by one in which a distinctive white painted black and red, plain red appears with russet dressing.[68] Some of the pottery types recall the Northern black polished ware but the relative abundance of burial sites and paucity of excavated Iron age sites as led to inadequate information regarding the development and continuation of Iron age cultures into early

history.

Megaliths by being conspicuous rude stone monuments continued to attract the attention of scholars since the beginning of archaeological studies in India but as yet the study on various aspects of Megalithism leaves much to be desired. This Iron age graves are far wider than any one culture region. As said earlier, they are found all over South India and even beyond. Among the graves, some of the most common types are as follows:[69]

1 Large urn, often pyriform, containing collected bones previously excarnated and buried in a small pit, marked in some cases by a stone circle or small capstone or both.

2 Legged urns and legged pottery sarcophagi;

3 Pit circle grave;

4 Cist grave;

5 Rock cut chamber, and

6 Alignment of rows of standing stones.

The geographic distribution of Megalithic types is as follows:[70]

a) Stone circles, with cairn filling are found in the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra.

b) Passage graves or chamber tombs are found in Karnataka.

c) Rock cut chamber, topikallu and Sarcophagi are found along the Southern coast and North Kerala.

d) Menhirs are found in Andhra Pradesh as well as in Kerala.

Numerous other types that are known to form a minority have no specific regional distribution.

In all the graves that are found time and space, the black and red ware is ubiquitous but it varies in thickness and gloss depending upon the raw material used. Another type, although a black and red ware has white paintings and occasionally, graffiti are noticed.

Besides pottery, the Megaliths have produced a variety of iron and copper objects. These include axes, swords, daggers, arrowheads, spearheads, chisel and adzes. Objects of everyday utility such as frying pans were also noticed. A few bronze objects were also common. It is observed that iron was smelt locally at several sites and also they knew production of bronze.

The economy of the Megalithic people was basically a pastoral economy with knowledge of agriculture. Only in a few cases, actual remains of grains were recovered. These grains include horse-gram, green-gram and ragi. Rice was also known to them. Some of the coastal Megalithic sites in the South have yielded fish hooks indicating fishing activity.

The burial traditions indicate that they belong to a different social and ethnic group. In Vidarbha,[71] even horses were buried. The skeletal evidence has yielded mixed results regarding the ethnic affinity of these people. The Brahmagiri skeletal remains point probably to Scythian or Iranian stock. In spite of vast body of data, the Megalithic have proved a complex problem. Apart from understanding the material culture certain aspects such as the authorship and the origin and their interaction with the contemporary communities has not been fully understood.

There are a couple of attempts, in archaeological research to attribute Aryans the credit of erecting earliest Megaliths to commemorate the dead. The focus of attention being the origin of South Indian Megaliths. Asok Parpol[72] made a conjunctive study of material culture and linguistic evidence relating to the Megaliths in South India in the backdrop of death cult among the Vratyas, the Aiynar cult. He reexamined some of the theories that exist relating to the origin of Megaliths. While one group of theories advocate the defusion of Megalithic cult from the Middle-East (Egypt or the Near-East) by sea route, the other group attributes the Megaliths to the migration of Dravidas from the North to the South. Further the affinity between the Dravidas, the Black and Red ware users and the pottery of the Megalithic burial goods is taken into account in this context. Some of these theories are examined in the

light of lexico-statistical counts, linguistic data from the Old Testament and recent archaeological discoveries. The origin of Sati is traced to the Megalithic culture of the Deccan. The Megaliths are even described as tomb stones of chieftains or kings who, on their death, were followed by a mass suicide by their kinsmen. It is interesting to note that the practice of mass suicide by the king's subjects was prevalent among the Incas, the Chinese, certain tribes of Africa and California. Most theories discuss the Megalithic problem in the context of Aryan nomadic tribes, the Eastern Celts or Scythians or as being reminiscent of those of Central Asia, Iran and Caucasus and some of the traits brought from these areas by the nomads speaking Indo-European languages.

Asok Parpola[73] discusses the arrival of Aryans from the Kuban region as three successive waves - the Vratyas of the early Kuban phase, the Rigvedic Aryans and Aryans who knew iron technology and practised Megalithism (which developed in Kuban after the Rigvedic Aryans left for India). The Kurgan, the Levant and Necropole B of Sialk VI cultures are said to form the intermediary link between the Kuban region and South India.

In India the Vratyas are identified with the users of Black and Red ware and are also to have picked up the fire altar idea from the Harappans and linked it with their ritual (Mahavrata) for their supreme god Rudra. The later arrivals and

settlements of the Aryans are related to the cemetary H, the Jhukar-Jhangar and the Painted Grey Ware cultures. The Prakrit speaking Vratyas (who represent the earliest folk migration into the subcontinent) came in contact with the Aryans who brought Megalithism and iron. The Vratyas borrowed these two traits and coupled with their fire altar idea to suit their death cult. These Vratyas were pushed towards the east by the advancing Aryans who knew better metal technology. The later vedic texts provide information on the funeral rites and practices such as burial and cremation in two forms - the quadrilaterals for the gods and circles for the Asuras. There is reference to smasancitis suggesting agni chayana fire altars. Agnichayana is not referred to in the early vedic texts.

Sundara[74] who reviews Asok Parpola (Op cit.) is of the opinion that his proposition is based on uncertain and provisional inferences gleaned from the literary and archaeological data without making a thorough survey of the physical characteristics of the Megaliths. Sundara emphasises the need for the study of Megaliths in the context of protohistoric cultures of India and explore the possibility of existence of multiple strains of indigenous and extraneous origins within the South Indian Megalithic complex. It is found that there is sufficient evidence on the distinctive characteristics (regional variation) of the Megaliths of Eastern Maharashtra,

North Karnataka and Eastern Tamilnadu. This geographic variation is considered to suggest different sources and courses of diffusion in time and space. However, this suggestion opens up further discussion and reexamination. The Megaliths of Maharashtra contained calcined bones, horse bone, horsebits, copper objects, carnalian beads and Black and Red ware pottery. The copper objects and horse bits are rarely found in cairn packings. Etched beads are seldom found in cairns, except in those of the late phase burials in South India. Horse bones are not found in Tamilnadu and other areas. A pit burial with black and red ware, a common burial type in Karnataka (Brahmagiri), has been reported from Vidarbha and Eastern Maharashtra. However, it has become increasingly difficult to explain the evidence of a multiple Megalithic tradition in a given region or adjacent regions unless they are attributed to different folk communities. The Vratyas must have had a common tradition of death cult. But there is no common factor found between Megaliths of Karnataka and Maharashtra. The spread of Prakrit language into the South need not be necessarily concomittant with the Megalithic culture of South India. The second urbanisation in the Ganga Valley as indicated by the rise of sixteen Mahajanapadas and the early historical phase in the Deccan (400 to 300 B.C.) may be associated with the spread of Prakrit and not earlier as proposed by Parpola. Hence the Megalithic record does not seem to throw any light on the aryanisation of South India.[75]

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