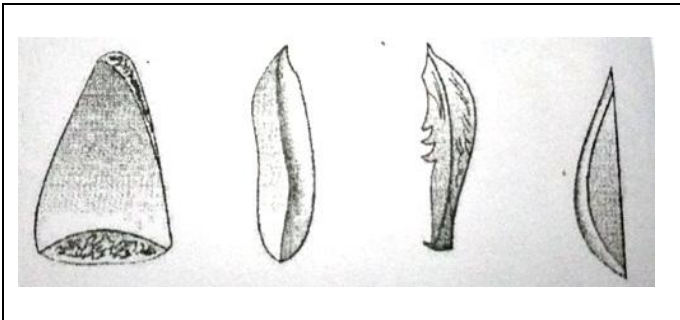
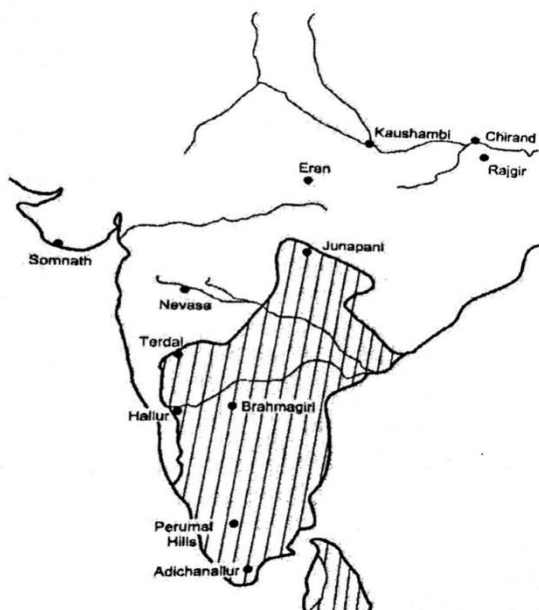


## THE METAL AGE (1800-1000 BC)

There was a very slow transition from the use of stone to the use of metal. People initially started using copper, gold, silver and at last iron. Initially, people valued gold and then copper and bronze, which are hard and also shiny. In Europe, the Neolithic Age was succeeded by the Bronze Age, but in India, there was no specific Bronze Age. In the northern parts of India, people changed to copper from stones for manufacturing axes, spears, heads and other objects. In India, the use of bronze began in the Copper Age. Therefore, we normally term this intermediate age as the Copper and Bronze age. The use of iron began much later, and it marked the beginning of the Iron Age in India. Hence, Metal Age in India can be divided into (i) the Copper and Bronze Age and (ii) the Iron Age.



**FIG 1.4 Neolithic Age (Well – Shaped, Sharp and Polished)**



## MAP 1.2 Megalithic Future Settlements (Early Iron Age)

It is very interesting to note that in the southern parts of India, there was no such intermediate Copper and Bronze Age between the Neolithic and the Iron Ages. The general features of the Neolithic period are the exclusive use of non-metal tools and the practice of agriculture with the development of village life. In India the period has not been properly studied and currently cannot be differentiated from the so-called chalcolithic period in which the use of stone was complemented by the use of copper or bronze. In the next phase, village economy continued on the old lines, but the great chalcolithic civilisations evolved out of it. The chalcolithic culture in India conventionally involved non-urban, non-Harappan culture which initially appeared at the turn of the second millennium BC and were finally replaced by iron using cultures.

There were three major chalcolithic cultures in India i.e., Banas culture (2000 to 1600 BC), Malwa culture (1900 to 1400 BC) and Jorwe culture (1500 to 900 BC). Besides these, the other cultures that were present during this period were Ahar culture (2800 to 1500 BC), Kaytha culture (2450 to 1700 BC), Savaldia culture (2300 to 2000 BC), Prabhas Patan culture (2000 to 1400 BC) and Rangpur culture (1700 to 1400 BC). The most prominent characteristic of these chalcolithic cultures is their distinct painted pottery. The red-slipped ware painted in designs of brown/chocolate colour (Kaytha culture); red-black-white designs (Ahar culture); coarser surface on which red or black designs are made (Malwa culture); lustrous red ware with glossy surface (Prabhas Patan and Rangpur culture) are well-known pottery forms. There were other chalcolithic villages which could be differentiated from each other mainly on the basis of pottery and other artefacts such as terracotta and tools. Around the Baluchi Hills were four principal culture groups: (i) Zhob Valley culture, (ii) Quetta Valley culture, (iii) Nal culture and (iv) Kulli culture.

People during the chalcolithic constructed houses in rectangular and circular shapes. The houses were made of mud wattle and daub, were mostly in

clusters. They did not know the use of burnt bricks. Floors in the houses were made of rammed clay and roof of straw which were supported on bamboo and wooden logs. People raised cattle and did farming of Kharif and Rabi crops in rotation. They used to store food grains in huts. Nearly all these chalcolithic cultures developed in the black cotton soil zone in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra. The inhabitations of Kaytha culture were just a few in numbers, most of which were located on the banks of Chambal and its tributaries. Ahar culture inhabitations such as Balathal and Gilund were among the largest. Excavations show that Balathal was a well-fortified inhabitation. There are adequate evidences that indicate that, the chalcolithic communities traded and exchanged goods with other contemporary communities.

Large inhabitations such as Ahar, Gilund, Nagada, Navadatoli, Eran, Prabhas Patan, Rangpur, Prakash, Daimabad and Inamgaon would have been major centres of trade and exchange. Religion was the common liking factor for all the chalcolithic cultures. All the cultures worshipped mother goddess and the bull. The worship of fire was a very extensive phenomenon among the chalcolithic people. Fire altars have been discovered from a great number of chalcolithic settlements. In South India, the dead were placed in east-west position. In Maharashtra, the dead bodies were buried in urns under the floor of their houses in north-south direction. In Chandoti and Nevasa in Maharashtra, some children have been found buried in



### **Sanganakallu Excavation**

Excavation at Sanganakallu, Kamataka (Bellary district) has provided evidence to show that in this region, microliths are of considerable antiquity, positively before the Neolithic or Polished Axe Culture or the beginning of agriculture. As the microlithic deposits underlie the Neolithic and overlie Palaeolithic, it is truly 'Mesolithic' as in Western Europe. Further, its association with a sticky black brown soil indicates climatic conditions when much more rain fell in the region, which is semi-arid today. Thus, a real transition between the pure food-collecting stage and the food-producing stage can now be postulated in several parts of India. However, any clear developmental history of the succeeding stage is not yet available from any one area. The picture has to be reconstructed or pieced together from scenes here and there.

Graves along with copper-bead necklaces. The chalcolithic people made notable advancements in ceramic and metal technology. The painted pottery was efficiently made and baked in kilns at a temperature of 500-700°C. In the upper parts of Doab, Ochre Coloured Pottery (OCP) belonging to 2000 to 1800 BC has been excavated.

People were acquainted with copper, as copper-bead as well as a celt and few other objects have been found. Gold was perhaps the earliest discovery, but it was used as a material for ornaments only. The Iron Age concludes the pre-historical period. Several historians are of the opinion that the later part of the Iron Age extended up to the period when the Rig Veda was composed. This period saw a notable progress in the culture and civilisation in India. The exceptional discoveries in large quantities in ancient sites show that in South India, stone was directly followed by iron, while in North India axes, swords, spearheads, awl, daggers, etc., were first made in copper and afterwards with iron.

We see the use of iron starting in the north-western part of the Indian sub-continent at the start of the first millennium BC. Iron objects used by the people can be categorised as: (i) Weapons used for warfare or hunting and fishing such as arrowheads, spearheads, daggers, lances and fish hooks; (ii)

Household objects such as nails, pins, needles, knives, clamps, rings, bangles and tongs, (iii) Craft tools such as axe, chisel and borers; (iv) Agricultural tools such as spade, sickle, hoe, axes and ploughshare. However, till now, only a few iron tools associated with the first half of the first millennium have been, unearthed, which show that at this stage, iron did not contribute adequately in the progress of handicraft and agriculture. In the initial stage in India, iron could not be used for production because of its scarcity. However, in this phase iron may have been used in warfare, for clearance, for, making wheels and the body of carts and chariots and in the building of houses. Thus, it is evident that the period between 1025 and 500 BC was to a great extent an age of weapons and not iron tools.

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