

NEOLITHIC AGE

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Concluding phase of Stone Age

Features which set them apart from the Paleolithic and Mesolithic Cultures.

Use of

- Ground Tools
- Polished Tools
- Pottery
- Practice of plant cultivation
- Animal domestication

Characteristic Features

- Tools marked an improvement
- Smooth and round surface.
- Growth of grinding technique--once damaged tools instead of discarding like earlier times could now after grinding could once more be usable.
- Chief tool type of this age---Celt which is basically an axe or adze.
- Used for clearing area of wild vegetation to make fit for cultivation.

Pottery

- Appears first time in this age.
- Rough and hand made.
- Cooking
- Storing of food grains.

Growing reliance on cereals

- Discovery of large numbers of
 - Stone querns
 - Pestles
 - Ring Stones

These were used for crushing or pounding agricultural produce.

Cereal Grinders

- **Quern-stones** are **stone** tools for hand-grinding a wide variety of materials. They are used in pairs. The lower, stationary, **stone** is called a **quern**, while the upper mobile **stone** is called a hand stone. They were first used in the Neolithic to grind cereals into flour.



Settled Life-Qualitative Changes

- Cultivation of cereals
- Domestication of animals
- Greater certainty of food supply
- Growth of larger communities
- Man started living in Wattle-and-Daub houses made of twigs and sticks plastered with mud.
- Planned Burials suggesting development of religious beliefs and practices.
- Existence of exchange system as is evident from the ornaments found at certain sites like at Mehrgarh.



Neolithic Revolution

Plant cultivation and animal domestication led to subsistence economy.

- Growth of farming Communities
- A settled village life
- Neolithic term was first used by Danish Pre historian Thomsen in the 19th century
- Gordon Childe used the term Neolithic Revolution to highlight the true socio-economic significance of these cultures.

Gordon Childe

His argument

- Farming was first invented in a single "nuclear region" in Mesopotamia or North-East.
- From there diffused and spread to India and other parts of the world.

Subsistence Economy based on

- Farming
- Stock-raising
- Turning point in the development of human civilization.

Chronological Distribution

- Le Mesurie in 1842 discovered the first Neolithic celt from Raichur district, Karnataka.
- John Lubback in 1867 discovered more from the Brahmaputra valley of Upper Assam.

Principal Sites

- Evidence of the spread of Neolithic Culture comes from SIX different geographical regions.
 - North-Western-Baluchistan and its adjoining area in Pakistan—7th to 4th millennium BC
 - Northern-Kashmir Valley—2500 BC -1500 BC
 - Central India-Vidhya region, south of Allahabad—4000 BC—1200 BC
 - Mid-Gangetic Basin-Eastern UP and Bihar— 2000 BC—1500 BC
 - Eastern India- Bengal, Orissa and Assam
 - Penninsular or South India-Andhra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu—2500 BC--1500 BC

- Different Time frame
 - Neolithic Culture did not develop or end everywhere at the same time
 - Overlapping/ co-existing with Copper using Harappan Civilization—
2600 BC-1900 BC
- Regional variations