



# Full Course on Ancient History

For UPSC/PCS & SSC exams

# Pre-History

Short Notes

mentored by:



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On the basis of availability of sources, History can be divided into three broad categories:

### 1. PRE- HISTORY

Absence of literary sources, depends on Archaeology, e.g., Stone Ages.

### 2. PROTO- HISTORY

Literary sources are there but not deciphered. e.g., Indus Valley Civilization.

### 3. HISTORY

Literary sources are there and they are deciphered.

## Important sources in History

1. Primary Sources
2. Secondary Sources

### PRIMARY SOURCES

Usually first-hand information, they are from the time period involved and have not filtered through interpretation or evaluation. e.g., literary records, artefacts (plant specimen, fossils, weapons, tool, clothing), Govt. records and surveys, original recordings, folk lores, archaeology, diaries etc.

### SECONDARY SOURCES

Interpretation and evaluations of primary sources, written on the basis of Primary sources. e.g., bibliographies, commentary, criticism, dictionaries, encyclopedias, dictionaries, magazines etc.

## IMPORTANT ERAS IN INDIAN HISTORY

1. **VIKRAM ERA - 56 B.C.** (VIKRAMADITYA OF UJJAIN)- After drove the Sakas out of Ujjain.
2. **SAKA ERA - 78 A.D.** (SAKA KING KANISHKA)- Occupied Ujjain 137 years after Vikramaditya.
3. **GUPTA ERA - 320 A.D.** (CHANDRA GUPTA-1)
4. **HARSHA ERA - 606 A.D.** (HARSHAVARDHAN OF KANNAUJ)
5. **KALACHURI ERA - 248 A.D.** (FOUNDED BY TRAIKUTKAS)

## PRE-HISTORIC CULTURE- THE STONE AGES

- The fourth stage of Earth's crust is called the Quaternary, which divided into Pleistocene (most recent) and Holocene (Present) - BORI in Maharashtra gives the earliest evidence of Man in India in the middle Pleistocene period.
- Credit for rediscovery of Indian pre-History - **Dr. Primrose**
- In 1935 H. D Terra and T.T Paterson studied glacier sequence of Kashmir and Punjab.

- The age when Pre- historic man began to use stone for utilitarian purpose is termed as the Stone age, stone age is broadly divided into three parts:
  1. PALEOLITHIC AGE
  2. MESOLITHIC AGE
  3. NEOLITHIC AGE

## PALEOLITHIC AGE (UPTO 9000B.C.)

- John Lubbock coined the term Paleolithic.
- Paleo - old and Lithic – stone.
- Development of first stone tools made of Quartzite hence Paleolithic men also known as “QUARTZITE MEN”
- This period is characterized by “Hunting and food gathering stage”.

*Animal remains found in the Belan Valley in Mirzapur district in U.P*

On the basis of the nature of stone tools used this period is further divided into three parts:

- a. Lower Paleolithic
- b. Middle Paleolithic
- c. Upper Paleolithic

### LOWER PALEOLITHIC

- Cover greater part of ice age, earliest subdivision of Palaeolithic age.
- Tools used- Hand axes, Cleavers, Choppers, and Chopping tools.
- Major sites
  1. Belan valley, Lalitpur - U.P
  2. Madras - Attirampakkam, Gudiyan cave
  3. Maharashtra - Narmada valley, Chirki, Nivasa
  4. Gujarat - Pawagarh hills (factory site)
  5. Karnataka – Hungsi valley, Bagalkot
  6. W. Punjab - Sohan valley etc.

### MIDDLE PALEOLITHIC

- Tools used - tool pattern based upon Flakes and Crude pebble industry, important tools - Blades, points and borers.
- Major sites
  1. Nevasa - Maharashtra
  2. Bhimbetka - Madhya Pradesh
  3. Bagore - Rajasthan
  4. Didwana, Karmali valley – Rajasthan
  5. Soan valley - Pakistan,
  6. Narmada valley - Maharashtra and M.P

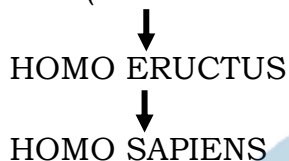
### UPPER PALEOLITHIC AGE

- Less humid phase, coincided with last phase of Ice age.
- In the world context it marks the appearance of new flint industries and of modern men (HOMO SAPIENS).

- Tools - Blades, Burins (Reniguntur - Andhra Pradesh) and Scrappers
- Patni - Maharashtra - Ostrich eggshell in criss cross design.
- Bagore - Rajasthan - Paleolithic shrine.
- Rohri hills in Upper Sindh - Milestone 101- A stone tool factory.
- Other sites are
  1. Nandipalle - Maharashtra
  2. Jogadha, Bhimbetka - Madhya Pradesh
  3. Singhbhum - Jharkhand
  4. Budha Pushkar - Rajasthan
  5. Kurnool caves - Andhra Pradesh

### **IMPORTANT FACTS**

- Earliest men like creature - HOMINID (RAMAPITHECUS)



- Bhimbetka Caves and paintings - The famous Bhimbetka caves near Bhopal extend from to the Upper Paleolithic age and are famous for their cave paintings (depiction of - wild animal, hunting scenes, and scenes from day-to-day life of the period.

### **MESOLITHIC AGE (10,000 - 6,000 B.C)**

- Meso means "middle" or "intermediate" or Lithic means "stone", so mesolithic is middle stone age also known as Microlithic age means "Small stone age".
- It was a transitional phase between Paleolithic and the Neolithic age.
- Climatic conditions are warmer as the end of Paleostciene age.
- Along with Hunting and Food gathering, Adamgarh in M.P and Bagor in Rajasthan provide for the earliest evidence of domestication of animals like cows, horses and other poultry and farm animals.
- Tools - Smaller in size, better in finishing (more geometric), main tools are - Backed blades, points crescents, triangle and trapezes. Some of microliths were used as components of spearheads, arrowheads, knives, sickles, harpoons and daggers.
- The earliest cultivation and primitive agriculture is suggested in Salt lake, Sambhar in Rajasthan.
- Sites like Bhimbetka, Mirzapur, Adamgarh (M.P - ROCK SHELTER) and Pratapgarh are rich in Mesolithic paintings.
- Morihan Pahar - Uttar Pradesh - Bow and arrows, horse and chariot paintings.
- Chopani Mando - Uttar Pradesh - First evidence of pottery.
- Other important sites
  1. Langhnaj - Gujarat
  2. Bagor - Rajasthan
  3. Damdama - Uttar Pradesh
  4. Hathkambha, Patne - Maharashtra
  5. Sangnakallu - Karnataka

## NEOLITHIC AGE (6000 – 1800 B.C)

- Neolithic means neo - new, lithic- stone age, it was the last phase of Stone age.
- Gordon Childe called this stage as Neolithic Revolution or Agricultural Revolution as this age marked transition in human history from small nomadic bands of hunter gatherers to large agriculture settlements and early civilization.
- Human became less dependent on hunting and food gathering and began to produce their own food.
- MEHRGARH (bread basket of Baluchistan) is earliest the Neolithic settlement in South Asia (7000 B.C), but in India Neolith is not early than 6000 B.C and in some places in south and eastern India, it is as late as 1000 B.C.

### FOUR MAJOR CHARACTERISTIC TRAITS OF NEOLITHIC CULTURE

Beginning of the practice of agriculture

Domestication of Animals

Used of polished stone

The manufacture of Pottery

### IMPORTANT INVENTION OF THIS PERIOD:

1. Making of Wheel



2. Discovery of fire



- Developments in agriculture transformed the nomadic hunters into a sedentary farmer led to the beginning of village settlements.

### POTTERY OF NEOLITHIC PERIOD

- Pottery was initially hand-made but later on wheel.
- Usage of pottery increased to a great extent.
- They painted and decorated their pottery rice husk.
- Unglazed pottery that is having rough surface.
- Found throughout India including the South. **Burzahom** - coarse grey pottery.

**NEOLITHIC TOOLS**

- The Neolithic tools consist of the ground tools having smooth surfaces, and well-rounded and symmetrical shapes.
- Tools are more sharp, polished and more effective than those in the earlier period including different types of axes called “Celt”.

**NEOLITHIC AGRICULTURE**

- RICE is considered as first crop grown in Indian subcontinent.
- The major crops grown during this period were Ragi, Horse gram, Cotton, Rice, Wheat and Barley.

**NEOLITHIC SITES**

1. KASHMIR: Imp feature of Neolithic sites is visible from Kashmir.

- (a) pit dwelling
- (b) yielded considerable bone implements
- (c) Only sites where microlith is completely absent (megalith)

Major Sites of Kashmir:

**BURZAHOM**

- ✓ The dwelling pits either circular or rectangular.
- ✓ Domestic dogs were buried with their masters in their graves.

**GUFKARAL**

Literal meaning of Gufkral is “Cave of the potter”

2. BALUCHISTAN

- a. Killi Ghul Mohammad
- b. Mehargarh

3. UTTAR PRADESH

- a. Chopani Mando
- b. Mahagarha

c. Koldihwa – Provided earliest evidence of cultivation of rice.

The radiocarbons dates of the bone remains, (from Koldihwa and Mahagarh) show that cattle, sheep, and goat were domesticated in the region.

4. BIHAR

- a. Chirand (bone implements)
- b. Chechar

5. KARNATAKA

- a. Brahmagiri
- b. Tekkalkotta
- c. Sanganakallu

- d.Narsipur
- e. Hallur
- f. Kodekal

- g. Kupgal
- h. Maski

i. Lingsugur - 1st noticed neolithic site in India



## **ARTISANAL ACTIVITY**

- Chalcolithic people were expert copper smiths and good workers in stone.
- They manufactured cloth and made beads of semi-precious stones.
- Inamgaon- evidence of potters, smiths, ivory carvers, lime makers and terracotta makers.
- MALWA- Spindle whorls are discovered which shows that people knew spinning and weaving.

## **DIFFERENT BURIAL PRACTICES**

- MAHARASHTRA - dead body in NORTH-SOUTH position.
- SOUTH INDIA - dead body in EAST-WEST position.
- WEST INDIA - Complete extended burials.
- EAST INDIA - Fractional burials.

Presence of grave goods indicate the beginnings of social inequalities.

## **MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION**

Chalcolithic culture spread over a long-time span, and coincided with pre-harappan, mature Harappan and post Harappan phase.

## **MEGALITHIC CULTURE**

- Megalithic culture overlapped with the end phases of Neolithic- chalcolithic cultures. Roughly placed in the time bracket of 1000 B.C and 100 A.D.
- literal meaning of Megalith is large stone, it was basically type of burial practice
- Burials made of large stones in graveyards away from the habitation area for memory or to commemorate.
- Black and Red ware available in all types of Megaliths.



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