

MESOLITHIC AGE

By the Middle Stone age or Mesolithic age, man had spread across the entire world. This stone age (c.10,000 BCE to 8000 BCE) was a very short period as compared to the Palaeolithic age. However, in the Mesolithic age, man saw significant changes in his life, such as the beginning of agriculture and rearing of animals. These changes made man move towards a settled lifestyle.

Upgraded Tools and Weapons

In the Mesolithic age, the new tools were small in size but sharper and more efficient than the stones used in the Old Stone age.

The Mesolithic tools are called **microlith**. The word *microlith* is made up of two words—*micro* meaning small and *lithos* meaning stone. Some tools, fixed on wood or bone, were used as spears, saws, arrows and knives.

Know This

- (a) Cro-Magnon is one of the main types of *Homo sapiens*. Cro-Magnon, who lived 40,000 to 10,000 years ago, is considered the oldest modern human species in Europe. It is named after the cave of Cro-Magnon in southwest France, where its first specimen was found.
- (b) Neanderthal is an extinct member of the modern human species. The first Neanderthal traits appeared in Europe as early as 600,000–350,000 years ago.



Some microlith of the Mesolithic age

The Mesolithic age gave way to the Neolithic age around 8000 BCE.

Recap

1. In the Middle Stone age or Mesolithic age, man took first steps towards a settled life by learning to grow crops. He also reared animals.
2. He upgraded the technique of making stone tools. He made microliths which were sharper and more efficient.
3. Some tools, fixed on wood or bone, were used as spears, saws, arrows and knives.

NEOLITHIC AGE

In the Neolithic age, he made further progress in agriculture. Gradually, he learnt to identify different types of seeds and sow them. Initially, he depended on rainfall to water his plants. But, later on, he began to irrigate the crops with water from nearby rivers and lakes. The early man grew grains like corn, wheat and millet. He used improved axes for clearing forests for agriculture. Sticks were used for digging the soil to sow seeds and the sickle to harvest crops.

In India, the remains of wheat and lentils, belonging to the Neolithic age, have been found at Chirand (Bihar) and of horse gram at Tekkalakota (Karnataka).

Domestication of Animals

In the Neolithic age, man started domesticating other animals such as wild pigs, sheep, goats, horses, donkeys and cattle. So, the Neolithic man began rearing animals. It ensured a regular supply of milk and meat for food and hides for covering the body. Besides, man also used animals for ploughing the field and to carry heavy loads.



Aurochs heads excavated from Catalhoyuk in a museum of Ankara, Turkey

Impact of Agriculture on Man's Life

Grain or vegetable crops take about three to four months to grow. So, for continuous care of the crops, the early man had to live for a long period near agricultural fields. This resulted in man opting for a settled life, especially near the banks of rivers where water was easily available for agriculture.

Agriculture is not one man's job. From sowing seeds to harvesting crop, many

people work together. This added a new dimension to the life of man in the Neolithic age. The people, who worked together in agricultural fields, started living as a community. Thus, started the formation of first villages.

Improvement in Tools

The Neolithic age is characterized by a vast improvement in the art of stone tool making. The practice of agriculture and the invention of whetstone mainly brought about this improvement. Using harder stones, the Neolithic man designed tools that could be used in agriculture.



A sickle dating back to 3000 BCE found in Iraq

Among notable tools of the Neolithic age were the polished stone axe, the sickle and the digging wooden stick with a stone mace head. Other tools in use were bladelets, knives, chisels and hammers. The polished stone axe was an important tool because it helped them clear thick forests, to grow more crops and build huts. The bow and arrow was also in use in the Neolithic period. In India, New Stone age tools have been excavated at Jhusi (Karnataka) and at Adichanallur (Tamil Nadu).

horse gram: a type of bean also known as 'kulath' or 'kulthi'

aurochs or urus: a very large type of cattle that was prevalent in Europe until its extinction in 1627.



Know This

Whetstone is a type of sharpening stone that is used to sharpen the edges of tools and implements. The early man used the whetstone to sharpen stone tools.



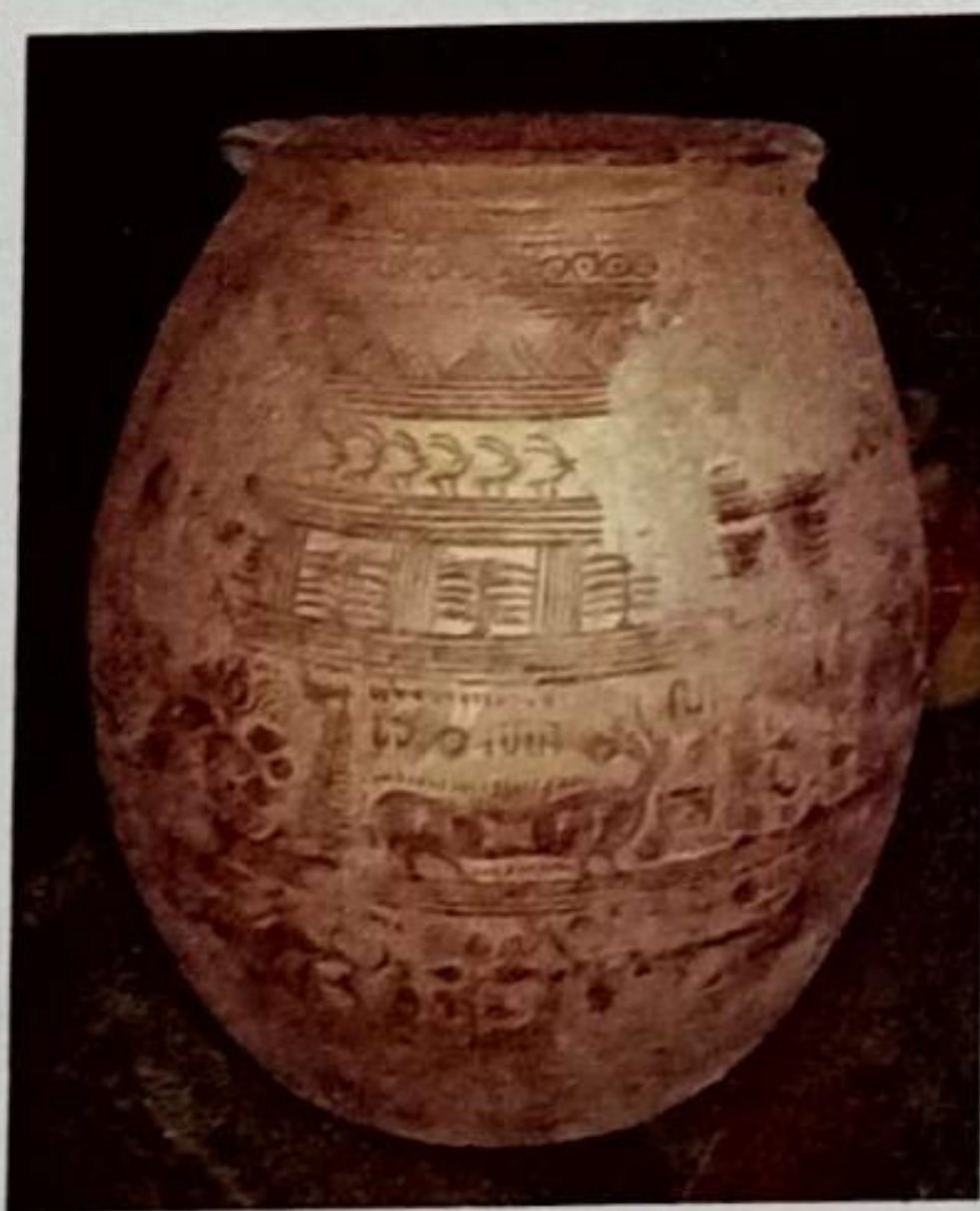
A copper alloy awl and a whetstone belonging to the late Neolithic age found in England

Invention of the Wheel

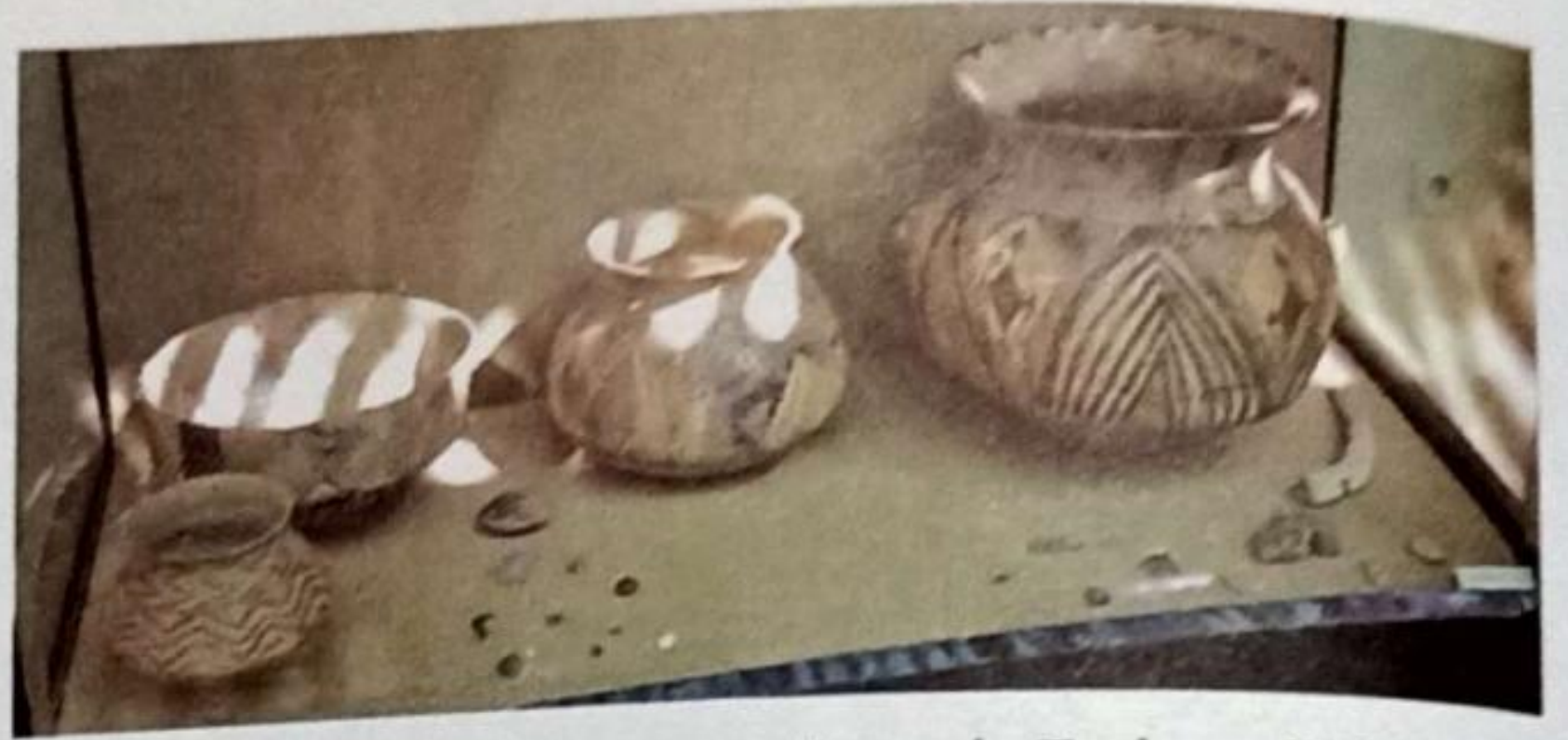
In the Neolithic age, the invention of the wheel changed the life of the early man forever. He began to use it for spinning cotton and wool, weaving cloth and in pot making.

Pot Making

The adoption of agriculture and rearing of animals left man with surplus grains, milk, etc. He needed something to store them. So, he pioneered the art of making mud pots and vessels from clay. He either dried these pots in the sun or baked them in fire. He also started using mud pots for cooking food.



A Neolithic terracotta pot found at Mehrgarh



The pottery found at Catalhoyuk, Turkey, 6000 BCE

The invention of the wheel gave him the potter's wheel. He started making pots of different sizes and shapes.

Recap

1. In the Neolithic age, the early man made further advance in agriculture, and the first villages were formed.
2. The early man also starting rearing animals.
3. The Neolithic age saw development of better tools like polished stone axe, sickle and chisel.
4. With the invention of the wheel, the Neolithic man started using bullock cart or horse cart. He also began using the wheel for weaving cloth, and in pot making.
5. He pioneered the art of making mud pots and vessels from clay.

Social Life of Neolithic Man

The Neolithic man started living in a community and formed villages. These villages were small groups of huts made



A mural of an aurochs, a deer and humans, dating 6000 BCE, found at Catalhoyuk, Turkey

mural: a large painting done on a wall

of mud walls and thatched roofs. A village was generally surrounded by a mud wall or a thick hedge to defend it from wild beasts.

Beginning of Trade

The surplus food in the form of grains, milk and livestock also led to the start of trade. However, the early man did not sell the surplus food in exchange for cash. Instead, he exchanged food, milk or livestock for the things he needed. This is called **barter trade**.

Religious Beliefs

The Neolithic man was fascinated as well as frightened by natural phenomena such as lightning, earthquakes and thunder. Unable to understand these phenomena, he started worshipping them. He also worshipped the sun, earth, moon, sky, water, fire, and trees. He sometimes offered

sacrifices amid hymns during worship.

Early man did not understand death. He believed that death was a long sleep or a journey into another world. So, food, clothes, tools, weapons, etc., were placed along with the dead at the place of burial.

The following table lists major differences between the lifestyles of the early man during the Palaeolithic age and the Neolithic age.

CHALCOLITHIC AGE

When the Neolithic age was continuing, another great change happened in the life of man following the discovery of metals. In fact, it gave birth to the **Age of Metals**. Copper was the first metal to be discovered by man. With the discovery of copper, man entered the **Chalcolithic age** or the

Comparison of Life in Palaeolithic age and Neolithic age

	Palaeolithic age	Neolithic age
Period	c.5,00,000 – 10,000 BCE	c.8000–4000 BCE
Food	Berries, roots and raw flesh	Grains, vegetables and cooked food
Shelter	Rock caves and treetops	Straw huts with thatched roofs
Clothes	Made of tree bark and animal skin	Stitched cotton, woollen and fur clothes
Animals	No domestication of animals	Domestication of animals such as dogs, sheep, donkeys, pigs, goats, cows and buffaloes
Tools	Crude tools made of stone, e.g. hand axes, choppers, etc.	Sharp, polished and grinded tools made of stone and metal, e.g. axe, sickle, bow and arrow
Discoveries and Inventions	Fire	Wheel
Social Life	Lived as a hunter and wanderer	Lived a settled life as a herdsman and farmer

KRISHNAGAR ACADEMY.

CLASS - VI, SUBJECT - HISTORY.

CHAPTER - LIFE OF MAN THROUGH THE
STONE AGE

23.05.2020

TOPIC - NEOLITHIC AGE, MESOLITHIC AGE.
PART - II

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

- Q 1. Mention any two changes that took place in the Mesolithic Age.
- Q 2. What do you mean by Microlith?
- Q 3. Write the uses of Sticks and Sickle made by the people during the Neolithic Age.
- Q 4. Name two places in India where the remains of wheat and lentils belonging to the Neolithic age, have been found.
- Q 5. How the formation of the first villages took place?
- Q 6. Name any four notable tools of the Neolithic Age.
- Q 7. What is the Whetstone?
- Q 8. What was the Barter Trade System?
- Q 9. Name any four natural objects worshipped by the people of the Neolithic Men.
- Q 10. What was the concept of death of the Early man?

Answers of the Questions (Part - I) published on 19.05.2020 (TUESDAY) on this same chapter.

A 1. 5,00,000 BCE - 4000 BCE.

A 2. Four major achievements of the Stone Age are as follows:

- (i) The discovery of fire
- (ii) Making of Stone Tools.
- (iii) Beginning of Agriculture
- (iv) Beginning of Community living.

A3. The palaeolithic man lived as a hunter-gatherer in small groups and led a nomadic life. Hunter-gatherer is a person who obtains food from edible plants and hunting animals.

A4. The ~~paleo~~ palaeolithic Tools are called macroliths.
(Macro means large and lithos means stones)

A5. The names of four early stone Tools are ~~Pestel~~, pestle, arrowheads, Spear heads, Choppers, Scrapers and hand axes.

A6. The names of four places in India where prehistoric tools have been found are

- (i) Mirzapur (Uttar Pradesh)
- (ii) Bori (Maharashtra)
- (iii) Kurnool (Andhra Pradesh)
- (iv) Bhimbetka (Madhya Pradesh)
- (v) The Valleys of Tungabhadra, Narmada and Godavari rivers.

Q7. The palaeolithic man was always in search of food and shelter. He took refuge in rock shelters, caves and slept on trees. They lived as a hunter-gatherer and led a nomadic life.

Q8. Petroglyph are images created by removing part of rock surface by incising, pecking, carving, etc. Petroglyph served as a means of communication for the prehistoric people before the invention of writing. Petroglyphs have

been discovered in different parts of the world, including Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh, India.

A9. The discovery of fire is considered as the most important event of the Old Stone Age. While making tools, man might have rubbed two stones that produced a spark of fire. This accidental discovery of fire changed the early man's life for the better. He started using fire for safety, survival and cooking.

A10. The palaeolithic man used a variety of stones such as flint, basalt and sandstone and also wood, bones, shells and antlers to make tools.

Today I am ending my class here. We shall be discussing the Chalcolithic Age and the Bronze Age in the next class along with the answer of Part-II given today. The next class will be on 26.05.2020 (TUESDAY)

Till then Stay Safe and Healthy at Home and wash your hands after regular intervals.