

# ***PRE-HISTORY***

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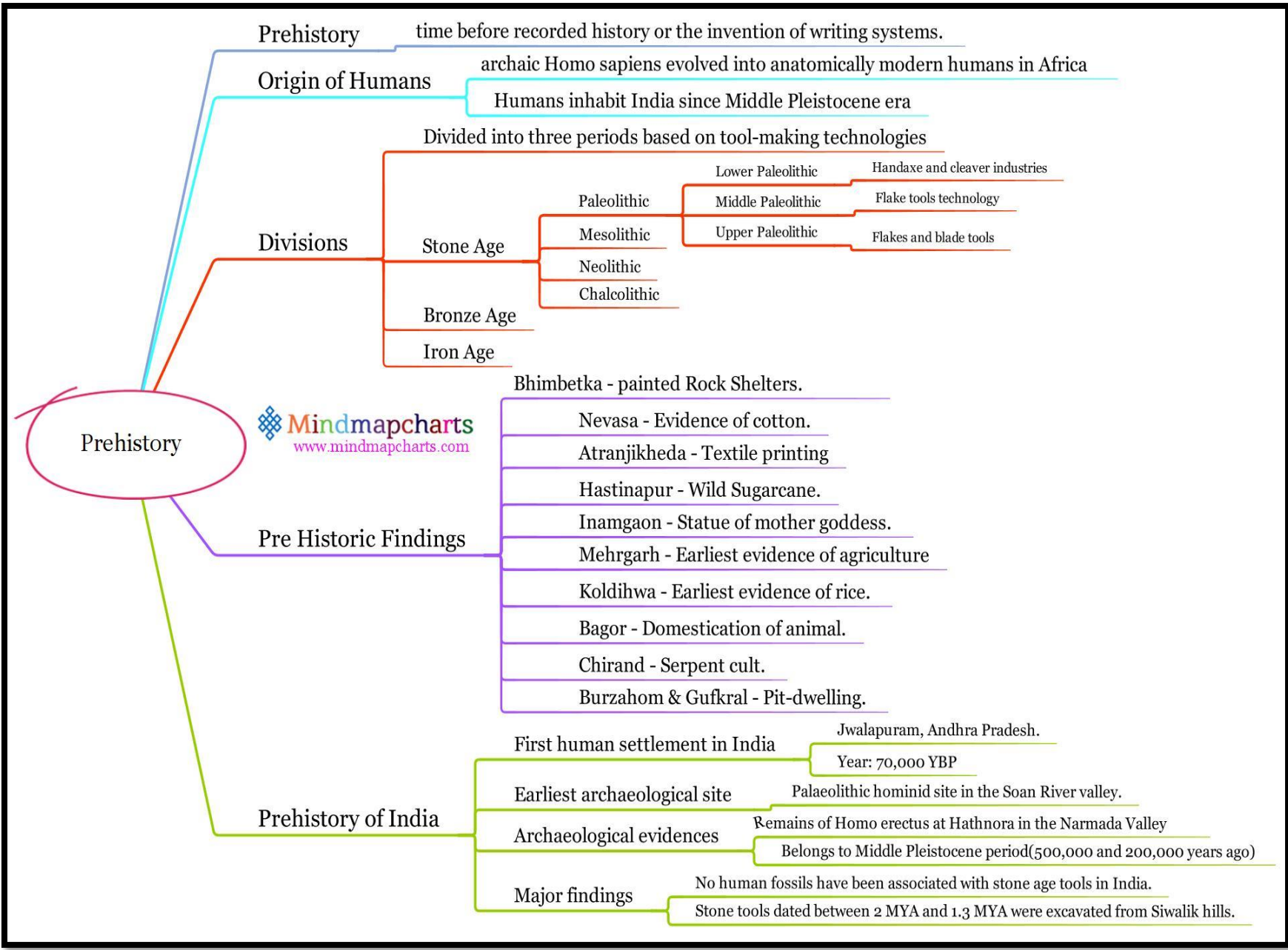
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**SOCIO-ECONOMIC HISTORY OF INDIA UP TO 1206 AD.**

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# PRE-HISTORY

- The term prehistory refers to the period when there was no written record.
- Understanding and reconstruction of the life ways of ancient men during that period is based on the analysis of the *material remains of their activities, such as tool making, animal hunting, food gathering etc., through archaeological explorations and excavations.*
- The prehistoric period has been mainly divided into **three ages**, namely based on **the Stone, Bronze and Iron ages** he changes in technology and social and cultural developments.



**Prehistory** time before recorded history or the invention of writing systems.

**Origin of Humans** archaic Homo sapiens evolved into anatomically modern humans in Africa  
Humans inhabit India since Middle Pleistocene era

**Divisions** Divided into three periods based on tool-making technologies

- Stone Age**
  - Paleolithic**
    - Lower Paleolithic Handaxe and cleaver industries
    - Middle Paleolithic Flake tools technology
    - Upper Paleolithic Flakes and blade tools
  - Mesolithic
  - Neolithic
  - Chalcolithic
- Bronze Age**
- Iron Age**

**Pre Historic Findings**

- Bhimbetka - painted Rock Shelters.
- Nevasa - Evidence of cotton.
- Atranjikheda - Textile printing
- Hastinapur - Wild Sugarcane.
- Inamgaon - Statue of mother goddess.
- Mehrgarh - Earliest evidence of agriculture
- Koldihwa - Earliest evidence of rice.
- Bagor - Domestication of animal.
- Chirand - Serpent cult.
- Burzahom & Gufkral - Pit-dwelling.

**Prehistory of India**

- First human settlement in India** Jwalapuram, Andhra Pradesh.  
Year: 70,000 YBP
- Earliest archaeological site** Palaeolithic hominid site in the Soan River valley.
- Archaeological evidences** Remains of Homo erectus at Hathnora in the Narmada Valley  
Belongs to Middle Pleistocene period(500,000 and 200,000 years ago)
- Major findings** No human fossils have been associated with stone age tools in India.  
Stone tools dated between 2 MYA and 1.3 MYA were excavated from Siwalik hills.

Period without any written records.

Archaeological excavations are the only evidence for our cultural knowledge.

Prehistoric period



Prehistoric period has three ages

The stone age

Palaeolithic age

Mesolithic age

Neolithic age

The Bronze Age.

Indus valley civilization

The Iron Age.

Vedic period

Early kingdoms

- The Stone Age is divided into three periods, namely ***Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic***, based on ***technological developments and gradual evolution of culture***.
- The people living during that period ***made tools and implements on stones which were easily available in the surroundings***.
- Besides, they also used ***wood, bamboo, bones*** etc. for making tools.
- However, as these are ***perishable materials and disintegrate fast, we do not get much evidence of these tools in archaeological contexts***.

## Tools of Paleolithic Era



**Chopper**



**Handaxe**



**Cleaver**

- Prehistoric period belongs to the time before the emergence of writing.
- It is believed that man learnt writing only about 5000-8000 years ago during the Neolithic period.
- The earliest known Neolithic writings are *Dispilio Tablet (found in Greece)* and *Tărtăria tablets (found in Romania)*. Both of these belong to 6th millennium BC.
- Thus, Prehistory began with appearance of the human beings about **five lakh years** ago, and finished with the invention of about **6-8 thousand years** ago.

## ***Classification of Prehistoric Period***

- Three classes of prehistoric period are stone, bronze and iron ages, with the later two overlapping with historic age.
- Stone Age is divided into three periods viz. Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic.
- Out of them, Palaeolithic {longest) and Mesolithic represent hunting gathering stage while the Neolithic represents the stage of food production,
- i.e. plant cultivation and animal husbandry.



# Dispilio Tablet

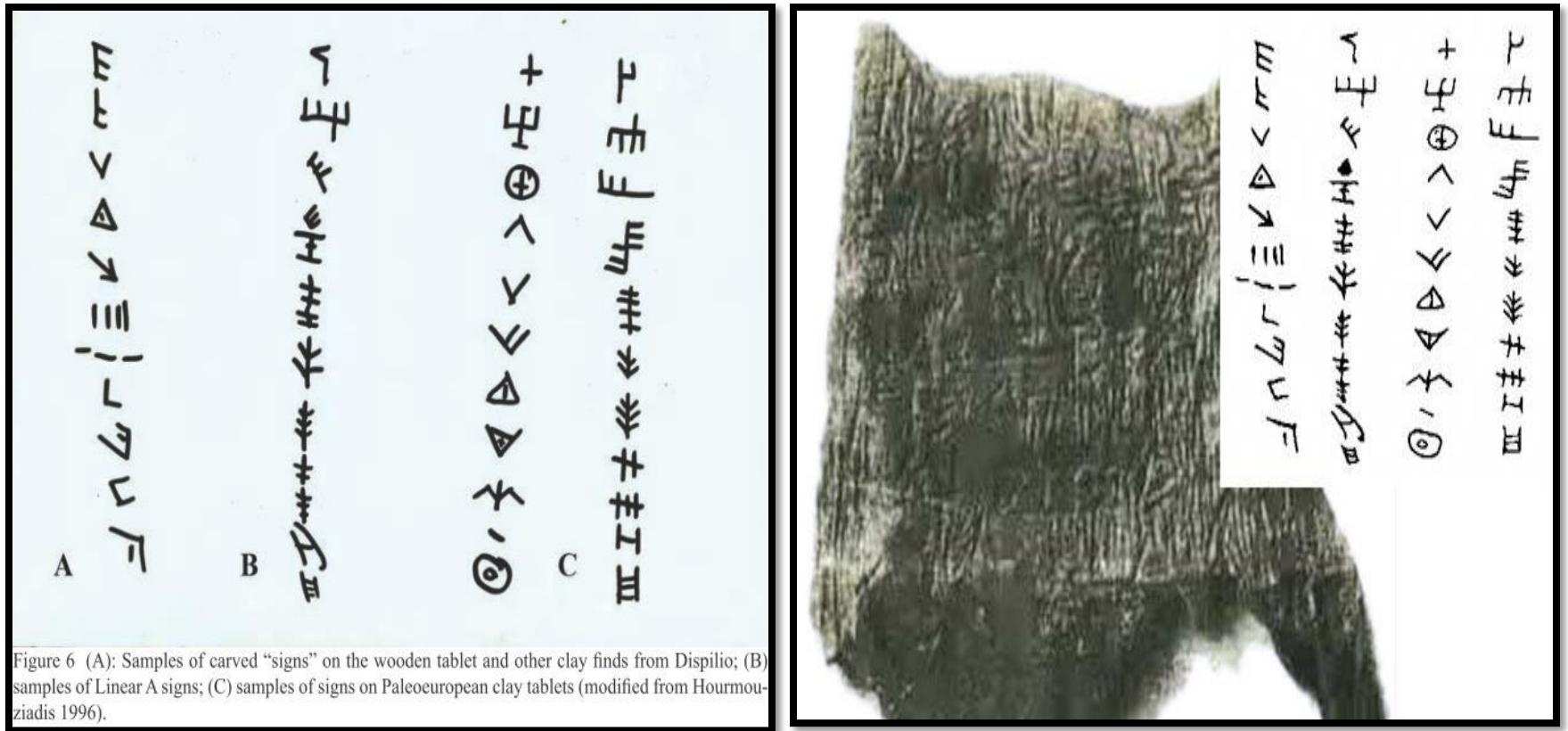


Figure 6 (A): Samples of carved “signs” on the wooden tablet and other clay finds from Dispilio; (B) samples of Linear A signs; (C) samples of signs on Paleoeuropean clay tablets (modified from Hourmouziadis 1996).

# *Tărtăria tablets*



# *Palaeolithic Age*

- The term Palaeolithic was coined by archaeologist ***John Lubbock*** in ***1865***.
- Palaeolithic Age spanned from ***500,000*** years ago {when tool making members of *Homo erectus* had arrived} till ***10,000 BC***.
- It is divided into three periods viz. ***lower Palaeolithic, middle Palaeolithic and upper Palaeolithic ages***.
- The transition from each of these phases to successive phases was slow and marked by ***increased fineness in the stone tools*** and technology of the time as follows:

Palaeolithic or Old Stone Age

Paleolithic age - 'Palaeo' old and 'lithic' stone

"Palaeolithic" was coined by sir John Lubbock in 1865

People were mostly hunters and gatherers.

Belongs to Pleistocene period

Period when most of the earth surface was covered with ice

Humans were absent in colder regions but could thrive in tropical region



Sub-divisions

Lower Palaeolithic

Middle Palaeolithic

Upper Palaeolithic

# Palaeolithic Culture

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## Soan culture

Soan is a tributary of river Indus

### Regions

sub-Himalayan region in Punjab and Himachal Pradesh.

Sirsa valley in Punjab and Beas- Banganga valley in Himachal Pradesh

### Three stages

Pre-Sohan

Late-Sohan

Early-Sohan

Sohan complex is also called Chopper chopping complex.

use of pebble tools was dominant.

### Two divisions of tools

#### chopper tools

unifacial tools having a round, semi-oval or almost straight cutting edge

formed by removal of flakes from the upper surface.

#### chopping tools

bi-facial tool, worked on both the faces.

produced by alternate flaking

## Acheulian culture

### Acheulian Tool types

hand-axes

cleavers

retouched flakes

scrapers

tools are characterized by distinctive oval and pear-shaped "hand-axes"

Materials such as flint, chalcedony, quartzite, andesite, sandstone, chert, and shale were used

Tools made in the Acheulian culture are advanced than tools in Soanian culture.

Attirampakkam at Chennai in Tamil Nadu is the oldest Acheulian site in India(1.51 mya)

# *Homo erectus*



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# *John Lubbock*





Lower Palaeolithic age tools – Hand axe and cleaver

Middle Palaeolithic age tools – Flakes

Upper Palaeolithic tools – Flakes and blades

## How Stone Age Humans Made Hand Axes

1. The process started with a large piece of rock.



2. The humans roughly shaped the rock with a stone hammer.



3. Using a hammer made of wood, stone, or antler, they sharpened the edge.



4. They trimmed the edge by prying off tiny flakes with a pointed stick.



**finished hand ax**



front view



side view

# *cleaver*



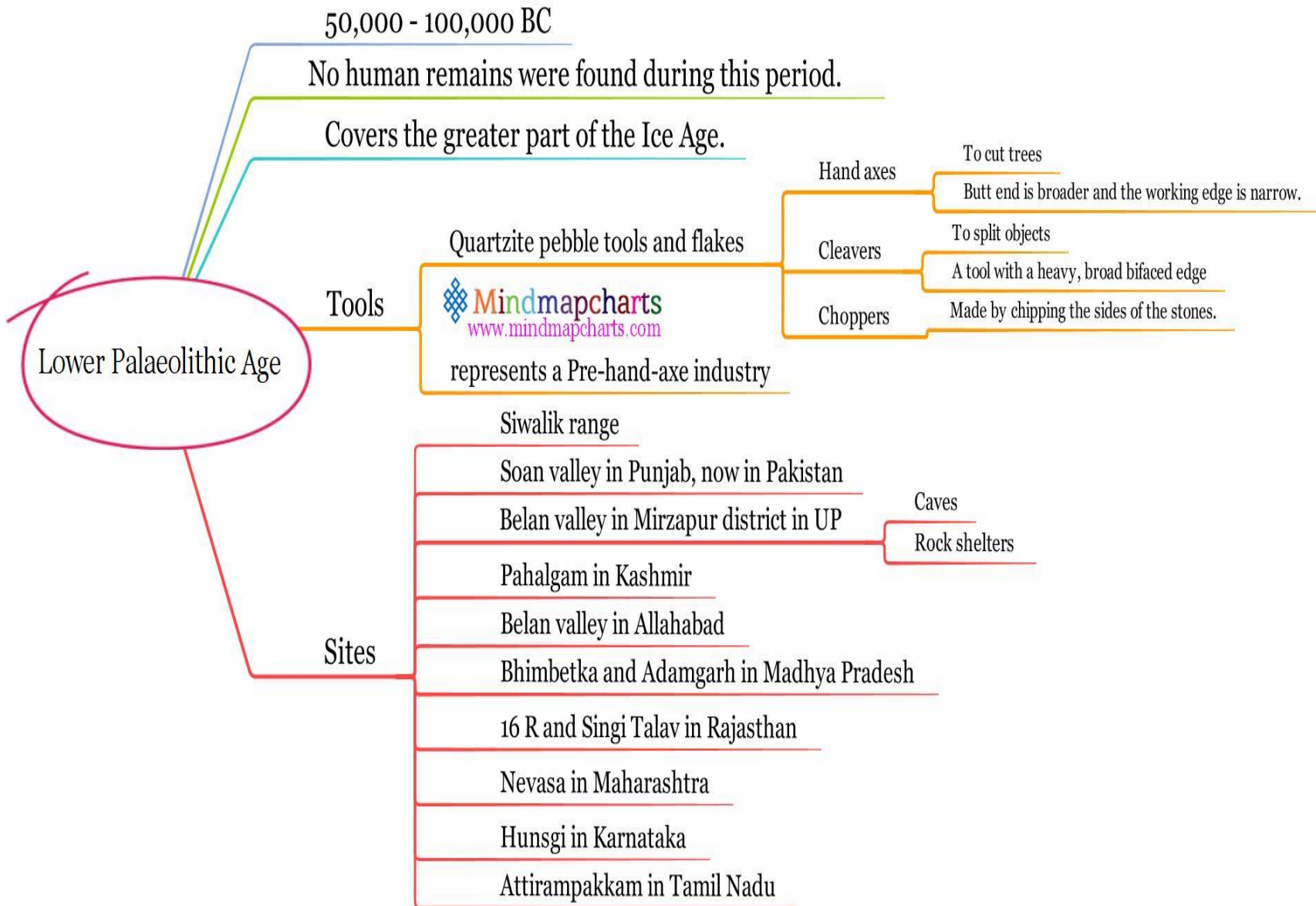
- Further, this division is not uniform around the world because of several factors such ***as time lag, climatic vagaries, great distances, numerous geographical and physical barriers etc.***
- Palaeolithic age finally ended with ***the end of Ice Age in about 10,000 BC.***

# Narmada Man – the only stone age fossil from India

- *Narmada Man* or *Narmada Human* is the earliest *Homo* species of Indian sub-continent.
- This fossil was found on banks of ***Narmada River*** in *Hathnora Village* of ***Madhya Pradesh*** in **1982**.
- ***Narmada Man*** used to live **2.5 Lakh** years ago and belonged to *Homo erectus* species, which was first among the three *Homo* species (***Homo habilis, Homo ergaster and Homo erectus***) to acquire tool making skills.
- These three species predate **Homo sapience sapience**, to which we belong.
- The importance of **Narmada man** is that it is only authentic record of a *Homo* species fossil from *Stone Age in India*.

## *Lower Palaeolithic Period*

- In lower Palaeolithic phase, the tools were mainly ***hand axes*** and ***cleavers*** with some ***flakes*** also.
- These tools were relatively ***blunt*** and have been found all over India except plains of ***Indus, Ganga and Brahmaputra*** {because raw material may not be available in these plains to make tools}.
- Many Palaeolithic tool assemblages were found around ***Tapti, Godavari, Bhima and Krishna*** rivers.
- The raw material used for making tools was mainly ***quartzite and chert*** but ***quartz*** and ***basalt*** was also used.



## *Way of Life- Lower Palaeolithic culture*

- The people of **Lower Palaeolithic culture** hunted **animals and gathered roots, nuts and fruits.**
- They fed on the flesh and bones of animals killed by predators.
- They lived in **open air, river valleys, caves and rock shelters**, as seen from evidence in **Bhimbetka** in Madhya Pradesh and **Gudiyam** near Chennai.
- The pre-historic human ancestors, who belonged to the species of **Homo erectus**, did not have a complex language culture like us, the Homo sapiens.
- They may have expressed **a few sounds or words and used a sign language.**
- **They were intelligent enough to select stones as raw material and used the hammer stones to carefully flake the rocks and design tools.**



# *Narmada Man*



The fossil of the Narmada man's skull found at Hatnora



## ***Various cultures in Lower Palaeolithic era***

- *The Palaeolithic period in India shows several distinct cultural and technological traditions.*

# *Soan Culture*

- Extensive deposits of *pebble* tools and *choppers* found in the *Soan river* (a tributary of Indus) valley in *Pakistan* along with some other similar sites in nearby area are collectively called *Soan culture or Sohan culture*.

# *Soan Culture 1*



## *Madrasian Culture*

- Father of Indian Pre-history Robert Bruce Foote had discovered hand axes near Chennai and called it Madrasian culture. Foote was a geologist of the Geological Survey of India.

# ***Madrasian Culture***





Reculers.



Beatty, Ighiam.



Reculers.



PALEOLITHIC IMPLEMENTS FOUND IN KENT.

The Madrasian culture is a prehistoric (aka Paleolithic) culture of South India (In North India, it is known as Soan Culture). It flourished in the Lower Paleolithic, the earliest subdivision of the Stone Age, about 2.5 million years ago. It is called the Madrasian culture because artifact tools thought to be related to this culture were first found at sites in Attirampakkam, which is located near Chennai (formerly known as Madras). Thereafter, tools related to this culture have been found at various other locations in this region. Bifacial handaxes and cleavers are typical assemblages recovered of this culture. Flake tools, microliths and other chopping tools have also been found. Most of these tools were composed of the metamorphic rock quartzite. The stone tool artifacts in this assemblage have been identified as a part of the second inter-pluvial period in India. The Madrasian culture people were hunter gatherers and did not engage in the farming or domestication of animals. During this time period, Lower Paleolithic peoples in this region typically made homes from rock shelters and thatched-roof huts.

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# *Nevasan Culture*

- Some Middle Palaeolithic era *flake* tools, scrappers, borers etc. were found at *Nevasa* site (*Ahmednagar* district of *Maharashtra*) in the valley of river *Godavari* and are called Nevasan culture.



# *Nevasan Culture*

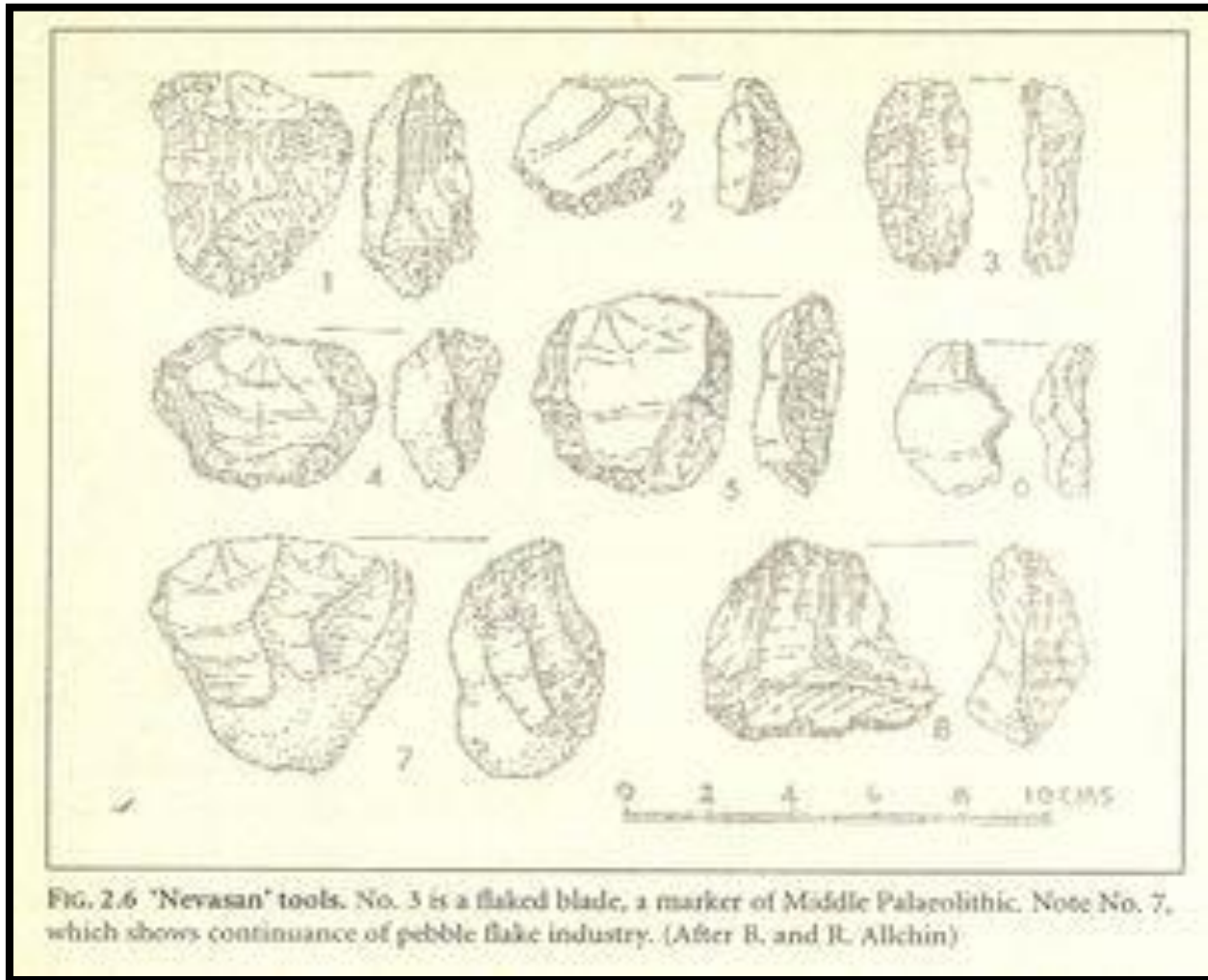


FIG. 2.6 'Nevasan' tools. No. 3 is a flaked blade, a marker of Middle Palaeolithic. Note No. 7, which shows continuance of pebble flake industry. (After B. and R. Allchin)

# ***Acheulian culture***

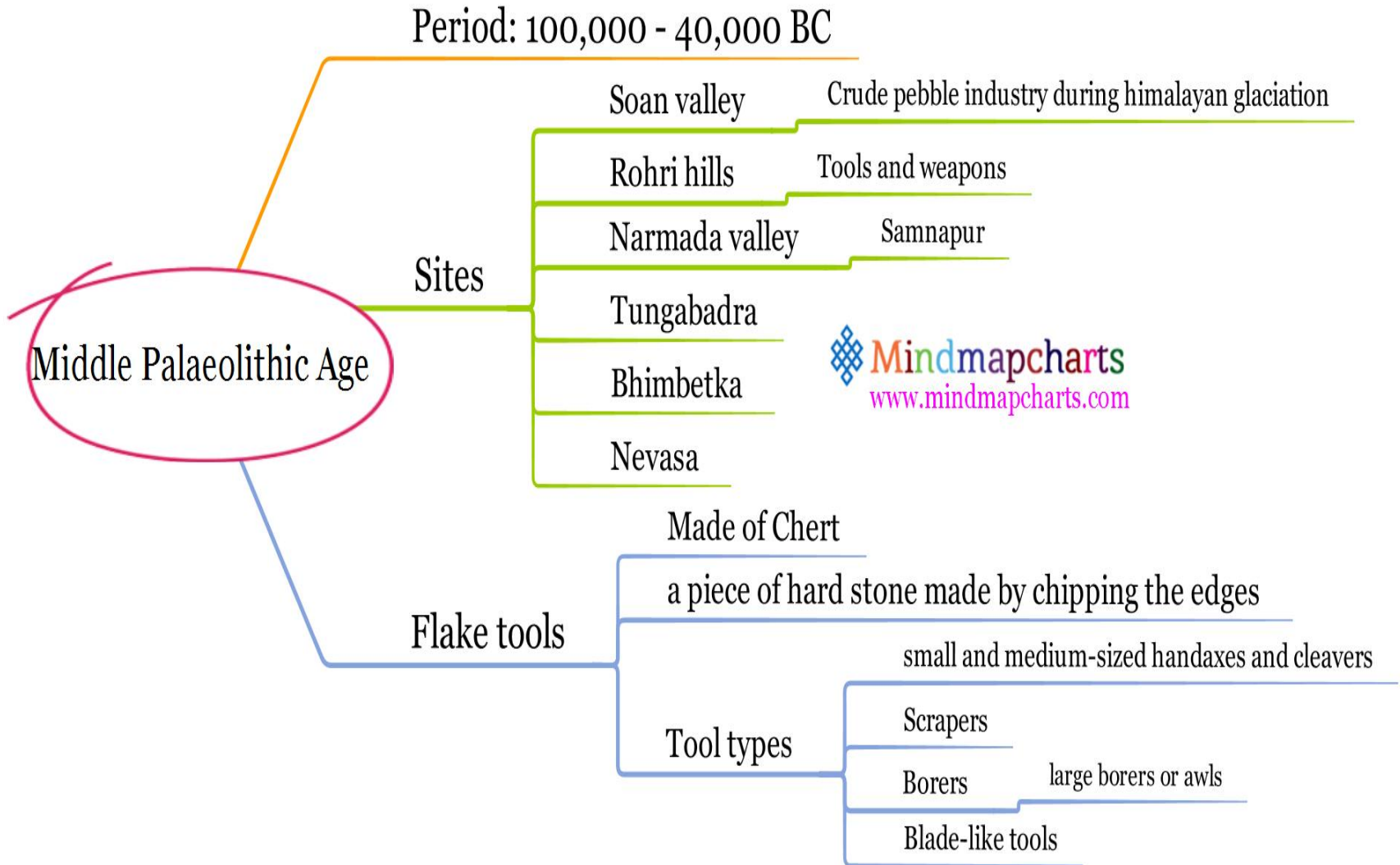
- Acheulian culture was named after the French site of ***St. Acheul***, which was *first effective colonization of the Indian subcontinent* and is almost synonymous with the ***lower Palaeolithic settlements in India***.
- Most of the sites in India including those in ***peninsular India, Deccan, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, East and North East*** have been ***categorized in Acheulian culture***.

# *Acheulian culture*



## ***Middle Palaeolithic Period***

- The lower Paleolithic cultures slowly transformed into the middle Palaeolithic by shedding some of the tool types; and by incorporating ***new forms and new techniques of making them.***
- In comparison to the lower Palaeolithic era, the tools in middle Palaeolithic became ***smaller, thinner and lighter.***
- Due to this, middle Palaeolithic period is also known as ***Flake tool industry.***



- Further, there was also a significant change in the choice of raw material for making tools. While ***quartzite, quartz and basalt*** continued to be used, in many areas they were replaced or supplemented by fine-grained siliceous rocks like ***chert and jasper***.

# *quartzite, quartz and basalt*







- Important *Middle Palaeolithic Sites* in India included ***Luni valley, around Didwana, Budha Pushkar in Rajasthan; Valleys of the Belan, Son river, Narmada river and their tributaries in central India {including Bhimbetka}*** and some sparse sites in ***Chota Nagpur plateau, Deccan plateau and Eastern Ghats.***

# *Bhimbetka*



# ***Bhimbetka CAVE***

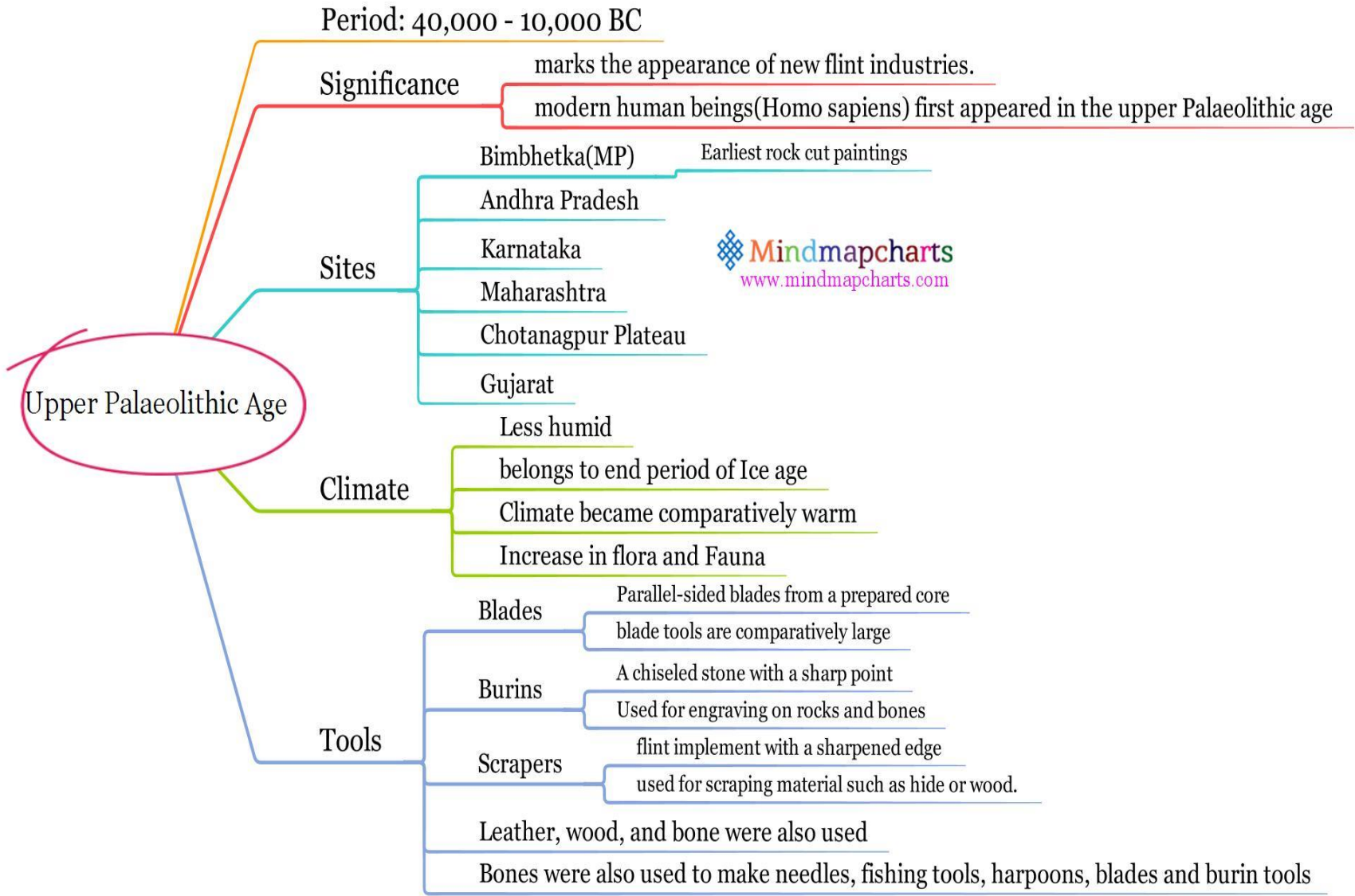


# ***Chert and Jasper***



## *Upper Palaeolithic Culture*

- Upper Palaeolithic culture developed during the later part of the ***upper Pleistocene***.
- The Upper Palaeolithic period has recorded a rich panorama of ***fossils*** in the peninsular rivers of India.
- One important discovery is of the ostrich egg shells at over 40 sites in ***Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra***, which shows that ***ostrich***, a bird adapted to arid climate, was widely distributed in western India during the later part of the ***upper Pleistocene***.



Period: 40,000 - 10,000 BC

Significance

marks the appearance of new flint industries.

modern human beings(Homo sapiens) first appeared in the upper Palaeolithic age

Sites

Bimbhetka(MP)

Earliest rock cut paintings

Andhra Pradesh

Karnataka

Maharashtra

Chotanagpur Plateau

Gujarat



Climate

Less humid

belongs to end period of Ice age

Climate became comparatively warm

Increase in flora and Fauna

Tools

Blades

Parallel-sided blades from a prepared core

blade tools are comparatively large

Burins

A chiseled stone with a sharp point

Used for engraving on rocks and bones

Scrapers

flint implement with a sharpened edge

used for scraping material such as hide or wood.

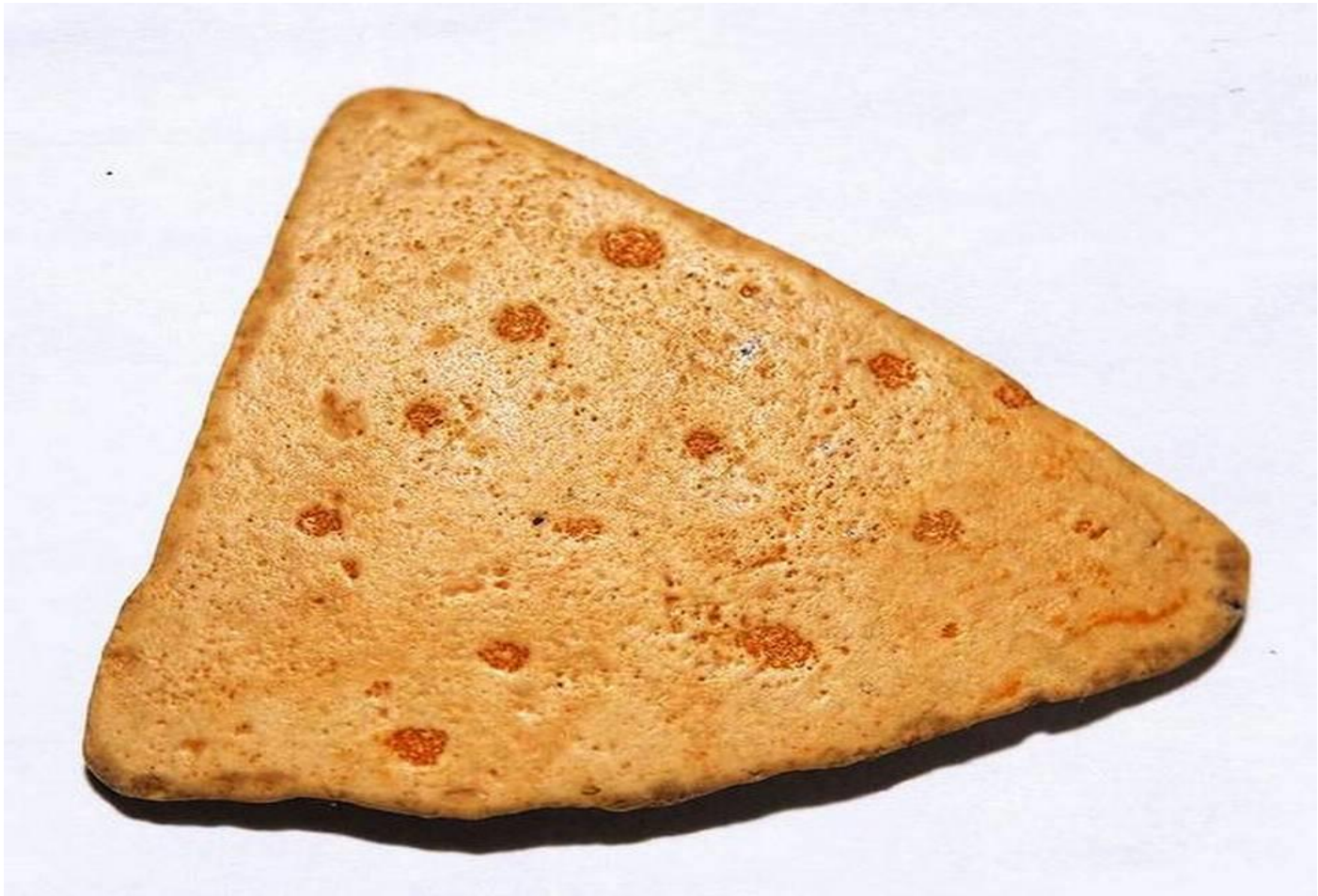
Leather, wood, and bone were also used

Bones were also used to make needles, fishing tools, harpoons, blades and burin tools

# ***Fossils***



***A piece of fossilised ostrich eggshell***





# *Ostrich*



- There were very ***important changes*** in the ***Palaeolithic-environment*** which had its own impact on the distribution and living ways of the humans. Some of them were as follows:

- 1. There was extremely cold and arid climate in the high altitude and northern latitudes.***
- 2. There was extensive formation of deserts in North west India***
- 3. The drainage pattern of western India became almost defunct and river courses shifted “westwards”.***

- 4. Vegetation cover over most of the country thinned out during this period.***
- 5. Coastal areas of south-eastern Tamil Nadu, Saurashtra and Kutch developed quartz and carbonate dunes as a result of the lowering of the sea level.***
- 6. During terminal Pleistocene south-westerly monsoons became weak and the sea level decreased by scores of metres.***

- Due to the harsh and arid climate, the vegetation was sparse though the ***faunal fossils show presence of grasslands.***
- The human population faced rusticated food resources and that is the reason that the number of ***Upper Palaeolithic sites*** is very limited in the ***arid and semi-arid regions.***
- *The most opulent archaeological evidence of this period comes from the **Belan and Son valleys in the northern Vindhyas , Chota Nagpur plateau in Bihar , upland Maharashtra, Orissa and from the Eastern Ghats in Andhra Pradesh.***

## ***Tools of Upper Palaeolithic Era***

- The tools of Upper Palaeolithic Era are further refined upon the lower and middle periods and ***show a marked regional diversity with respect to the refinement of techniques and standardization of finished tool forms.***
- Man also used prototypes of ***traps, snares and nets*** during the upper Palaeolithic times.
- The advancement in tools is evident from ***bores in stones, grinding slabs*** etc.
- The bored stones are still used by fishermen as net sinkers in ***river fishing and marine fishing.***
- The use of grinding stones might have been for ***processing plant foods such as wild rice.***

# snares



# Snares-2



- Another important discovery of upper Palaeolithic period was of rubble built in circular form.
- Further, the upper Palaeolithic settlements also show a distinct trend of *being associated with permanent sources of waters.*
- The earliest form of art by humans also belongs to upper Palaeolithic period in the form of ***rock paintings.***



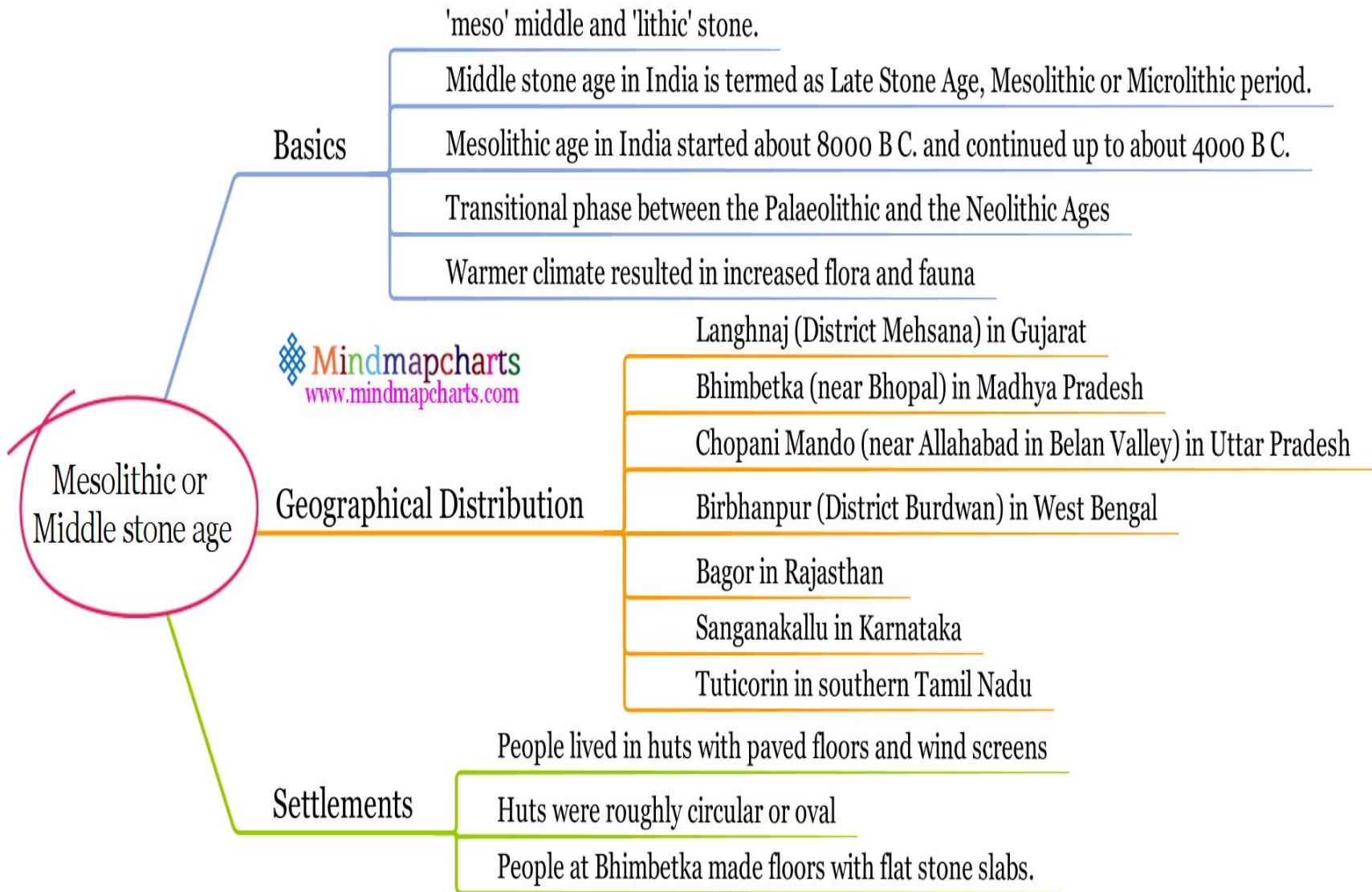


## ***Ways of Life and Main Characteristics***

- Evidence of art in the Upper Palaeolithic period appears in the ***form of paintings***.
- ***Beads and ornaments*** of this period have also been found.
- The ***lithic blade industry*** advanced in this period.
- Some of ***the green colour paintings of Bhimbetka*** are dated to Upper Palaeolithic period based on style and archaeological evidence.

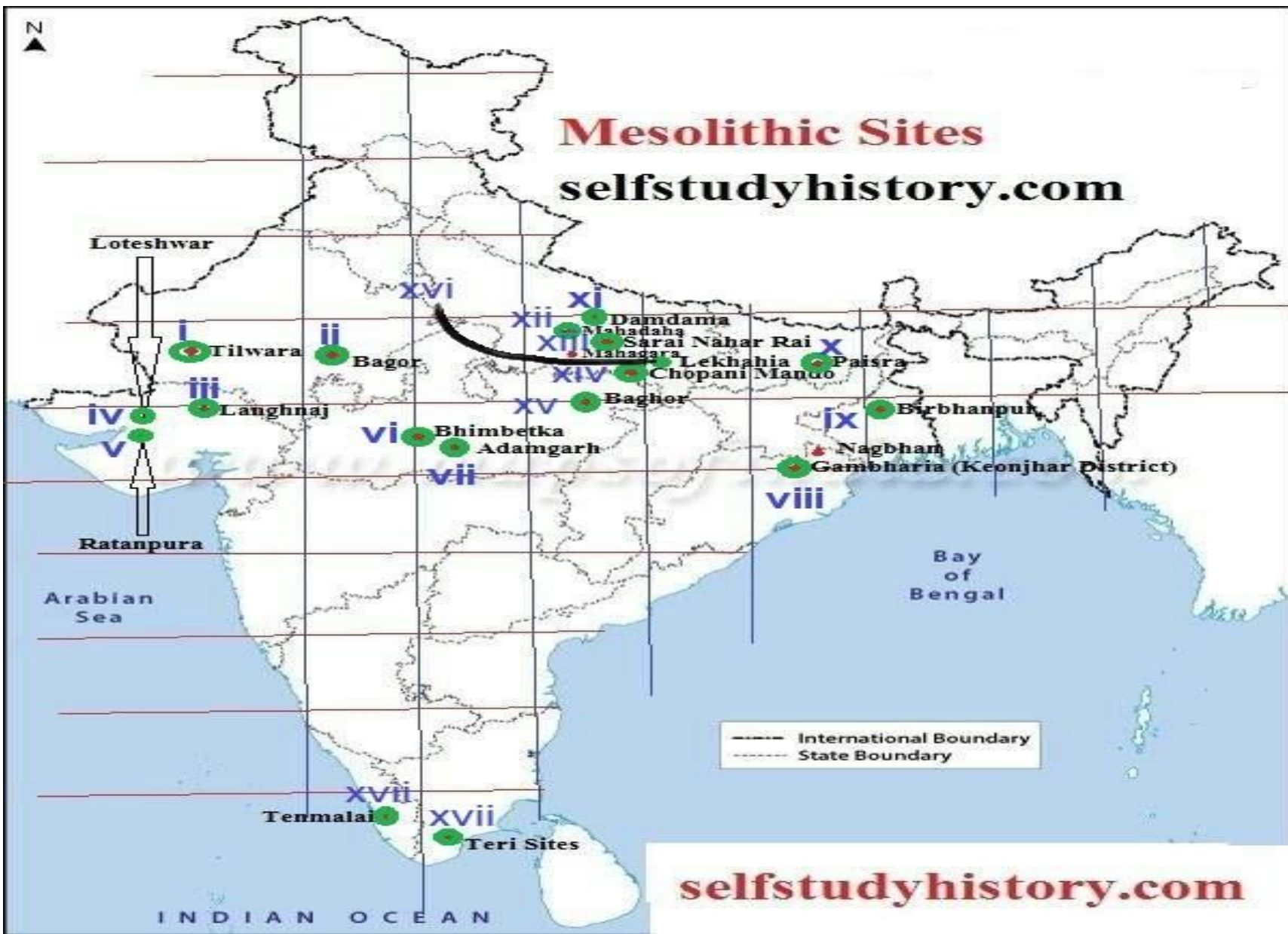
# *Mesolithic Culture*

- Mesolithic sites are found in most parts of India.
- They occur in all eco-zones from the coasts to the hills: *sand dunes, rock shelters, deltaic regions, lake areas, forested territories, hilly and mountainous areas, rocky terrains and coastal environments.*



# Mesolithic Sites

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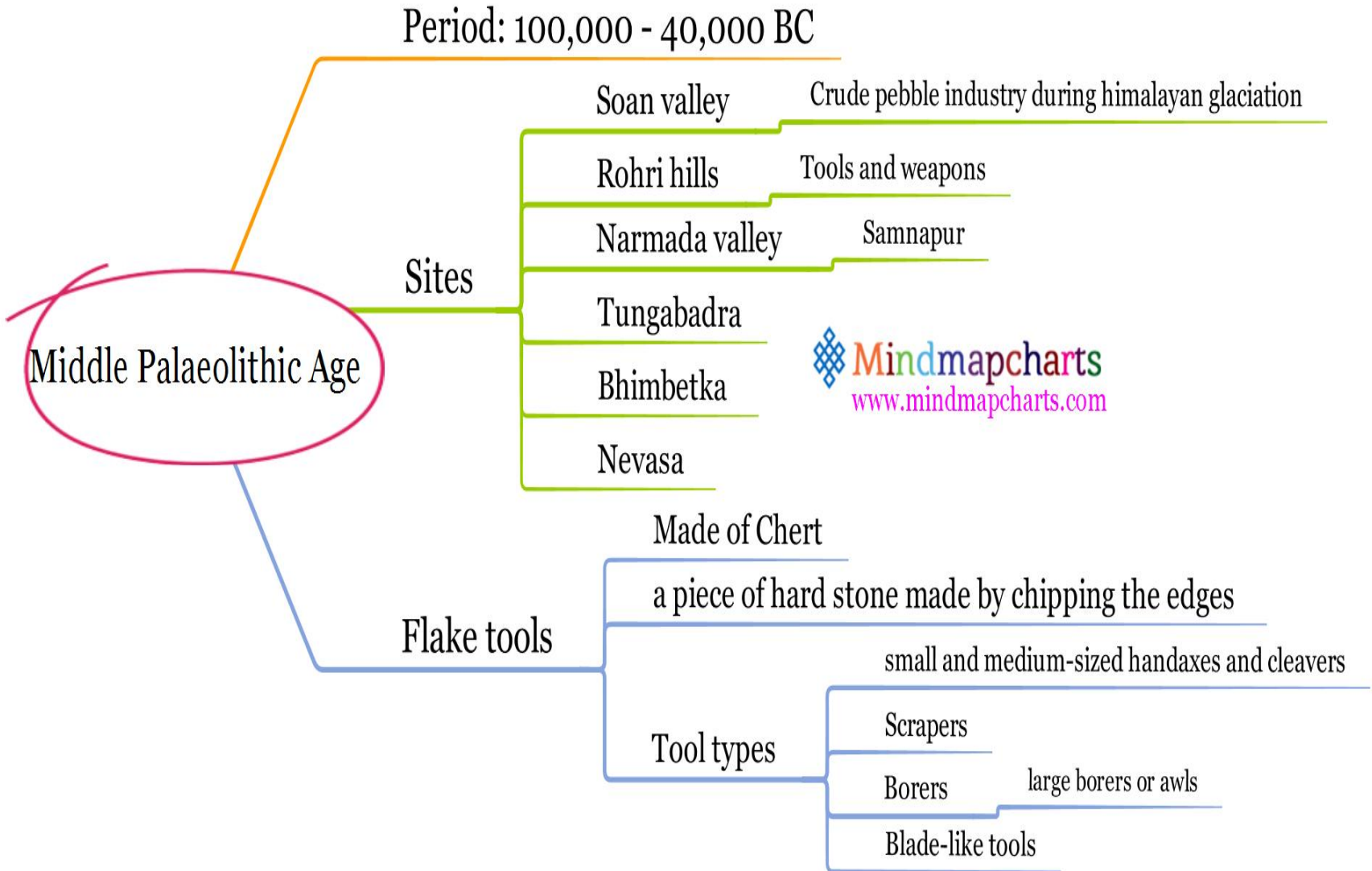


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## ***Mesolithic sites in India***

- Paisra (Bihar), **Langhnaj** (Gujarat), **Baghor II**, **Chopani Mando**, **Sarai Nahar Rai**, **Mahadaha and Damdama** (all in Uttar Pradesh), **Sankanakallu and Kibbanahalli** (Karnataka).
- Rock shelter sites are found in **Lekhakia**, **Baghai Khor**, **Adamgarh and Bhimbetka**.

- Coastal sites are seen at Mumbai, ***teri*** sites of ***Thoothukudy*** in Tamil Nadu and ***Vishakapatnam***, which have ***microlithic*** evidence





# Mesolithic age - Tools, Pottery and Arts.

## Micro lithic Tools

Made of chipped and flaked stones

Length of tools varied from 1 to 8 centimetres

Tools include blades, points, lunates, trapezes, scrapers, arrowheads, geometric and non-geometric tools.

Tools were capable of being used as combination tools by hafting them in curved wood or bone

## Pottery

reported from a number of excavated sites like Langhanj, Bagor(largest Mesolithic site in India), Nagarjunakonda, Chopani Mando

Pottery was wholly hand-made and usually coarse grained with incised and impressed designs rarely.



## Arts

### Painted rock-shelters

1. Mirzapur district of UP

2. Bhimbetka near Hoshangabad, Adamgarh, Lakha Juar in MP

3. Murhana Paharin in Uttar Pradesh

4. Kupagallu in Karnataka

paintings deal primarily with animals which are shown standing, moving, running, grazing, etc.

paintings are generally executed in red ochre but sometimes bluish green, yellow or white colour also have been used.

humans are depicted in activities, such as dancing, running, hunting, playing games and engaged in battle.

rhinoceros hunt is depicted in the caves of Adamgarh

# Mesolithic age - Society, Recreational activities and Burials

## Society

people began to have fixed settlements

people were essentially hunters, food-gatherers and fishermen

domesticated varieties of animals like cattle, sheep and goat

hunted smaller animals with bows and Spears

depended on vegetables or plants for food rather than animal meat.

Mindmapcharts  
www.mindmapcharts.com

## Recreational activities

paintings at Bhimbetka

dances of ritual significance.

musical instruments such as blowpipes and horns were used

## Burials

rock-painting of a family mourning the death of a child at Bhimbetka

At Langhanj human skeletons were associated with quartzite pebbles

### four types of burials

1. Extended burial

2. Flexed (folded) burial

3. Fractional (secondary burial)

4. Double Burials

Multiple burials were witnessed at Sarai Nihar Rai and Mahadaha

Mesolithic people interred objects like microliths, animal bones and beads along with the dead.

# *Climate*

- After the Ice Age, with the advent of ***global warming***, human groups became highly mobile and began to occupy various ***ecozones***.
- The ***monsoon*** pattern had already emerged. Some regions witnessed higher ***rainfall***.
- At ***Didwana*** in western ***Rajasthan***, fresh water lakes were known to exist ***between 10,000 and 3500 BP***.
- The animal bones from this period suggest a ***dry deciduous type of forest during the Mesolithic period***.

# ***Chronology***

- The date of the ***Mesolithic culture varies in different parts of the world.***
- This culture is ***assigned to pre-agricultural times in certain areas.***
- In Levant (Eastern Mediterranean), they are dated between 20,000 and 9500 BCE.
- ***In India, Mesolithic cultures appeared around 10,000 BCE.***
- In certain parts of India including Kerala and Tamil Nadu, ***it continued up to 1000 BCE, till the beginning of the Iron Age.***
- In Sri Lanka, the ***microliths*** appeared about ***28,500 years BP.***

# ***Economy***

- Hunting wild animals and gathering plant food and fishing were people's main occupation during this age.
- Agriculture was not practised in the early stages.
- At the end of the Mesolithic period, humans domesticated animals and paved the way for the Neolithic way of life.
- The rock paintings of Central India depict hunting, trapping, fishing and plant food collection.

# ***ANIMALS***

***gaur***



***buffalo***



*barasingha*



*porcupines*



***SAMBAR DEER***



***CHITAL DEER***





***GAZELLE***



***HOG DEER***



***NILGAI***



***JACKAL***



***TURTLE***



***WILD HARE***



***LIZARD FOX***



***MONITOR LIZARD***



## ***RHINOCEROS***



## ***ELEPHANT***



- The faunal evidence from this period shows that people belonging to this period hunted ***cattle, gaur, buffalo, barasingha, porcupines, sambar, chital, gazelle, hog deer, nilgai, jackal, turtle, fish, wild hare, lizard fox and monitor lizard.***
- Bones of ***rhinoceros and elephant*** have also been found.
- They used ***spears, bow*** and ***arrow*** and ***traps.***
- The paintings of ***Bhimbetka*** show that various animals were hunted and for this ***men and women went together.***

# ***MESOLITHIC WEAPON***

***spears***



***bow and arrow***



- The people used *fire* and perhaps *roasted food*.
- Domestic animal bones of *cattle, sheep, goats, pig and dog* have been found at *Kanewal, Loteshwar and Ratanpur, and from Adamgarh and Bhimbetka* in Madhya Pradesh sites.
- *Camel bones* have been found from *Kanewal*.



## ***Camps and Houses***

- The Mesolithic people were highly mobile. They moved in search of ***animals and plant foods***.
- They made ***temporary huts and also used caves and rock shelters***.
- ***Circular huts*** with postholes and burnt clay lumps bearing reed impressions have been found.
- ***Many of caves and shelters feature paintings. Circular huts are seen in rock paintings.***
- The ***temporary huts*** were built using ***perishable materials***.
- Traces of oval and circular huts and possible wattle daub are found in ***Chopani Mando and Damdama in Uttar Pradesh*** and ***Bagor and Tilwara in Rajasthan***.

# ***ROCK SHELTERS***

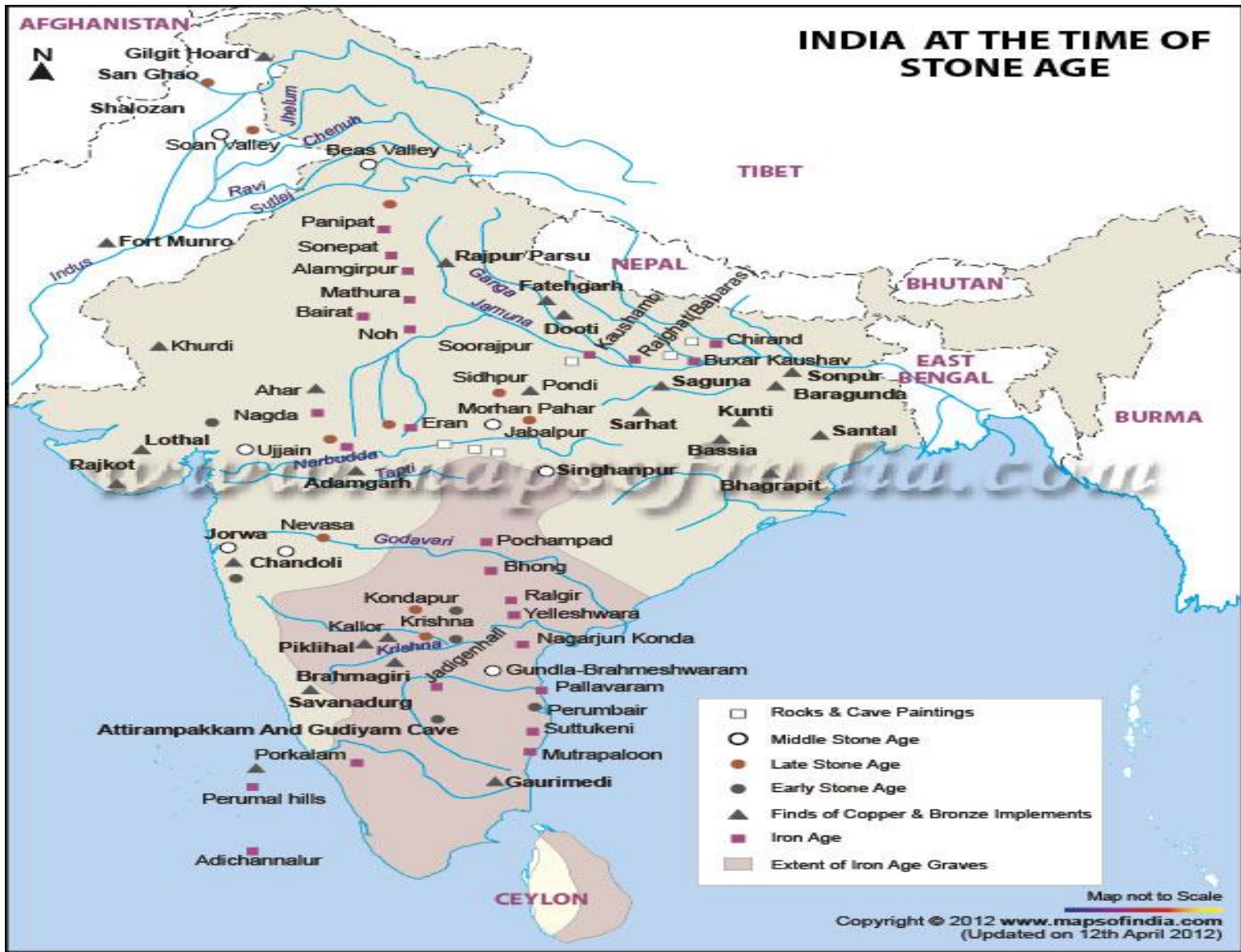


# ***ROASTED FOOD***



# WATTLE DAUB





# NEOLITHIC AGE

## Neolithic or New stone age

### Basics

'neo' new and 'lithic' stone.

Coined by John Lubbock

Neolithic settlements in the India are not older than 6000 B.C.

Neolithic settlements in India were first developed in the west of the Indus.

Cultivation of plants and the domestication of animals began.

### Society

Led to settled life and growth of village settlements.

Crops such as wheat, barley, rice, millet, lentils were cultivated

Hunted wild animals such as boar, nilgai, gazells, etc.

Domesticated animals include sheep, goat, cattle, etc.

 Mindmapcharts  
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### Settlements

Houses were circular in shape built on a series of bamboo posts with a conical roof

Houses were subdivided into four or more internal compartments

In Kashmir valley, the Neolithic people of phase-I lived in circular, oval, rectangular or square pits

Walls were of wattle and split bamboo screen plastered with mud

Houses had a hearth in a corner, sometimes only two stones juxtaposed

Nagarjunakonda and Paiyampalli(North Arcot district) have yielded evidence of dwelling pits

Sharp and polished neolithic tools made way for cultivation

## Neolithic Revolution

Wild animals were domesticated

Evolution of settled communities

Storage of grains due to surplus production



Ground and Polished

Smooth surfaced with symmetrical shapes.

axes, adzes, shoe-last Celts, long weeding hoes, picks with single or double working ends, chisels, axe-cum hammers

Made of diorite, basalt, slate, chlorite, schist, shale, gneiss, sand stone and quartzite.

## Tools

## Neolithic Revolution

(i) Indus system

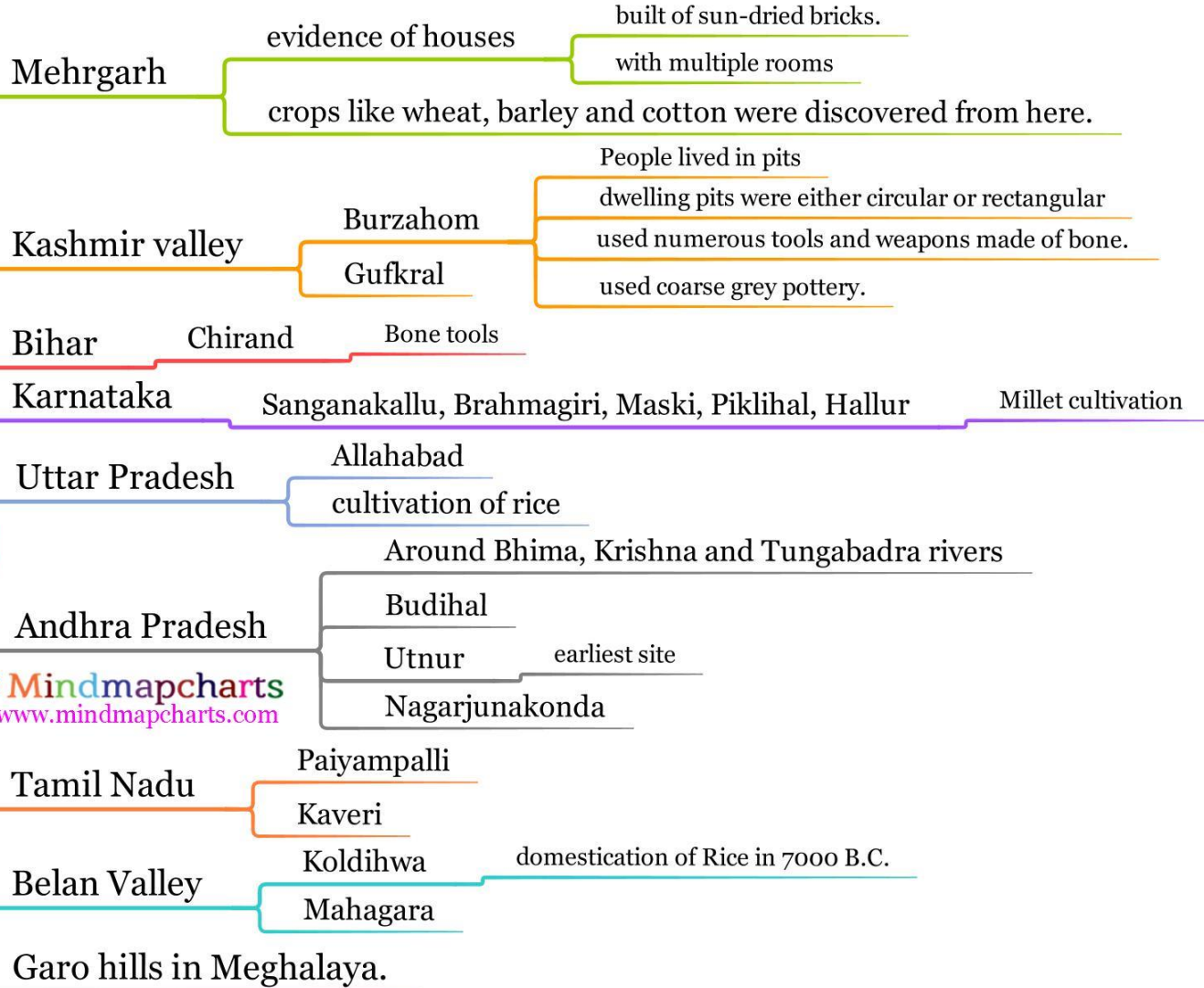
(ii) Ganga valley

(iii) Western India and the northern Deccan

(iv) Southern Deccan.

## Regions of Neolithic agriculture

# Neolithic Age - Major sites





# Neolithic Age - Pottery, Arts, Ornaments and Burials

## Pottery

Burnished grey ware is the specialty of the Neolithic period.

Usage of pottery increased to a great extent

Pottery was initially hand made but later turned on wheel and fired in large kilns.

## Arts

At Burzahom a stone slab is engraved with a hunting scene

It shows a stag or deer being hunted from the front with a bow and arrow and a spear from the rear.

## Ornaments

Beads of shell, steatite, terra cotta and siliceous stones and copper and gold were used

Copper bangles from Brahmagiri and spiral ring from Narsipur are the few metal ornaments found in the Neolithic sites.

## Burials

Neolithic people buried their dead nearby their habitation

dead are usually buried accompanied by pottery and ornaments, stone tools and even headrest

Infants were buried in the urns, usually in the houses.

At Burzahom in the Kashmir valley, the dead used to be buried in oval-shaped pits dug usually into the house floors.

Along with the human bones, the bones of dog and goat, which were perhaps sacrificed were also found.

interesting feature of the Kashmir Neolithic sites is the Animal burials.

Fragmentary burials of five wild dogs and antlers of barasinga were found.

## *Early Neolithic Cultures and the Beginning of Agriculture*

- The Neolithic period marked the ***beginning of agriculture and animal domestication.***
- It is an important phase in Indian history.
- Early evidence of Neolithic culture is found in the Fertile Crescent region of ***Egypt and Mesopotamia, the Indus region, the Ganges valley of India and also in China.***
- Between ***10,000 BCE to 5000 BCE***, agriculture emerged in these regions, which ***led to several cultural developments.***

- The introduction of ***domestication of animals and plants*** resulted in the production and supply of a large quantity of grains and animal food.
- The ***fertile soil*** deposited by the ***rivers*** enhanced the ***growth of agriculture, generating a surplus of grains.***
- ***Surplus food production*** played a major role in the ***rise of early civilisations.***
- ***Large villages*** came to exist and ***pottery developed.***
- ***Permanent residences*** were built.
- Hence, the cultural developments of this period are called ***Neolithic revolution.***

- The Neolithic cultures of India are divided into ***various regional cultures*** and ***they flourished in different time periods.***
- In the ***north-western part of India and Pakistan, it began at a very early date.***
- In ***north-eastern India, Neolithic cultures appeared at a very late date, around the early historic time.***

## ***The Neolithic Culture of North-Western India***

- The *Neolithic culture of north-western India* is the earliest to have ***evidence of plant and animal domestication in India.***
- ***Mehrgarh, Rana Ghundai, Sarai Kala and Jalilpur*** are some of the Neolithic sites.
- These sites are now situated in ***Pakistan.***
- The site of ***Mehrgarh*** has produced evidence of ***early Neolithic times, dating to c. 7000 BCE.***
- ***Wheat*** and ***barley*** were cultivated and ***sheep, goat*** and ***cattle*** were domesticated.
- This culture preceded the Indus Civilisation.

- The *first cultural period (I)* of the *Neolithic age at Mehrgarh* dates from *c. 7000 to 5500 BCE*.
- The people belonging to this age *did not use pottery, but cultivated six-row barley, emmer and einkorn wheat, jujube, ilanthai and dates*, and also *domesticated sheep, goat and cattle*.
- They were *semi-nomadic, pastoral groups*. *They built their houses with mud and buried the dead*.
- They *used ornaments* of *sea shell, limestone, turquoise, lapis lazuli and sandstone*.

- The ***period II at Mehrgarh*** dates from ***c. 5500 to 4800 BCE*** and the ***period III from 4800 to 3500 BCE***.
- There is ***evidence for pottery*** during these periods.
- ***Terracotta figurines*** and ***glazed faience beads*** have been found.
- Evidence for ***ornaments*** on women has been uncovered.
- ***Long distance trade*** was practiced, as revealed by ***Lapis Lazuli***, which is available only in ***Badakshan***.
- The ***town*** was ***abandoned*** after the ***rise of mature phase of the Indus Civilisation***.

# The Neolithic Culture of Kashmir

- *Neolithic culture in Kashmir* region was contemporary to the **Harappan civilisation**.
- ***Burzahom***, an important site of this culture, provides evidence for the ***Megalithic*** and ***Early Historic Periods***.
- In this place, people lived in ***pit houses*** (about four metres in depth) ***in order to escape the cold weather***.
- The houses were ***oval in shape, wide at the bottom and narrow on the top***.
- ***Postholes*** used for constructing ***a thatched structure were found around the pit houses***.



- The *Neolithic* period of *Kashmir* had ***domestic sheep, goat and cultivated plants.***
- The Neolithic people of Burzahom ***traded*** with the people of the ***Harappan Civilisation.***
- They used ***handmade pottery.***
- They used tools such as ***stone axes, chisels, adzes, pounders, mace-heads, points and picks.***
- ***Awls*** were ***used for stitching skins*** into clothes ***to beat the weather.***
- ***Scrapers*** were used ***for working the skins.***

- ***Two phases of Neolithic*** culture have been identified.
- They are termed ***Aceramic*** and ***Ceramic phases***.
- ***Aceramic phase did not have evidence of ceramics.***
- ***Ceramic phase shows evidence for the existence of pottery.***
- In the ***Ceramic phase***, ***people built mud houses. They used copper arrowheads.***
- They also used ***black ware pottery, beads of agate and carnelian and painted pottery.***

- A ***burial*** at this site produced ***wild dog bone*** and ***antler horn***.
- An ***engraving of a hunting scene*** is depicted on a stone here with ***dog and sun***.
- Seeds of ***wheat, barley, common pea and lentil*** have been recovered from the excavations.
- People domesticated animals include ***cattle, sheep, goat, pig, dog and fowl***.
- Bones of wild animals such as ***red deer, Kashmir stag, ibex, bear and wolf*** suggest that they hunted animals.

# *common pea*



# *Barley*



# *Lentil*



# ***RED DEER***



# ***KASHMIR STAG***



Rare **Kashmir Deer**  
May Soon Be Extinct

ScoopWhoop  
news



# ***IBEX***



# ***BEAR***



# ***WOLF***



- There is evidence of *menhirs* and the use of *redware pottery* and *metal objects* in the *megalithic culture*.
- The use of *lentil* suggests that contacts had been established with **Central Asia**.
- These people had interactions with *Harappan Civilisation*.

## *The Neolithic Culture of Ganges Valley and Central India*

- In the ***Ganges Valley***, and in ***Central India*** ***Neolithic sites*** are found at ***Lehuradeva***, and ***Chopani Munda***.
- The site of Lehuradeva has produced early evidence of rice cultivation dated to c. 6500 BCE.
- These sites are characterised by cord-marked pottery.
- ***Koldiwa***, ***Chirand***, ***Senuwar*** and ***Mahagara*** are important Neolithic sites in this region.
- These sites also have evidence of ***pottery and plant and animal domestication***.

- Evidence for the cultivation of hulled and ***six-rowed barley, several types of wheat, rice, pea, green gram, and gram/chicken pea, mustard, flax/linseed*** and ***jackfruit*** have been found at the sites of Central India.
- ***Sheep, goat*** and ***cattle bones*** have been found besides ***bones of wild animals***.
- The Neolithic people used a type of ***pottery*** with ***cord impression on the surfaces***.
- They used ***microliths, bone*** and ***antler tools*** and terracotta objects.
- These sites perhaps flourished till about the ***middle of the second millennium BCE***.

## *The Neolithic Culture of Eastern India*

- The Neolithic sites are found at many sites in **Bihar** and **West Bengal**.
- **Birbhanpur** and **Chirand** are some of the prominent Neolithic sites in this region along with **Kuchai**, **Golbaisasan** and **Sankarjang**.
- These cultures show similarities with the Neolithic complexes of east and Southeast Asia.
- *Pointed butt celts, chisel and shouldered axes* have been found in the region from the Neolithic era.

## *Neolithic Culture of South India*

- The Neolithic cultures of South India have been found mainly in ***Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka and the north-western part of Tamil Nadu.***
- These sites have ***ash mounds*** in the centre with settlements around them.
- ***More than 200 Neolithic sites*** have been identified as part of the Neolithic complex.
- These sites are found ***near the granite hills*** with water sources.
- These sites have been spotted in the river valleys of ***Godavari, Krishna, Pennaru, Tungabhadra and Kaveri.***



- ***Sanganakallu, Tekkalakota, Brahmagiri, Maski, Piklihal, Watkal, Hemmige and Hallur in Karnataka, Nagarjunakonda, Ramapuram and Veerapuram in Andhra Pradesh and Paiyyampalli in Tamil Nadu*** are the major Neolithic sites in South India.
- Some early Neolithic sites have ash mounds. ***Utnur and Palvoy in Andhra Pradesh*** and ***Kodekal, Kupgal and Budihal in Karnataka*** feature ash mound sites.
- ***Soft ash*** and decomposed cow dung layers are also found at this site.
- The ***evidence of habitation*** in the ***form of houses and burials*** are found around the ash mounds.

## *Neolithic Culture of North-eastern India*

- In north-eastern India, Neolithic culture appears at to a ***very late period.***
- The Neolithic cultures of north-eastern India generally date from ***2500-1500 BCE or even later.***
- ***Shouldered axes and splayed celts*** have been found at the ***sites in Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh.***
- ***Daojali Hading and Sarutaru*** are the Neolithic sites in the ***Assam*** region.
- This region bears evidence for ***shifting cultivation.***
- Cultivation of ***yams and taro, building stone and wooden memorials for the dead,*** and ***the presence of Austro-Asiatic languages are the marked features of this region, which shows cultural similarities with South-east Asia.***