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MATERIALISTIC LIFE OF THE AGRARIAN COMMUNITIES OF THE NEOLITHIC PEOPLE OF NORTHERN INDIA

Ms. Monu
Research Scholar, Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture & Archaeology
Kurukshetra University, Kuruklshetra,dhandamonu31@gmail.com

ABSTRACT*:*

This research paper attempts to show that the Neolithic phase in Indian subcontinent did not develop everywhere at the same time and nor ended simultaneously. The Neolithic cultures in India have different geographical regions and their own distinctive**.** In addition, the division of these Neolithic regions is tentative and subject to revision. B.K. Thapar, has divided Neolithic cultures of Indian subcontinent into six geographical regions, including, (i) Northern, covering Kashmir; (ii) North Western, covering, Baluchistan, Swat and the contiguous areas of upper Sind valley in west Pakistan; (iii) Central eastern, covering Chotta-Nagpur plateau with its pen plains in various districts of U.P., Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal; (iv) North-eastern, covering Assam, Chittagong and the sub-Himalayan regions including Darjeeling; (v) North Bihar, covering, district saran; The Neolithic period in North India (c. 7000–2000 B.C.E) represents a significant shift in human history marked by the transition from nomadic foraging to settled agricultural life. This study explores the materialistic aspects of Neolithic agrarian communities through archaeological evidence from key sites such as Mehrgarh, Burzahom, and Chirand etc. These sites reveal the adoption of domesticated crops (wheat, barley) and animals (sheep, goats, cattle), along with the construction of pit dwellings, storage facilities, and community hearths). Tools were made of polished stone, bone, and microliths reflect technological advancement closely to agrarian needs. The emergence of pottery handmade and occasionally wheel-made served both utilitarian and symbolic purposes. Terracotta figurines, beads, and burial goods found at these sites also indicate early forms of socio-economic stratification and spiritual belief systems. This material culture is not just subsistence but also the evolution of social organization and identity formation. Drawing on archaeological interpretations and comparative analysis, the study argues that materialism was a cornerstone of Neolithic life, facilitating not only survival but also cultural expression and cohesion in early village societies of North India.

Key-Words*:*

Neolithic, Agrarian, Nomadic, Communities, Crops, Tools and Weapons, Beads, Domestication of Animals, Pottery, Terracotta, Figurines, Beads etc.

INTRODUCTION

The Neolithic is marked by the beginning of farming and domestication of animal for which this phase of human history has been termed as Neolithic revolution[1]. The post-glacial period has witnessed a marked change in human history with the beginning of agriculture which has

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changed the entire scenario of human adaptation from hunter-gathers to farmers. The term 'Neolithic' was first used by john Lubbock. The term Neolithic -neo 'means new, and 'lithic' means stone.[2] The Neolithic Age spanned from around 7,000 B.C. to 2,000 B.C. in the Indian context but started in 9,000 B.C. in the world context. The agricultural origin the transition to food production and domestication of animals is attracting increasing attention as a topic of enquiry in different parts of the world.The Neolithic period marks one of the most transformative phases in human prehistory, distinguished by the shift from hunting-gathering to agriculture and settled life. Early evidence of Neolithic is found from the Fertile Crescent region covering the Nile Valley of Egypt, Israel, Palestine, Syria and Mesopotamia;[6] the Indus Region and the Ganga Valley of Indian subcontinent. By about 10,000-5,000 BCE. agriculture and pastoralism emerged in many parts of the world, leading to several cultural developments.[7] The region of Israel, Palestine and Syria (Levant), Turkey and Iraq witnessed early development of Neolithic villages. In North India, this age spanning roughly from 7000 BCE to 2000 B.C.E witnessed the formation of agrarian communities that developed a distinctive material culture shaped by their subsistence economy, environmental adaptations, and emerging social structures [3].

The current research area, dating back to the Neolithic period of Northern region , which is extended in many regions. The Indian subcontinent has all the favorable ecological conditions necessary to give rise to the early farming communities, referred to as Neolithic age[4]. Agriculture was the key development of in the rise of human civilization where by farming, domesticated species created from food gatherer to food producer. The history of domestication of plants and animals begins in South Asia practically with the emergence of Neolithic cultures. The tools of the Neolithic age were such as- axe, celts, chisels etc. The birth place of agriculture site in early time [Neolithic Stone Age] was Mehrgarh.[5] This transformation laid the foundation for the rise of civilization in the Indian subcontinent. Agriculture was the key development of in the rise of human civilization where by farming domesticated species created from food gathers to food producer.

This paper highlights the materialistic life of early farming communities of Neolithic age related through artifacts, attempting to understand their lifestyle in Within India. The Neolithic culture first appeared in north-western parts of India. In Kashmir, south India and eastern India they appeared at a later stage. Some regions of India did not witness Neolithic cultures at all, and the Mesolithic culture was directly succeeded by Iron Age culture.[8]These Neolithic cultures into the following three very broad groups on the basis of predominance and domestication of particular cereals in the respective regions: (A) Wheat -Barley culture (North Western Neolithic Cultures including Kashmir). (B) Rice culture (Central -Neolithic Cultures of the Vindhyan out crops in Belen Valley and Eastern India). (C) Millet culture (Neolithic cultures of southern peninsula). Northern India has not yet provided the basic subsistence economic pattern which includes not only polished stone tools but also other cultural traits like pottery, animal husbandry and process of beginning of agriculture. In this paper, an attempt has been made to highlight the vast repertoire of stone tools and pottery from different states of Northern and their position in the neolithic status of North India

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Geographical Regions:

The Neolithic sites of the Indian subcontinent are divided into various regional cultural groups. They are: 1) North-western region – The areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

2) Northern region – The region of Kashmir. 3) The Vindhyan hills and the Ganga valley – Vindhyan region of Prayagraj, Mirzapur and the Belan river valley. 4) Mid-Eastern Ganga valley region – The area of northern part of Bihar. 5) Central Eastern region – Including the Chotta Nagpur area with Odisha and Bengal region. 6) North-eastern region – Assam and the sub-Himalayan region.[9]

Materialistic culture of agrarian communities of neolithic people in North India defined as the Physical objects, resources, and spaces that people use to define their culture provides valuable insight into the daily lives, beliefs, and economic organization of Neolithic societies. Archaeological discoveries from sites like Mehrgarh (in present-day Pakistan, closely linked to early North Indian settlements), Burzahom, Gufkaral (Kashmir), Mid-eastern Koldihwa, Chirand (Bihar) and eastern site Daojali- Hading and Sarutaru offer a rich array of artifacts including polished stone tools, microliths, handmade pottery, terracotta figurines, and structural remains such as pit dwellings and granaries.**[10]** These artifacts suggest not only technological innovation but also shows the development in the life of neolithic People. Domestication of plants like wheat, barley, and lentils, alongside animals such as cattle, sheep, and goats, contributed to a settled life dependent on cultivation and animal Shusbandry[11]. This economic shift required the development of tools and storage systems, further enhancing the importance of material goods in everyday life. Additionally, burial practices involving grave goods and ornaments suggest the emergence of social differentiation and symbolic expression, both rooted in material culture[1]

Review of Literature:

Various works have been carried out by renowned scholars on the early farming communities of India. There are some research papers and reports related to finding of this region. Beginnings of agriculture by G.R. Sharma, V.D. Mishra, B.B. Mishra and J.N. Pal in 1980 which describes beginning of agriculture in India, and the factors which are essentials for farming. H.D.Sankalia wrote on ‘’Prehistory and Protohistoric of India and Pakistan’’. J.N. Pal carried out work on ‘’The Early Farming Culture of Northern India‘‘. Kailash Chand Jain did work on ‘’Prehistory and Protohistory of India”. H.D. Sankalia wrote on ’’Earliest Farmers in Narmada Valley’. Long back in Allchin, B., & Allchin, R.(1997). “*Origins of a Civilization: The Prehistory and Early Archaeology of South Asia”*. Amongest other works mention may be made of —Beginnings of Agriculture by G.R. Sharma, V.D. Mishra, B.B. Mishra and J.N. Pal in 1980 which describes beginning of agriculture in India, and the factors which are essential for farming. They worked on agriculture with domestication animal, of Mesolithic and Neolithic. Neolithic provides food producing economy in the south Asia and due to agriculture settlement patterns started in India. H.D.Sankalia wrote on “Prehistory and Protohistoric of India and Pakistan. J.N. Pal carried out work on “The Early Farming Culture of Northern India”. K.C. Jain did work on “Prehistory and Protohistory of India”. Sharma, A. K carried out work on (1982) *Burzahom: Site in Kashmir shows light about the burial pattern of Kashmir sites resembles like megalithic sites.* Thapar, B. K. wrote on about (1985) *A History of India*

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tells about the pit dwelling pattern of Kashmir. Neolithic provides food producing economy in the South Asia and due to agriculture settlement patterns started in India. T.N Khazanchi wrote work on (1977) "North-Western cultures of India". T.N Khazanchi carried out work on (1976) "Pit-dwellers of Burzahom". B.K. Thapar did work on (1974) "Problems of the Neolithic cultures in India". Sharma, A.K. Sharma carried out work on (1989) "Neolithic Gufkaral". B.R. Mani did work on (2006). Kashmir- Neolithic and Harappan relations.". A. Basu, "Indian Archaeology, A. Review" (1960-62). A. Shashi, Asthana. Carried out work on (1996). "History and Archaeology of India's contacts with other countries" Was also a pioneering work on Neolithic Cultures.

But all the work carried out by the renowned Archaeologists and Scholars either belong to one region or one farming communities, yet no serious work have been taken cumulative, to cover the all farming communities of India since agriculture work started in India, "My work" cover all the farming communities and sincere efforts have been made to cover the initial stages of the development farming communities. I have started research work on Neolithic culture, when some evidence of farming are reported in North India.

Study Area:

The current research area is dating back of cumulative study of Neolithic culture. This paper highlights "Materialistic life of the Agrarian communities of Neolithic people of Northern India" attempting to understand about the Agrarian communities of Neolithic North India and the Materialistic culture in. This work has focused on north part of material culture of early farming communities of India in ancient time. Theses artifacts offer a detailed view of the resource acquisition and development of tools and weapons of the period, showing that , was amassed and disseminated through extensive production in farming networks to consumers throughout the Northern region .This is the study area for research work which is based on tools, crops, houses, metal, bone, pottery of prehistory material.

Aim of the Study:

1. Trace the study of cumulative study of Northern region of Neolithic Agrarian communities.

2. Investigate the Neolithic farming development through polished stone tools and weapons.

3. Identify major implements and their uses for the subsistence of the Agrarian communities of Neolithic people of Northern India.

4. Explore the Materialistic life changes in Neolithic people through technological advancements achieved from the food gatherer to food production.

Methodology:

The information has been taken from published books, Journals, report, I.A.R and research paper related site survey etc. to material culture (Pottery, Ornaments, metals, tools and weapons, beads, figurines, beads etc. and related to material culture of north.

1. This paper endeavors to compile data from all reports of excavated sites and related exploratory work.

2. Research papers pertaining to North region, the surrounding sites of North-west, North,

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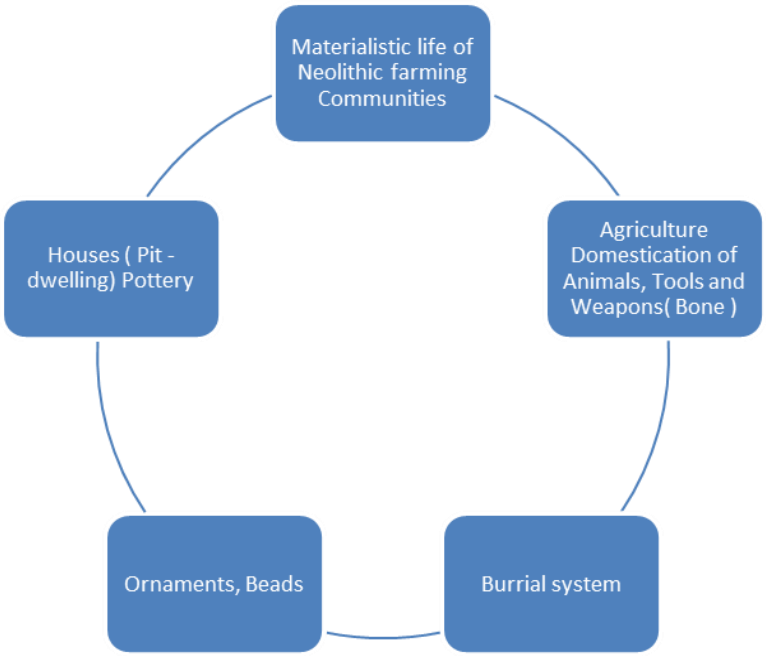
The Vindhyan hills, Belan valley and the ganga valley, The mid- central eastern region and the North eastern region of Assam will be reviewed to gain insights into the use of artifacts and associated livelihoods.

3. A comparative research approach will be employed to enhance the understanding of the Materialistic life of the agrarian communities of Neolithic people of Northern India. The study is based on archaeological sources.

Materialistic life of the Agrarian Communities of Neolithic People in North India:

The evidence of the material culture of the Neolithic Age People was found from excavated sites. Neolithic Culture was rural farming based. These finding shows the light on the socio-economic life of this period. Material objects are as – Houses, Pottery, Beads, Clothes, Ornaments, Clothes impressions found on pottery Bone objects, Stone objects, Terracotta objects, glass objects, Ivory objects, Cereal and Plants remains, Animal remains, reconstruction of the life of the People during this phase can be seen the Following finding material below.



Houses:

There were different types of structures noticed at various sites in Northwestern region, where people resided during Neolithic period. The first farming communities in the aceramic Neolithic stage lived in rectangular one-room houses of smaller size and then multi-roomed houses of mud-bricks with storage were made.[18] At Mehrgarh, Neolithic people lived in mud-brick houses, which were found small in the beginning and bigger in the later levels. These houses had also attached cell-like compartments, which might have been used for storage of grains. The mud-bricks used in the house building were of regular size with finger impressions and the houses were divided into small rooms with assigned places for fire.[24] The houses which have been excavated yet are of four types i.e. two-roomed, four roomed, six roomed and ten roomed houses. Generally, the houses were made of mud bricks. The bricks were long and narrow. It measured 62 * 12 * 8 cm. There was a herringbone pattern on the upper faces of the

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bricks. At Kili Gul-Muhammad and the sites associated with it, mud-brick structures with hearths, ovens for baking and granaries with six-roomed and sometimes nine- roomed units were discovered. Wells were also found between the houses. At Sarai Khola excavations have revealed the presence of several pit- dwellings also.[20] The Neolithic people used huts made of grass, wattle and daub and pebble layers were used as foundations for walls and a rubble layer between two mud-brick layers was also found. At Burzahom the main feature of earliest settlers was dwelling pits cut below ground level into the natural soil, which is mostly loess. The pits are well-like structures. The pits are circular or oval in plan, narrow at the top and wide at the base. The diameter varied according to the needs of the people. The largest of these pits measures 2.74 m. at the top 4.57-m. at the base and 3.95 m. in depth. Presence of ash, charcoal and potsherds within these pits clearly indicate human occupation. The dwelling pits were thus the devices made by early Neolithic man to fight the severe winters of Kashmir.

Besides the circular pits, pit chambers that are rectangular or sometimes squarish have also been noticed. In Burzahom where the structures in mud or mud bricks with regular floors made of rammed karewas soil. These were filled up and plastered with mud and covered with a thin coat of red ochre to serve as a floor. Another floor was a hearth and an oval pit with a mean diameter of 1.04 m. A few mud platforms were also found with partitions walls on them. A few copper arrowheads were, At Gufkaral the settlement pattern consisted of large and small dwelling pits cut into the loessic deposits, being circular or oval in plan with narrow mouths and wide bottoms. These pits were surrounded by storage pits and hearths. A number of postholes were noticed around the pits and the hearths to support the superstructure of grass and reed. In the Middle Ganga region, the excavation, have brought to light evidence of circular or oval huts known through the patterns of post- holes that have come to light from almost all excavated sites of the area. Wattle and daub structure is attested by good number of burnt clay with reed and bamboo impression.[225] At Chirand, the evidence of pit dwelling has also been reported,[26] which may have been roofed over because traces of postholes were A circular floor and a semicircular hut with several oblong ovens were also found exposed in the excavation. Burnt chunks of clay with reed- of bamboo impressions were also found, which suggest that the houses perished in destructive fire**.(Shitala Prasad Singh: Early Agriculture of the Neolithic Middle Ganga Plain: An Appraisal,PP.1-9).** The excavations from Mahagara, there appears a pattern Dwelling pits, ground tools, ceramics of different shapes and sizes, burials, contacts with outer world etc. It portrays a well-stratified Neolithic society of fixed settlement.[27] The people of mid central eastern regions, lived in houses made of reeds and bamboo Neolithic people of Northeastern region lived in Mud and mud bricks-walled houses.

Agriculture:

Neolithic period, people lived with a subsistence economy of food gathering including hunting and fishing as evident from different bone and stone objects. The development of farming was the most important part for the human civilization.[31]with the emergence of agriculture changes occurred in societies in the Neolithic Age. The first level of the Neolithic settlements in the Mehrgarh of the Northwestern region provides us information. The people of North-western region noticed related cultivation of crops include hulled six-row barley and wild, domestic hulled two- row barleys. Another important crop was wheat. Grains of domesticated hulled

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einkorn wheel, wheat and barley have been noticed in the period at Mehrgarh. Ber and dates were also noticed at Mehrgarh along with these; seeds of cotton.[32]At Burzahom many evidences noticed include wheat, barley and lentil, plant remains. *At Gufkaral, people had started cultivating following cereals, pulses and weeds; Barley*-six-row, wheat, lentil, common pea and clover etc. as the carbonized and uncorbonised forms have noticed.

From the metallurgical analysis of a copper bead from a burial of Mehrgarh, some thread was discovered. **(C .Jarrige, J. F. Jarrige and R.H .Meadow RH, G,Quivron (eds). ‘’Mehrgarh Field Report”pp.85):** From Neolithic times to the Indus Civilization) .After characterizing, the threads are identified as cotton. The evidence of cotton seeds at Mehrgarh was earliest in the Indian Sub-Continent and also in the whole world. The Neolithic people at Gufkaral had adopted a well-settled life where the practice of agriculture, cattle breeding and herding, and weaving of woolen cloth became the way of life. Excavations at Kanishkapura have given the evidence of emmer wheat or Triticum dicoccum which is recovered from early Harappan deposits at Kunal in Hissar (Haryana) where evidence of pit dwelling has also been noticed ,a common feature of Neolithic evidences noticed settlement at Burzahom [35]**.** The people of mid central eastern region knew the cultivation of rice as paddy husk impressions were found on burnt clay pieces. It was further substantiated by the discovery of charred rice, wheat, moong, massor and barley. The knowledge of these plant foods suggests that the people were raising two crops a year. The people of Bihar, Orissa and west Bengal cultivated plants include hulled and six rowed barley, rice, pea, green gram, green pea, khesari, mustard, flax/linseed and jackfruit. The presence of a wild variety of rice along with a domesticated variety is significant which presents the practice of collecting wild rice along with cultivation of rice. The cultivated variety of rice has been identified as Oryza sativa and wild variety are Oryza nivara and Oryza furigana.

Pottery:

In the beginning, ill-shaped but serviceable sun-dried clay pots were made. Then baskets were used as moulds for clay pots and were fired to give strength to the pots. The North-western Neolithic culture was related to aceramic and pottery**.** North-western Neolithic culture was aceramic and pottery came in the ill-shaped and sun-dried clay pots were made. Then baskets were used as moulds for clay pots and were fired to give strength to the pots. At the end of neolithic culture wheel was used to make pottery, which was imported from west Asia.[28]

At some of the sites of Baluchistan, distinctive pottery both hand-made and wheel thrown, decorated with black or red painted designs including simple geometric motifs was noticed. The pottery was noticed including of fine buff ware, with burnished red-slip in both type plain and decorated shreds. The pottery was made in different shapes and forms. The pottery at Gumla, Lewan and Mehrgarh is course red-brown frequently burnished with a limited range of types either hand-made or built on a simple turntable. Some pottery shows additional gritty sand to the outer surface. With coiled impressions on the bases of the pots.[29] The pottery at Sarai Khola, located in the Potwar plateau is highly burnished and red in colour. The pottery recovered at Kili Ghul Muhammad, wheel made pottery with the designs of black triangles and oblique painted in black on a red surface, called black-on-red ware. The main shapes of vessels includes are open bowls, and rim-less barrel shaped jars.[30]

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At Burzahom noticed hand-made grey ware of different colour includes dull red, brown and buff was represented by bowls, vases and stems. The coarse grey ware is reported from the Kanispur, Burzahom and Gufkaral. The surfaces of coarse grey ware are dull grey. The fine grey ware is reported from the Burzahom and this fine grey ware has been fired in different temperatures to get various shades such as ashy grey, dull grey, dull brown, and dark grey The principal shapes of fine grey ware are handi type, Kashmiri moat, (pitcher-ghara) Voar (lota) type, and Tsoad (a small pitcher). However, a few numbers of large vessels were recovered from Burzahom. Many varieties of fine pottery noticed includes bowls, globular pots, jars, stems, and funnel shaped vessels have been found The principal shapes of fine grey ware are handi type, Kashmiri moat, (pitcher-ghara) Voar (lota) type, and Tsoad (a small pitcher). However, a few numbers of large vessels were recovered from Burzahom.

In Middle Ganga valley ceramic industry of the Neolithic Gangetic plain is rich and varied.

Mainly red-ware was found in abundance, although grey, black, and black-and-red ware was also used. The inverted fire technique was used to produce the black and red ware The finding evidence indicates that in the early stage of the culture, as indicated at Chirand, Lahuradeva, Jhusi and Hetapatti, people were using handmade pottery but subsequently the slow wheel appears to have been used for the purpose. principal pottery types included vase with broad mouth, narrow neck and spouted vase, lipped bowl, perforated bowl, footed bowl, oval bowl, bowl with stand, etc., vases, jars, spoons or ladles and knobbed pottery. Decorations consisted of post firing painted designs in the form of criss cross and wavy lines and circles. Painting of red ochre on grey ware and rarely on other wares was also found. Mat impressions were found on few pot shreds,

In the region of Vindhyas Ceramic industry is one of the most diagnostic traits of the Neolithic culture of the northern Vindhyas.[27] Four wares comprising rusticated, cord-impressed, burnished red and burnished black wares represent the Neolithic pottery; all are handmade and ill fired .it is the richest among the cultural assemblages. It is a handmade pottery. In north eastern region noticed at the surface, the ceramic industry has been divided into four major groups: (i) Cord impressed ware (ii) Rusticated ware (iii) Burnished red ware and (iv) Burnished red and black ware. Other wares of this culture are black and red ware, black slipped ware with occasional painting in white, and slipped plain red ware. The main vessel shapes noticed includes bowls, basins, vases, and dishes.

That wild species of most of the domesticated animals in the Near East, such as, sheep, goats,

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boar and cattle, were intensively hunted for their meat prior to their domestication. Domestication of animals was also needed for the potential use of animals in the ritualistic sacrifices. These findings do suggest that sacrifice was indeed at the back of human mind while domesticating animals. In the initial stage of aceramic Neolithic period the people were purely hunter gatherers as the bones of wild species of animals were found including Ovis, Ibex and cattle. The domestication of animals related northern region, evidences noticed by the bones found there include, Ibex, wild and domestic dogs, wolf, bear, the Nilgai, wild Urial, the pig, the Kashmir stag, humped cattle, Indian domestic buffalo, domestic sheep, the domestic goat, etc**.** Many of the bones recovered bore cut and skinning marks indicating they were slaughtered for food. The animal bones of Boss species and water buffalo in majority, shows that animals was also domesticated for agriculture also.= The presence of terracotta net sinkers at Sarai Khola suggests that fishing also formed an element of subsistence economy. The subsistence of the Neolithic people was based on the exploitation of plants and animals, by domestication as well as by hunting and gathering. The people of Mehrgarh usually hunted for getting most of the meat. The bones of wild animals like wild sheep, wild goats, wild asses, blackbuck, nilgai, large deer, small deer, wild boar, water buffalo, wild cattle and possibly elephants were found. Neolithic Culture of Kashmir the initial stage of aceramic Neolithic period in the Gufkaral the people were purely hunter gatherers as the bones of wild species of animals were found including Orvis, Ibex and cattle. domestication of dogs, sheep and goat increased and the bones of the wolf, the Kashmir stag, the Nilgai, Indian humped cattle, argali-large, Asiatic sheep, the domestic sheep and goat, ibex, the Red deer, Bear and Fish were recovered, which bore skinning marks of hunt and slaughter.[37] In mid- central-eastern region noticed large number of bones of animals, birds, and fish and clusters of fish scales suggest that they consumed flesh also. Neolithic people of Chirand were familiar with elephant, rhinos, buffalo, ox, stag, and deer, as the bones of these animals have been found there. In central eastern region evidences of domesticated rice were also obtained from Neolithic site, and there is direct evidence of animal domestication too.

Tools & Weapons:

The Neolithic people made ground and polished stone tools. The artefacts recovered from Neolithic culture give evidences of the life pattern of the first farming communities. They used celts in form of oval shape. The celt might have been used for cutting trees, chopping, slicing of fruit, vegetables, meat, grass, etc. Tools and weapons were noticed Ring stone or Mace head a) Large; b) Small. Used as an agricultural harvesting tool Sling stones Sling balls almost spherical in shape The artefacts connected with food producing, and hunting-gathering include Celts, querns, mullers, bored stones, microliths, bone tools, pottery, etc. findings of grinding stone recovered.

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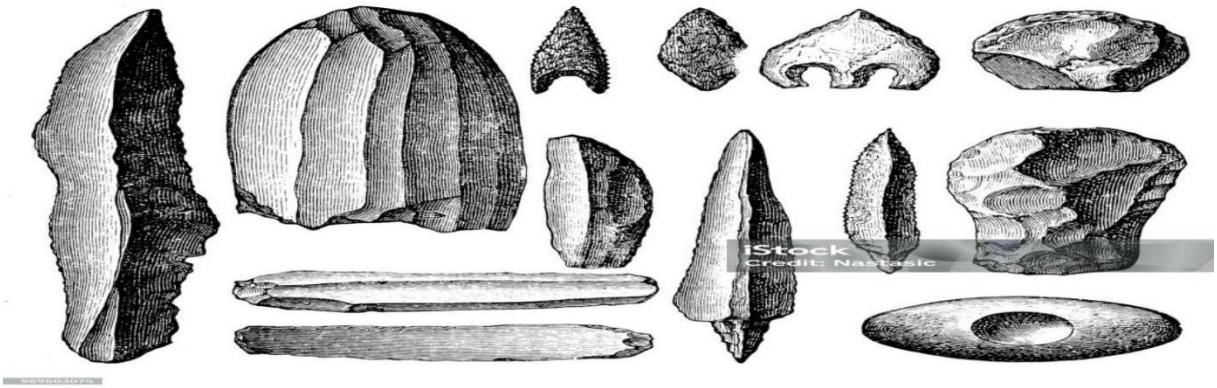

Fig: Tools and Weapons Related Neolithic Culture.

The people of Mehrgarh used of stone tools and bone tools were noticed. People of Mehrgarh in the period were associated with activities like butchery, cooking, making of bone artefacts and others using stone tools.

Kili-ghul -Muhammad is represented by ground stone and chipped chert industry including blades, scrappers, choppers, etc. made of generally a dull tan chert, occasionally jasper and chalcedony. The techniques of pecking and grinding were used in making hammer-stones, ring-stones, querns and grinding stones etc. The stone implements show similarities with those found in Iran and Central-Asia, as geographically Iran is nearest region. Besides the bone and stone tools, a small-perforated pendant of lead, beads in steatite, lapis-lazuli, frit, copper bead, cornelian, turquoise beads, bangles of conch shells etc. have been found there. These semi-precious stones have distant sources like Badakhshan, Turkmenia and trapezes match with those of Jaitun culture as identified by the Archaeologists. This also suggests there were trading activities in the period under discussion.[38]

Stone tools, bone tools like needles and awls are the striking feature of the Neolithic Kashmir. They also used bone tools like needles and awls. Generally the bone tools were fashioned out of long bones of animals like stag, sheep, goat etc. through splitting, chipping and grinding and polishing by constant rubbing techniques. Some Neolithic hand axes were noticed at Mehrgarh. Sometimes, they used wooden handles with blades. The have used these hand axes - as sickles to harvest grains.

. The main tool types found in West Bengal include polished stone axes, triangular axes, ring stones, shouldered celts, few bone tools, microliths and beads of semi-precious stones. Neolithic Celts were noticed in Hamirpur and Jhusi, Lalitpur etc. In Orissa, triangular axes with rounded butt, faceted hoes, chisels, mace heads, pounders and grinding stones were reported.[39]

In Vindhyan Plateau comprising the Belan valley artifacts recovered from the excavated sites include ground stone tools like celts, geometric and non-geometric microliths, blades, querns, mullers, sling- balls, bone arrowheads, terracotta beads, and animal bones.

In North-eastern region, the stone assemblage comprise include of ground and polished stone industry, microliths, flake, blade industry and chipped stone axe industry. Polished stone axes, ground stone celts made of slate and sandstone were prominent features noticed there. The other stone tools comprised harvester, knife, axes, adzes, and single and double perforated

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celts mostly made of schist, shale, and basalt. Shouldered celts and cord impressed pottery are the characteristic features of North eastern Neolithic culture.

Tools	Sub-types	Functions
Needles and Awls.	i) Simple, about 12 cm, long, round section, flattened end; ii) small, round, pointed; iii) Round throughout but flat at one end; iv) Double perforated, with flattened tapering body. (The Awls are plain and oblong with one pointed end and other flattened without eye, in many cases notched and grooved all round).	Were possibly used in stitching garments and leather articles.
Harpoons	i) Harpoons with barbs on both sides, symmetrically carved; ii) Barbs mostly on one side.	Hafted harpoons were efficacious in spearing fish.
Points	i) Thin sharp, projected point; ii) Point sharp with rounded and flattened body; iii) Butt ground. (Circular, oval, triangular, pin type, dagger type spear type etc.)	Fabrication of other tools, making grooves and notches in awls, piercing eyes and holes in needles and harvesters, buttoning garments, hunting, etc.
Pen shaped point.	Unique type with a groove for hafting.	
Scrapers	i) Heavy, horn tip, sharpened and burnished; ii) Medium; iii) Light, thin and flat.	For polishing long bones and possibly animal food processing.
Arrowheads	i) Shouldered; ii) Rounded.	Served arrows for bows for hunting of animals and other functions as of points.
Composite tool	A borer made on a long, hollow bone as long pointed tool with handle.	For stitching Leather

Table: Bone tools and their functions noticed at . Courtesy by, Abdul Adil Paray).

Ornaments:

Mehrgarh people were connected with trade. There have been valuable stone beads like Turquoise, Lapis Lazuli in grave goods in the period I at Mehrgarh. This may indicate a long distant exchange of people at Mehrgarh as the stones were not indigenous to the area. Archaeologists have found some bronze materials like earrings, bangles, pins (double spiral headed, bird-headed and button headed), cosmetic bottles and toilet objects like mirrors, blades in the cenotaph areas at Mehrgarh. The main ornaments found were the carnelian beads in good number with a few pastes and a soap stone pendent at Burzahom. At Gufkaral one spacer, one carnelian, one terracotta and second one was wooden bead noticed with copper hair pin and terracotta bangle. The main ornaments found were the carnelian beads in good number with a

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few pastes and a soap stone pendent at Burzahom..

Clothes:

Though some threads of cotton have been found in a burial in Mehrgarh, it is not certain that the people of Mehrgarh knew the process of weaving. In Period I at Mehrgarh, the people may wear ornaments like beads, pendants and bangles, made of marine shells. There are different types of beads e.g. cylinder discs – short and long cylinders, pendants e.g. shaped, natural shells etc. These ornaments were decreased in Period II. From the period, some polished beads and pendants have been found. Certainly, the long string beads, found in the burials at Mehrgarh had considerable socio-economic value.

Beads:

Finding beads from Gufkaral shows that there were done trade through many ways. Beads includes steatite, turquoise, carnelian, jade, chert, chalcedony, Agate were noticed at Kashmir sites. There were also found bone necklaces, necklaces, bracelets, and earrings shows they were fond of beads, these were used by both female and male. Terracotta and steatite beads, including long barrel-shaped beads. Earliest use of lapis- lazuli and carnelian in South Asia.

Beads from Gufkaral

Art:

An engraved stone slab was found at Burzahom, depicting a hunting scene in which an antler is being pierced from behind with a long spear by a hunter and an arrow being discharged by another hunter from the front. The upper portion depicts two antelopes and a dog. Another slab has shown an engraving of an abstract design of a hut. A rock engraving has been also found at Bomai and Sopore in North Kashmir. It depicts hunting by masked men.

Religion: From their burial practices it seems there were some aspects of religious beliefs of these people. At many burial, pottery noticed along with on the skeletal and remains of human and animals, suggests religious belief. Burying of pet animals with the human dead bodies at shows the sacrificial killings. The presence of separate burials for dog and wolf would give a clue that the people believed in totems. Trepanning of the skulls is indicative of medical belief.

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Burial Pattern:

In Neolithic Kashmir, evidences related burials patterns noticed at both include- houses and burials. One burial noticed at Neolithic site Jammu and Kashmir shows that the bones were carinated and treated with red ochre. While as in primary burials no red ochre treatment was seen on bones, which were placed in couched, embryonic position with their skulls placed in north-east or south-east direction. Grave goods were found in the human graves. Along with the human bones, those of animal bones were also noticed, which were perhaps sacrificed in honors of the dead. The pits for burials were generally oval and rectangular in shape and plastered with lime. There is evidence of trepanning also. At Mehrgarh, two groups of graves were found near residential houses, in which bodies were laid on their sides, in a contracted position. The graves contained beads, baskets with bitumen coating, bone points and awls, stone blades, stone axes etc. beads are often found in Neolithic graves, indicating spiritual or social significance. Two burials without grave goods were also found but with a covering of red-ochre on the bones. Such graves show a contact with that of Central-Asia. The Northwestern Neolithic people buried their dead leaving with them beads of steatite, carnelian, lapis- lazuli, bangles of conch shells and slaughtered animals. The use of red-ochre and slaughtered animals in the graves show considerable use of rituals and imply beliefs in life after death. In addition, the study of skeletons and teeth have showed there was no single race and the first farmers had affinities with South and South-east-Asian people rather than the west Asian people.[39] A large circular pan for keeping the cattle was noticed in Mahagara near the huts. Several animal bones were recovered from Mahagara site.

Discussion and Conclusion:

The ongoing discussion about the Agrarian communities of Neolithic people, along with evidence from materialistic culture in Northern India suggests significant development through polished stone tools and weapon. Neolithic culture denotes materialistic culture of agrarian communities of Northern India such as- Polished stone tools and weapons, Domestication of animals, Pottery (Wheel-made and Hand –made), Production in Agriculture, Ornaments (Bones), Clothes, Beads, Houses (Pit- dwelling), Burial pattern etc. Although pinpointing the exact origins of through polished tools and weapons and before that is difficult, there is ample proof of such from food gatherers to food production. The agrarian communities in northern India was pivotal in the origin, development in the expansion of Neolithic sites in many regions as- North-West, North, The Vindhyan hills, the Belan valley and the Ganga valley, The mid-central eastern region, The north- eastern region .The findings from this region indicate that the Neolithic agrarian people were skilled in technology for making tools and weapons, making potteries in specific temperature, they become food producer from food gatherer and import grains to other regions because the mainly sites Mehrgarh, chirand, ,Koldihwa etc., which grows grains firstly in the South Asian context. This study paves the way for future research into regional variations in Neolithic northern agrarian community's technological traditions and comparisons with adjacent cultural practices. In conclusion, a thorough examination of Materialistic cultural of artifacts within the Neolithic culture necessitates fresh excavations with a focus on stratigraphic and chronological contexts. Merging conventional archaeological techniques with scientific analysis will depend our grasp of the societal and economic

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significance of Materialistic life of the agrarian communities of Neolithic people of Northern India thereby broadening our comprehension of this ancient society.

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