



**ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER**

**History**

**NEOLITHIC EXPLORATIONS IN KADAPA DISTRICT OF ANDHRA PRADESH: A HISTORICAL SURVEY**

**KEY WORDS:**

Benzazepinone-2,5-dione, oxoketene dithioacetal, Friedel-Craft cyclocondensation with PPA

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**INTRODUCTION**

The food-procuring cultures of the Pleistocene and early Holocene in different parts of the world were succeeded by food-producing cultures, distinguished by the use of stone axes finished by grinding and polishing these stone axes are called Neoliths, and polished stone axe-using cultures are called Neolithic cultures. For a very long time archaeologists have been puzzled by the presence of a great number of stone-axes among the surface finds. The recent explorations and excavations have brought to light many Neolithic settlements, throughout the sub-continent, The Azilo-Tardenoisean civilization may be the precursor of the Neolithic Period, The place of its origin is still an enigma though some archaeologists presume that the origin was somewhere in West Asia. While the adaptive strategies in the preceding stone ages (Paleolithic and Mesolithic) were hunting, gathering and fishing, the Neolithic is marked by a radical shift in adaptive behaviour. It is the dawn of a new level of interaction between humans and environment, resulting in the domestication of animals and plants and settled village life. On account of this significant change from food procurement to food production, Childe (1964) termed this stage the 'Neolithic revolution'. It was also referred to as the agricultural revolution<sup>1</sup>.

The Neolithic people settled either on the top of granatoid hills or on levelled terraces on hillsides or on valley floors . In the southern part of the Deccan plateau , where granite hills rise from the block cotton soils , the Neolithic villages were generally located on hill sides on plateau , sometimes miner along streams , and accotionally along the the banks of major rivers . [upender singh, 2016:123]settled village life , domestication of cattle, goats and sheep and using of finished stone axes were the salient features of the Neolithic age<sup>2</sup>.

**Neolithic Culture In Kadapa District Ofandhra Pradesh: Neolithic pottery:**

In Archaeological terms the Neolithic period followed the Paleolithic and Mesolithic periods, spanning six thousand years from approximately 12000Bc to 6000 Bc years ago. There are a number of distinctive features of the Neolithic culture of Andhradesa including the apparent symbolic importance of cattle, and the creation of ash mounds that give it nobly indigenous air , and that appear to have local origins<sup>3</sup>.

All the pottery from the earlier Neolithic period was of handmade. Burnishing with a dabber or spatula was probably a later development. Self-protection was the main pre-occupation in the Neolithic times, which made the Neolithic Man sometimes seek a lake as his habitation. He built his home on piles in shallow water. The evidence of the earliest Neolithic period in Andhra was discovered in 1876 by Robert Bruce Foote in the form of an adze of sandstone, at a place called *Vaddamanu* in the Guntur district. Robert Bruce Foote, between 1885 and 1891, discovered more than 50sites, which are geographically located in the present districts of Hyderabad, Krishna, Guntur, Ncllore, Kurnool, Kadapa and Anantapur.

Out of the material remains of the Neolithic people, which survived the ravages of time, was the stone-axe, made out of igneous or metamorphic rocks, such as diorite, dolerite and

basalt, The other less common varieties are small tools either hafted or used as adzes, small chisels, picks, fabricators, hammer-stones and sling stones, etc. Coghlan has postulated several stages of manufacture. According to him the Neolithic tools might have been developed from a Paleolithic sharp-edged scraper. A lighter variety of ground-axe is associated with the Solutrean and other Upper Paleolithic Cultures of Western Europe. Foote recorded four stages of manufacture from the earliest stage of chipping till their completion as highly polished tools. Subbarao<sup>4</sup> also suggested four stages. Allchin<sup>5</sup> postulates the following five stages before it finally appears as a finished ground or polished tool.

**Neolithic excavations in kadapa district :**

Small test excavations/surface scrapings were carried out at three of these sites namely *Hanumantaraoopeta*, *Peddamudiyam* and *Balijapalle*. In addition, Venkata-subbaiah has documented more sites in the Kurnool district. In archeological terms, one thing that is notable about this region is the lack of evidence for ash mound sites. Ceramic forms and general aspects of their style, such as slip and paint colors, are similar to the ceramics from the Neolithic sites of the neighboring region suggesting broad contemporaneity and cultural contact, although the Kunderu valley is known for its distinctive painted Patpad Ware.

The known Neolithic sites in the region can be seen to be distributed near the Kunderu River, or its tributaries, including placement on the banks of seasonal nalas. In Kadapa district, there is a range in the apparent site size, 37 are in the size range of 0.2 hectare, 5are in the size range of 0.25 to 0.5 hectares, 3 in the range of 0.5 to one hectare, one in the range of 1.3 hectare and one of 3 hectares. This pattern of sites can be contrasted with that known in the ash mound tradition region to the west, where the largest settlement sites were located on granite hill tops away from river or stream valleys, although generally adjacent to other permanent water sources.

While the chronology of this Neolithic region requires further refinement, it is clear that a large proportion of it is equivalent to Phase III of the Southern Neolithic chronology. The Patpad Ware, distinctive to the region under consideration, is often related to the more widespread Peninsular 'Jorwe' phenomenon, which is most pronounced in the third phase. According to the calibrated radiocarbon chronology of Watgal, this phase can be dated back to 1800 B.C., and may continue up to 1200/1000 B.C. The chronological evidence suggest that contrary to the naming of this painted pottery phenomenon, it is earlier in the Southern Neolithic province than further north. The two available radiocarbon dates from *Peddamudiyam* and *Balijapalle* when calibrated: 1540 B.C. and 1110 B.C. are in agreement with this per iodization<sup>6</sup>.

**Neolithic Tools:**

The first Neolithic tool in South India was found in 1842 by Taylor at Lingsugur in Raichur district of Karnataka. The important Neolithic-Chalcolithic site Mylavaram was in Kadapa district. Neolithic artifacts were found at Pulivendla, Vemula, and Yellatur. Not only Neolithic artifacts but also painted red and polished pottery was discovered at these sites.<sup>7</sup>The Neolithic man depended, besides cultivation, upon hunting, fishing and on whatever naturally available to him

such as fruits, vegetables and edible grasses or tubers.

The tiny blades of chert, etc. were perhaps used as barbs or arrow heads and hafted to wood or bone with resins to be used as knives, sickles or blades. The nodules of chert were used for making fire, a practice endured till the present times. The other method was to churn wood, which would not be effective during wet season. Some pots with perforated bases, recovered at many Neolithic-Chalcolithic sites must have been used for storing fire. Cattle served his cultivation and food needs. Another development in the later half of the Neolithic sequence is the appearance of perforated bowls, for which numerous functional interpretations have been offered: incense braziers, covers for boiling milk, steam cooking, colanders, or for the preparation of a 'macaroni-like' dish of 'milk-tubes', actually a sorghum flour paste boiled in milk (Nagaraja Rao 1971:36)<sup>8</sup>

Recently, a more complete specimen recovered from Watgal indicates that some of these perforated bowls had spouted lips for pouring, in addition to straining functions (Devaraj *et al.* 1995). Meanwhile another complete specimen from *Bilajalipalle* (Kadapa District) has a lipless rim (Venkatasubbaiah 1992). This could indicate vessels with different functions or regional variation, and highlights the potential for future residue analysis. Nevertheless, the Watgal evidence might lend support to an alternative interpretation that sees these vessels as curd strainers. Perforated vessels also occur in ceramic repertoires further north on the Peninsula but only from the Late Jorwe period, c. 1200 BC (Dhavalikar 1988: 476) with current chronological resolution it is hard to pinpoint a region of origin and direction of spread, although it is clear that these vessels indicate culinary developments shared between the northern and southern Deccan<sup>9</sup>.

**Mesolithic, Neolithic Rock art engravings:**

Neolithic and Megalithic assemblages by a team of archaeologists of the Archaeological survey of India<sup>10</sup>. The term "Rock Art" is popularly used to define prehistoric art in the form of paintings, bruising and engravings on bare rock surfaces of caves and rock shelters and on isolated rock boulders in the open air. There are basically two categories of rock art. The first refers to art produced by the application of colour substances to the rock surface to depict motifs, symbols and figures; this form includes Paintings/Pictographs. In the second category, the rock is chiselled, with the help of a sharp instrument of stone or metal, to depict the desired motif, symbol or figure. This form includes pecking/bruising/engraving and petroglyphs.

A tentative chronology, based on contextually, is suggested, for the rock art in Andhra Pradesh. The paintings that show motifs related to wild fauna, in all probability, belong to the Mesolithic as these paintings are within the range of Mesolithic occupations. The paintings with humped bulls were tentatively dated to the Neolithic-Chalcolithic as the sites are in the proximity of Neolithic-Chalcolithic habitations. The petroglyphs with the circle-with-trident symbol and other geometric designs, based on their proximity to the Megalithic burials, are ascribed to the Megalithic. The paintings showing elephants and horses, metal weapons, religious symbols and inscriptions may date from the early historic to the Medieval periods.

The Mesolithic phase is identifiable on the basis of the predominant representation of wild species, such as deer along with other animals lie the tortoise, rabbit, fox, hyena, and dog; anthropomorphs; human figures, masked human figures, geometric drawings, and handprints. A single colour scheme (red) is followed at all the sites during this period. No petroglyphs occur during Mesolithic phase. Another interesting fact about the Mesolithic rock art sites of Andhra Pradesh is that they are found in the limestone, sandstone and granite areas, whereas the succeeding phase of rock art is confined more or less to the granite area. The important

Mesolithic rock art sites in Kadapa district are *Chintakunta* and *Dappalle*.

Stylistically, the Sanganonipalli deer figures may be considered to be the earliest of the Mesolithic paintings. They are large and done in a flat-wash out line, beginning with the head and then proceeding to the body. The fluidity of the brush movement is very obvious from the gradual thinning of the color pigments towards the end of the body. The figures are located at a height of 3-5 m above the floor level of the rock shelter. This feature is noticed at Chintakunta, Banga Agraharam and Dappalle. The anthropomorphic figures at Chintakunta, with headdress of radiating lines and criss-cross lines on the body, appear to be cultic symbols.

**Neolithic Period**

The rock art in the Neolithic phase, the paintings are predominantly those of humped bulls, either alone or in association with human figures. All the paintings are in red. Petroglyphs make their appearance from the Neolithic phase. Some minor stylistic variations can be observed in the depiction of humped bulls. At *Chintakunta*, the *genital organs* are also prominently depicted. Another interesting feature at this site is the occurrence of human figures with bows and arrows, side by side with humped bulls, another interesting petroglyph form is the cupule (cup marks). The petroglyphs are found on the walls of the rock shelter in which Mesolithic paintings are also occurs and this site is located in a sandstone formation.

**Banga Agraharam:-**

Banga Agraharam is a small village situated close to palakonda hills, south east of Kadapa town. A few prehistoric painted rock shelters were located in the Palakonda reserve forest at a distance of 7kms from Banga Agraharam village. The figures comprised antelopes, horses, bulls, human figures with bow and arrows and geometric designs. On the basis of thematic representation, they have been assigned to Mesolithic, Neolithic and historical period (IAR 1986-87:8)<sup>11</sup>.

**Ethno – Archaeology:**

The Neolithic people were the earliest pastoral folk known for the domestication of animals. The life style of gollas and kurubas , two contemporary pastoral communities will help us in understanding the life style and culture of the Neolithic folk. What I came to know during the field work is the agricultural lands in the vicinity of these upper Neolithic sites belong to pastoral case i.e. golla caste people. Most probably this golla cast is very dominant one in all aspects i.e. Socio – Economic and politically even on today in these study villages as they have been practicing animal husbandry besides agriculture. And so, on subsistence pattern, economic life and material culture of the same can be meaningfully applied to reconstruct the early farmers life to understand the historic relationship between them as the early farmers practiced agriculture besides animal husbandry and hunting.

**CONCLUSION:**

According to Allchin&Allchin there were three sub-regional phases in the southern Neolithic. Robert Bruce Foote, between 1885 and 1891 discovered more than 50 sites, which are geographically located in the present districts of Hyderabad, Krishna, Guntur, Nellore Kurnool, kadapa and Ananthapuram. The various archaeological explorations, including intensive survey in the northern Kadapa district the Neolithicsites distribution. some 43 sites in the penner river basin of the Kadapa district were located and surface collections were available. In these collections Hanumantharao peta different pottery were discovered, Peddamudiam and Tanguturu animal bone tools and stone artifacts has been collected from the site. Thus these are the Neolithic sites in Kadapa district of Andhrapradesh which are the best examples for the evidence of early man activities and cultural community here.

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