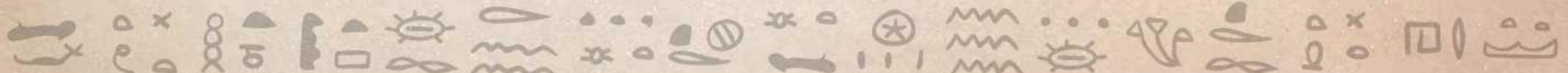


MESOLITHIC AGE



The Mesolithic Age (9000-4000 BC): Hunters and Herders

- It is **an Intermediate stage** which **began around 9000 B.C.** also called as **transitional phase** between the **Paleolithic and the Neolithic age.**
- Means of Livelihood:** Hunting, fishing and **food gathering** but started **domestication of animals at a later stage.**
- Tools used:** **Microliths**
- Sites:** Bagor Rajasthan, Southern Uttar Pradesh, Central and Eastern India and also south of the river Krishna.
- Bagor in Rajasthan and Adamgarh in Madhya Pradesh** provide the earliest evidence for the **domestication of animals.**





a-j) trapezes,

k-l) lunates,

m-p) points,

q) Triangle

r-z) various types of blades

Based on the subject matter, colour, style, encrustation and superimposition, the rock art of India is in general classified in **four broad developmental stages**.

- **The Stage 1** is represented by the **hunters and gatherers in symbols/ petroglyphs** bearing Palaeolithic to Mesolithic antiquity
- **The Stage 2** depicts the hunters and gatherers in **hunting and dancing scenes**, in addition to the symbols and geometric designs of the **Mesolithic period**.
- **The Stage 3** rock art **depicts the settled agriculturist and animal keepers** using pottery corresponding to the **Neolithic/Chalcolithic period**.
- **The Stage 4** rock art represents the **people of the early historic period**.

The most important Mesolithic rock art sites include **Bhimbetka, Adamgarh, and Pachmarhi, and many in the Jharkhand region.**

Bhimbetka Caves:

- There are about estimated 6214 rock art motifs in Bhimbetka **predominated by zoomorphs (animal art)** and a combination of them with **human figures (anthropomorphs)**.
- **A series of hunting scenes of archers** are remarkable in Bhimbetka representing inter Mesolithic Art - **group conflicts** and probably within the group clashes as well.
- The **paintings of the later period have human figures and designs in geometric pattern** as well as other ritualistic/ religious symbols and conch-shell inscriptions.
- There are **paintings of dance scenes and horse-riding warriors with umbrella-like head gears**, scenes of honey collection and fishing, hunting of the wild boar, etc.
- There are **depiction of musical instruments of horns, pipes, drums and tom-toms**. We can also notice palm prints, thumb impressions, hand stencils and finger markings.

- The paintings show different **overlapping layer in red and white and green**.
- The earliest layer mostly represents large figures of wild animals either depicted in **red ochre or in white/ grey colour**. The **black colour** from charcoal or manganese was used likely later.

