

The objective is to identify four broad periods in the prehistory of India. They are

- 1, Palaeolithic Age
- 2, Mesolithic Age
- 3, Neolithic Age
- 4, Iron Age
- 5, Megalithic Age

The eminent archaeologist Robert Bruce Foote has added number of places to the prehistoric map of India. Korking, Timpuram, Manamadurai, Saurashtra, the Palani hills, Nadi, Vallu, Udayagiri etc. Sir Max Müller Wheeler added Anikamudi.

Palaeolithic Age [Old Stone Age]

The first stage of human life - people of this period used crude and rough Stone implements for hunting animals - Implements were made of Quartz & gneiss or hard rock - This Age lasted up to B.C. 10,000 - Robert Bruce Foote has discovered this age implements at Pallewaram and in the districts of Kanchi, Vallu, & Tiruchelur. People led a nomadic life - they were called as food gatherers - They took shelter in caves - did not wear any dress - they began to use leaves and herbs to cover to their bodies - no idea of God or Religion - did not know how to dispose off the dead - Produced fire by rubbing two flint stones -

Mesolithic Age falls in between the Palaeolithic and Neolithic Age - also known as the Microlithic Age -

The microliths called "Sankimusi" are used by the tribals of the Palani and Annamalai hills. Their period existing with a range of 5000 years from 5000 to 3000 B.C. - These people began to have domesticated animals along with their hunting. Rituals and religious practices developed along with burial of the dead.

Neolithic Age People used trap rock instead of hard rock to make their stone implements - tools were more polished and sharpened - They began to lead a settled life - abandoned caves and began to build clay huts and thatched houses - people lived and worked in groups - This age was the beginning of Agriculture, domestication of Animals and pottery making. Learned the Art of cultivation - They had become the food producers - The discovery of wheel - used the wheel to carry goods and for making pottery. - knew the art of weaving - the custom of burial developed during this age - Burial urns have been unearthed in several parts of Tamilnadu - Date of this age appeared to be from 1500 B.C. Neolithic Civilization existed in Mohenjo, Krishnagiri, Shervaroy hills, and the districts of Tiruchy, Pudukottai, Salem, and Tirunelveli.

Iron Age In the South Iron was discovered and used by men Iron implements have been found at Bodiyinagarthamur, Keraladur. Robert Bruce Foote discovered some axe-heads, Spear-heads and knives of Iron. During this Age agriculture had improved much - Iron implements were efficiently used for cultivation.

Megalithic Age The most important characteristic of this age was the erection of burial monuments known as megalithic. The most important sites are Adichanellur, Manamedura, Perumal malai, Pudukottai, Nilgiris etc. This Age flourished between 200 - 400 B.C. The pottery of Adichanellur was more primitive than the megalithic pottery of other sites, Bronze articles, and Iron implements are found in these urns. People used huge stones as tombs. Large urns were used for burials of the dead.

(3) Sangen Literature

Comprise generally of Tolkappiyam, Ettutogai, and Pattupattu - The Post-Sangen works comprise Patinenkilkanakku.

Tolkappiyam is the earliest of Sangam works - means ancient classic - period shows that it could not have appeared earlier than 2nd century BC or later than 1st century AD - It was preceded by grammatical and poetic words.

There are three chapters in Tolkappiyam.
① Eluttatikaram, ② Sollatikaram ③ Pornelatikaram.

Ettutogai Pae Sangam.

① Nattirai, ② Kurunragai, ③ Ainkurunuru, ④ Patnirupattu, ⑤ Peripadal, ⑥ Kalittogai, ⑦ Ahananuru, ⑧ Purananuru -

Nattirai means good things - contain 400 stanzas - speaks about topography and love. The dress of the people, food habits, customs of the people of five tinas are depicted.

Kurunragai consists of 402 stanzas - Author was not known - Love theme is very beautifully portrayed, rulers such as Gori, Pari, Valli etc mentioned in it.

Ainkurunuru contains 50 stanzas - It consists of the five tinas of 100 stanzas for each.

Patnirupattu composed by different poets who sing the glory of the Chera kings, and give lot of information about the military activities of Chera rulers.

Peripadal contains 22 verses - Six of them deal with ^{Lord} Vishnu and eight with Lord Murugan - know the religious life of the family of this Ale.

Kalittogai consisting of 250 verses - composed by five poets - deals with love situations, arising the five tracts of Tamilagam.

Ahananuru - collection of 400 verses of love category - The features of five lands are described - It contains many historical information.

④
Puranam is collection of four hundred songs -
honour of the three monarchs of Tamizhan
was useful to ~~the~~ history for understanding
political history.

Pethupattu and the Authors

1. Thirumukkappadaai - Nakkirar
2. Porunaduupadaai - Mudala-makkaiyar
3. Sirupanaaduupadaai - Naldu Natittanar
4. Porumpanaduupadaai - Kadizhalu ^{Goutigan} _{Kannar}
5. Mulleippattu - Napputhanar
6. Madurai Kanai - Manthudi Napputhanar
7. Nadunal Vadaai - Nakkirar
8. Kurunchipattu - Kapilar
9. Pakkina Palai - Kadizhalu ^{Goutigan} _{Kannar}
10. Malai Padukadam - Perunkanckikanar

Post Sangam works

Padinenkilkkanakku works are
listed below

1. Naladiyar
2. Nanmanikkadigai
3. Inna Narpadu
4. Iniyavai Narpadu
5. Inna Narpadu
6. Kalavali Narpadu
7. Aintinai Aimpadu
8. Aintinai Elupadu
9. Tinci malei Aimpadu
10. Tinci malei nuddaimpadu
11. Kai nilei
12. Thirukural
13. Tirukkudaram
14. Acherajak Kovai
15. Palamoli
16. Siru Pancharمولam
17. mudu molikkanchi
18. Elethi

Twin Epics

- 1) Silappathikaram
- 2) Manimekalai

② Society in Sangem Age

The five Physiographical Division of Land

Kuruchi, mullai, meymam, - Neydal, and Palai

- 1) Kuruchi - mountain region - Lord Muruga - Eynar
- 2) Mullai - Pastoral land - Lord Vishnu - Idaiyar
- 3) meymam - Cultivable land - Lord Indra - Vellelar
- 4) Neydal - Sea shore - Lord Varuna - Parattayar
- 5) Palai - Dry region - Goddess Kottavai - Eynar

- Communities - untouchable class - Status of women
- Outright wife - masterly behaviour - virtues
- Education - Sports - nobility - Entertaining
- Guests - Light of home - Requests of Charity
- The widow - Parattayar - Love and marriage
- Family life - Hospitality - customs and
- Practices - Ear Doss and ornaments - Food items

Religious life in Sangem Age

Nadukkal [memorial stones] or virakkal - Animism [cult of spirits] worship of nature [naturism] - tree worship

Conception of Heaven and Hell - Religion. Customs like veriyadal, kuravai etc.

Lord Muruga worshipped in Kurunji land - Kottavai worshipped in Palai land - Vishnu worship in mullai land - Indiran worshipped in meymam land

Culture in Sangem Age [Fine Arts]

Painting - Drama - Dance kuravai and Thirasei were group of dances - music - Ball metal. Instruments - Stringed Instruments - Wind Instruments - Percussion Instruments like murasu, udukkan, Panbale etc.

Education and Literature

Poets - Poetesses - Teachers role in Education - Value of Education - knowledge - Astronomy - Seasons - Sangem literary works - Tholkappiyam, Pattupattu, Ettuttosei

D) Economic life of Sangam Age

Agricultural Economy - Principal occupation -
 varieties of crops - Fertility - Upland
 Rotation of crops - ^{method of} Cultivation of land -
 Irrigation - Harrow - Cattle rearing -
 Weaving of Cotton cloth and Silk cloth -
 Skilled Carpenters - Carpenter - Gold Smith -
 Black Smiths - Kuyavar - Panay and Padini
 (or) (Portolers)

Trade and Commerce in Sangam Age

Barter System - Coinage - Transport
 Traders in small groups called
 Vanikachchattukal. Foreign Trade
 with west countries like Greek and
 Roman country - Yavanas - Arians -
 Trade with the East including Ceylon,
 Java, Burma, Malaya, Sumatra, Bali etc.

Sea Ports

Kaveripom-pattinam or Puhar -
 Korkai, + Muziri - Tondi
 warehouses - Light houses - important
 Important Imports - Important
 Exports - Trading Communities -

Internal Trade

markets or Angedi -
 Allsedi - Evening (or) Night markets -
 Nalansedi - day time markets.