

Materialistic Milieu of the People of Ahar and Adjacent Chalcolithic Culture: A Reappraisal

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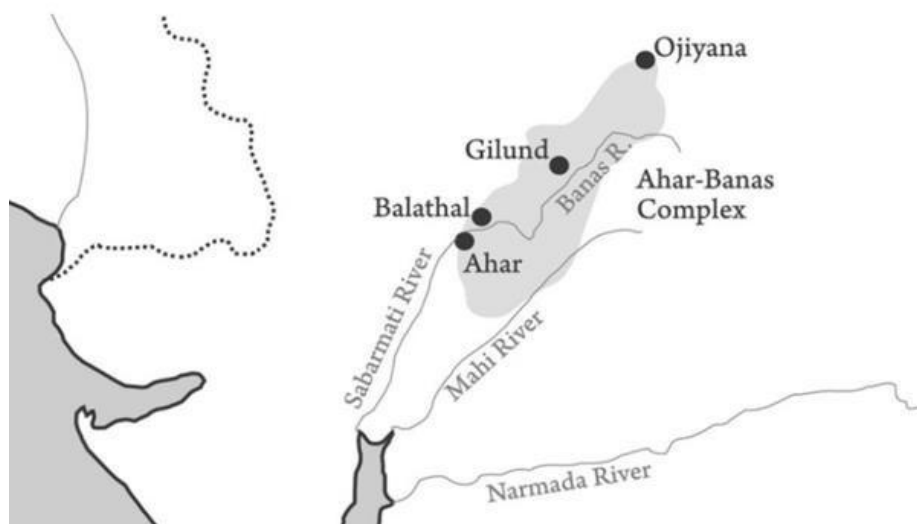
Abstract:

The end of the neolithic phase marks the end of the stone age and the beginning of the Protohistoric period, a period which is characterized by the use of chalcolithic weapons, the tools were made of copper in addition of lithic (Stone). The term chalcolithic is a combination of two words word chalco (copper) and lithic means (stone) was derived from the Greek language. .In general the Neolithic/Chalcolithic phase in the Indian subcontinent was characterized by sedentary settlements, domesticated plants and animals, Ground and chipped stone industry with a microlithic component, restricted use of copper technology, hand-made and wheel-made plain and painted pottery and also Black-and-Red ware, a mixed subsistence based on farming, stock raising and limited hunting and gathering. The chalcolithic culture was rural. People lived generally in mud houses which were plastered with cow dung. There walls of these houses were found, which were made with mud or mud bricks in villages. They were farmers and cultivated land and domesticated animals. Their economy was based on agriculture. The main crops of the chalcolithic age was wheat and barley. The people used to cultivate gram, lentil, green- gram, urad, wheat and barley. The people of Ahar culture domesticated the cattle, buffalo, sheep, Cow, goat and dog. They hunted animals like barasingha (swamp deer) fowl, deer, and caught fish, turtle and birds. The main tools and weapons of this early farming communities of chalcolithic culture was stone tools such as polished stone axe, blade, flakes and they also used copper or low grade bronze. The people of Ahar and adjacent chalcolithic, mostly used stone and copper objects but they also used low grade bronze and iron. A Khetri mine was located in the Ahar region of Rajasthan. The copper is the characteristic feature of Ahar Culture and adjacent region of chalcolithic age .The people of Ahar were related to rural farming communities.

Keywords: Chalcolithic, Ahar, Materialistic, Houses, Metals, Domesticated, Tools and Weapons, Agriculture, Ornaments.

Introduction

. The Chalcolithic period in India, spanning from 3000 BCE to 1500 BCE, marks a significant transitional phase in the development of human civilization from simple agrarian communities to more complex, organized societies .(D.P. Agrawal & J.S. Kharakwal; Bronze and Iron age in South Asia,pp.139).¹ The prominent Chalcolithic cultures of the Indian subcontinent, was the Ahar Culture, also referred to as the Ahar-Banas Culture in southeastern Rajasthan. . Named after the type-site of Ahar, this culture flourished in the river valleys of the Banas, Berach, and their tributaries.



Map related to river complex pattern of Ahar culture (Shown in Map)

The Ahar culture, flourishing in the south-eastern region of Rajasthan India, characterized by its distinctive black- and red ware pottery, fortified settlements, and use of copper tools. The Ahar culture offers valuable insights into the socio-economic dynamics of prehistoric communities in the Indian subcontinent.³

Major Sites- Ahar Culture

- **Major Sites-**
- I. Ahar,
- II. Balathal,
- III. Gilund,
- IV. Ojiyana etc.



The Ahar or Ahar-Banas Culture (c. 3000–1500 BCE), located in south-eastern Rajasthan, shows a well-developed Chalcolithic settlement pattern related to an economic base. This study investigates the Materialistic culture of the people of Ahar, focusing on their agricultural practices, craft specialization, trade networks, and resource utilization as evidenced from excavated materials at key sites such as Ahar, Gilund, and Balathal. The Ahar Culture represents a significant Chalcolithic culture in the Indian subcontinent. The economy of this culture reveals a blend of early agrarian systems, craft industries, and limited but vital trade contacts. Copper artifacts, slag heaps, and furnaces indicate a well-developed knowledge of metallurgy, positioning Ahar as a crucial node in early copper exploitation and possibly in wider trade networks (Agrawal, 1982; Tripathi, 1976). Furthermore, the discovery of semi-precious stone beads, terracotta figurines, and specialized ceramic types points toward craft

specialization and exchange activities.⁴

The economic life of the Ahar people was remarkably advanced for its time, reflecting a balanced combination of agriculture, animal husbandry, metallurgy, and craft production.⁵ The strategic geographical location, coupled with access to copper resources in the nearby Aravalli Hills, played a critical role in shaping the economic foundation of Ahar settlements. Archaeological excavations at major sites such as Ahar, Gilund, and Balathal have unearthed valuable data on agricultural practices, storage systems, tools, pottery, and trade goods, shedding light on the everyday lives and subsistence strategies of the people.

At Ahar, remains of stone-and-mud houses have been noticed in excavation. The architecture was very simple, consisting of rectangular and circular mud floors plastered with cow-dung and lime.⁶ At ahar sites, some houses found rectangular 2 oven (Hearths) (Roy, Kumkum. (2010). *Insights into Early Societies: The Chalcolithic Age*. pp.24-28).

The people of this culture used different types of clay pots made on the wheel.

The pottery tradition with bright red projection of thick mold, thin red pot tradition, hot colour pot tradition on which orange colour paste is found, white painted black –red pot tradition etc. red painted buff ware (Ratnagar 1981 : 202).

At the Kitchen, vessels were noticed a type of buff wash but sometimes the colour varies from yellowish to pinkish come under the copper stone culture of Ahar. Kitchens, made of stone with open courtyards and living rooms whereas phase The chalcolithic site of Ojijana has reported some domestic and public architecture. The domestic architecture consists of multi chambered house complexes yielded wattle and daub structures (Meena, B.R. 2000. Recent Excavations in Rajasthan. Archaeological Survey of India, Jaipur Circle). A clay bin was found underground in ahar house in the northwestern corner of the walls. And it is noticed over seal impressions. These impressions on seals were made from round and rectilinear and the found designs are geometric.⁷ storage pits, floors, storage The materialistic life of Ahar culture is mainly known from the remains obtained from the excavation sites as Balathal, Ahar (Sankalia et al 1969 : 194) Gilund.⁸ The settlement of this culture ranges from small hamlets of 0.8 to 1.6 hectares in area to large villages like Ahar, Gilund and Balathal⁹ sprawling over an area of 4 hectares platforms and double Chulhas. This type of granary has also been found in the fortified enclosure at Balathal. Granaries have been identified at Gilund and Inamgaon. The one found at Gilund is a large 15 m X 12 m structure made of parallel walls of mud-bricks (Shinde & Possehl 2005: 297). Five parallel walls placed at a distance of 1.5 m from each other have been plastered from inner and outer faces. It is that the place between the two walls was used for storage purposes. At Balathal we have evidence of planned settlement, granaries, stone, brick and mud brick structures and introduction of new pottery types in Balathal Phase.¹⁰ *This phase witnessed* a remarkable prosperity In fact, the Balathalians knew the technique of erecting brick and stone structures. The Chalcolithic people lived normally in thatched huts with walls made of split bamboos plastered with mud. At Gilund (Rajasthan) and Nagda (Malwa), there is also some evidence of the use of mud-bricks. The domestic animals of this culture were bulls, sheep, goats, pigs etc. Wild animals like deer, cheetah, nilgai, rabbit, wild boar etc. were hunted and their meat was eaten. The people of this culture also did Agriculture, their food grains were barley, wheat, paddy, gram and green gram, peas and lentils. The people

of this culture used most of the hammered tools among which axes, flat axes, wheels, rings, sticks, bangles are noticed .¹¹

The presence of road in Gilund and streets and lanes in Balathal dividing the settlement into blocks also shows the proto-urban level of settlement management the site of Gilund have also yielded Archeo-faunal evidence (Shinde et al., 2014) including tiger and wild boar thus the circumference wall may also have protected the settlements from such wild animals. The lime plaster was found profusely at Gilund on the floor and walls.

Extension:

The chalcolithic cultures of India divided into six regional groups: (1) The Ahar- Banas Chalcolithic Culture (2600 B.C -1900 B.C). (2) Kayatha- Chalcolithic Culture of Madhya Pradesh (2400-B.C.-2000 B.C). (3) Jorwe -Northern Deccan Chalcolithic Culture (1400 B.C. - 700 B.C). (4) The Neolithic-Chalcolithic Culture of the Deccan, (5) Chalcolithic Culture of Gangetic Doab and (6) Eastern Chalcolithic Culture. The main excavated sites Ahar, Bagor and Gilund of the Banas Culture; Kayatha, Maheshwar, Navdatoli, Nagda, Avara, Menotti and Eran of Madhya Pradesh; Chandoli, Jorwe, Nevasa, Inamgaon and Nasik of Northern Maharashtra; Bahadradab, Ambkheri, Hatnapur and Atranjikhera in the Gangetic Doab; and Chirand of the East give a fairly good picture of Chalcolithic India. In this Paper we will discuss about the Materialistic milieu of the chalcolithic sites of Ahar and adjacent region. Such as- Ahar, Balathal, Gilund and Ojiyana.



Map Related To Chalcolithic Cultures Courtesy A.SI.

The key features of this culture include red pottery, generally with impression matt surface bearing with Black paint

Table related to Ahar and Adjacent Chalcolithic Culture:

Ahar and Adjacent regions Chalcolithic Cultures	Significance
Ahar – Banas culture	Ahar Banas culture sites in Rajasthan included Ahar, Balathal, Gilund, Ojiyana and others near the Banas River.
Balathal (1962-63)- V.N. Mishra	The houses were made type of and rectangular and square type, which was made of mud bricks and stone. Stone objects like Saddle querns, Mullers, Rubber stones, Hammer stones, and copper objects

	including- Razor, Chopper, Knives, Chisels and tanged arrowheads. It is noticed that the people was agricultural and herding animals.
Ojiyana (1999-2001)-B. R. Meena and Alok Tripathi	Terracotta bulls, white-painted and stylized, termed "Ojiyana bulls," Terracotta cow figurines; a copper chopper, Harappan type faïence, and various beads were discovered. Ornaments included copper and shell bangles, copper rings, and pendants. Agricultural tools like saddle querns and hammer-stones were also unearthed.
Gilund (1959-60)- B.B. Lal	The features of the Pottery of Gilund is Black and Red Ware, Painted with black linear and curvilinear design and ceramic white pigments, included with plain and painted, black, burnished grey, and red grey ware. The vessels included - Bowls and dishes grey ware. Houses were made with mud brick. The walls being plastered with mud. The houses are noticed with circular clay lined ovens and open mouthed Chulhas The Terracotta figurines in which bull figurines with hump and long horns was noticed most prominent.
Panchmata (2015)-A.S.I Mewar region.	Artifacts included Perforated jar, Shell bangles, Terracotta beads, Shells and the semi-precious stones like Lapis lazuli different type of Pottery and two hearts has been noticed.

Major Sites- Ahar Culture

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This study aims to analyze the Materialistic Milieu of the Ahar and Adjacent region people by examining available archaeological evidence. It explores the main pillars of their economy agriculture, animal husbandry, metallurgy, craft specialization, and trade and discusses how these elements contributed to the stability and longevity of Ahar settlements.

Understanding the Economic base of this culture not only provides insights into their way of life but also contributes to the broader understanding of Chalcolithic economies in the Indian subcontinent.

Review of Literature:

The area under present study is very rich in archaeological wealth. Exploration and Excavation of various objects of early farming communities are tools, weapons, crops, pottery, ornaments, stone, house, and archaeological sites of Chalcolithic sites is, Rajasthan included such as Ahar, Panchmata, Balathal, Gilund and Ojiyana.

Review of related literature is essential for a research study as it provides solid rationale for generating theories, formulating hypothesis, selecting subjects, sources of historical facts and finding the conclusions. In the compilation of this thesis, which is the first of its kind on such a scale, a number of original texts have been used. Moreover, the researcher have made full and extensive use of the works, considered as standard, in the complitation of the thesis, which is the first of its kind.

Various works have been carried out by renowned scholars on this region. Here are some the published research papers and reports related to finding of this region:

Long back in 1971 D.P. Agrawal who worked on the topic “The Copper Bronze Age in India” which Informed us about the origin of metals, which took the change in human being life. In the role of agriculture metal tools make farming very easy, which increase production. The people of chalcolithic knew about metallurgy. He has published work on Indian archaeology, metallurgy, the history of science and Palaeo-climate. Amongst 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 essentials for farming. They worked on agriculture with domestication of animals of Chalcolithic culture. 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”. B.B. Lal carried out work on “Exploration and Excavation: Archaeology in India”. D.P .Agrawal wrote work on “chalcolithic culture and technology in India. D .H. Gordon did work on “The Early Use of Metals in India and Pakistan”. M .K. Dhavalikar wrote on “Indian Protohistory”. J.S.Kharakwal and D.P. Agrawala carried out work on “ Bronze and Iron Age in South Asia”. R. Hooja & Vijay Kumar carried out work on “Aspects of the early copper Age in South Asia”. Indian Archaeology : A Review (1954-55 : 14-15,1955-56,57-58,59-6-,61-63,67-68,1997-98. J.S. Kharkwal., V.N. Mishra, L. Pandey, L .C. Patel and J. Purohit did worked on “ Balathal : The oldest village of Mewar”. A. Tripathi & B.R. Meena worked on “Recent excavations in Rajasthan “. V.N. Mishra wrote about “ Pre and Protohistory of the Berach Basin “ was also a pioneering work on Chalcolithic Cultures of Ahar and adjacent culture.

It must be noted that all the work carried out by the renowned Archaeologists and Scholars either belong to one region or one farming communities, however, no integrated work has been taken cumulative, to cover the all farming communities of India since agriculture work started in India, “My Research paper” cover Materialistic milieu of the people of Ahar

and adjacent chalcolithic culture and sincere efforts have been made to cover the initial stages of the of Ahar chalcolithic culture.

Study Area:

The present research work focuses on the north part of “Materialistic Milieu of the People of Chalcolithic Culture of India in ancient time is the study area for research work which is based on the Ahar chalcolithic, tools, crops, houses, metal, bone, pottery of prehistory material.

Objectives of Research:

- To get acquainted with ancient human activities and their living of Ahar culture.
- To know about ancient material culture of Ahar sites.
- To get information of early farming community and Origin of agriculture in Ahar (Rajasthan) Site.
- To know about the settlement Pattern of human being.
- To get information about material tools and ornaments.
- To know about origin and development of the human being.
- To identify the finished product manufacturing at the sites and to determine the source of raw material of the culture.

Methodology:

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

The study is based on archaeological sources.

The study includes the tools in museum to get better information about the development of human being, agriculture, material etc.

The study includes a deep knowledge of excavated reports, research paper related to the farming

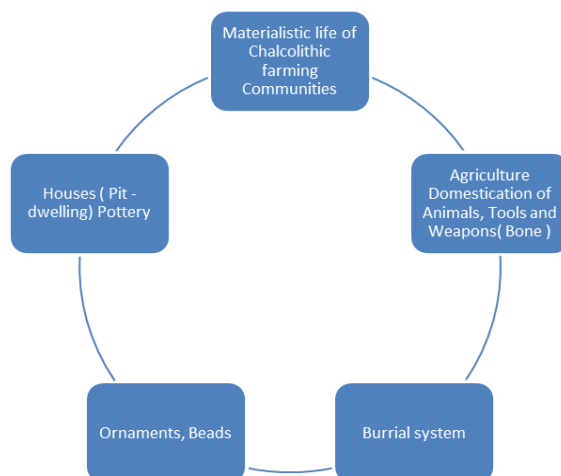
communities.

- The study will include the excavated materials to get better understanding about the sites.
- Comparative study method of materialistic culture of Ahar sites include adopted for better understanding.
- The information of northern region will be studied with the help of map.

Materialistic Milieu of the People of Ahar and adjacent Chalcolithic Culture:

The Origin and development of agriculture and pastoralism in South Asia, Rajasthan (Ahar) that have taken place over the course of more than. with the technological developments of Materialistic milieu of the people of Ahar and adjacent chalcolithic culture 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.



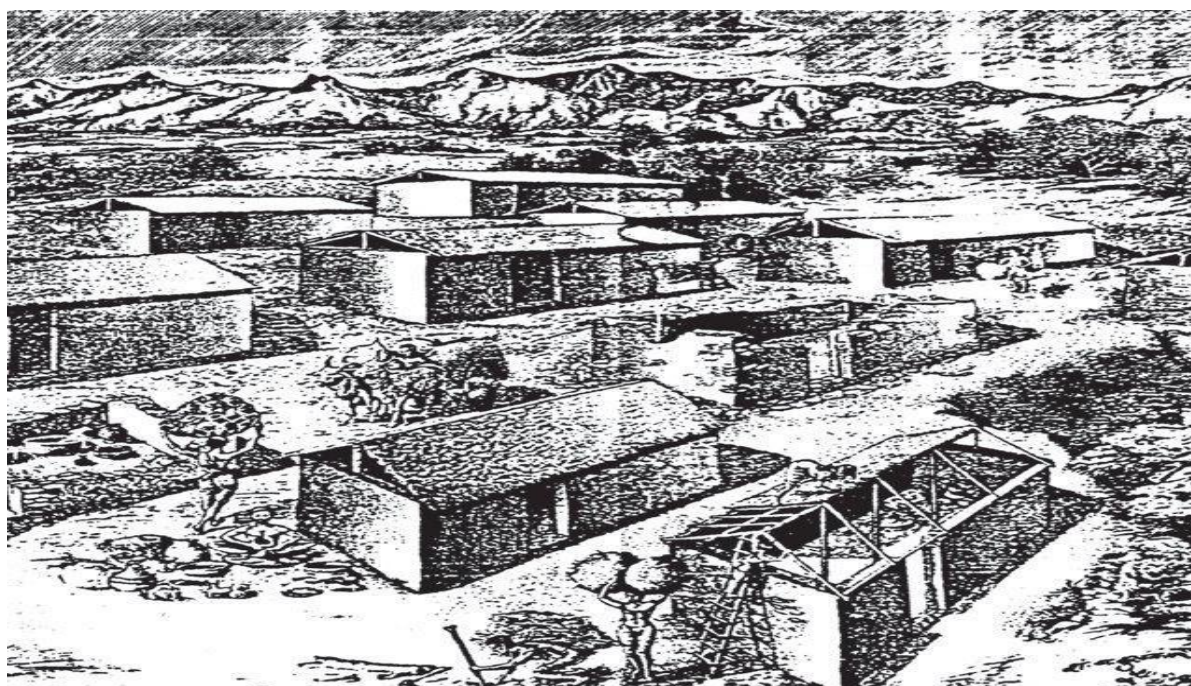
Houses:

The houses of the early farming communities of chalcolithic culture were located near the rivers or fertile land, because this culture was rural and it was based on farming. The houses of the agricultural communities of chalcolithic culture were noticed in form of rectangular or circular in shape. The Chalcolithic people lived normally in thatched huts with walls made of split bamboos plastered with mud. At Gilund (Rajasthan) there is also some Evidence of the use of mud-bricks. In every houses having single or multiple rooms Chalcolithic house floors, walls and sides and bottoms of silos were plastered with lime, mainly to keep away insects. This indicates its manufacture and use by the Chalcolithic people. Ahar houses included small courtyards which was used for cooking, storage, and for other work.¹²). The houses were built with material like as- made of mud, wattle and daub, stones, mud bricks or burnt bricks, plastered thatched roofs.¹⁴ At Ahar, remains of stone- and-mud houses have been noticed in excavation. The architecture was very simple, consisting of rectangular and circular mud floors plastered with cow-dung and lime¹⁵



Image created related Mud houses from Ahar site.

In the western part of Balathal. The house-floors at Ahar were prepared by river gravels mixed with clay, over these floors probably huts of wattle-and-daub were raised, as indicated by burnt clods of mud. At ahar sites, some houses found rectangular 2 oven (Hearths).¹⁶ The chalcolithic site Ojijana has reported some domestic and public architecture. The domestic architecture consists of multi chambered house complexes made of stone with kitchens, open courtyards and living rooms whereas phase yielded wattle and daub structures (Meena, B.R. 2000. Recent Excavations in Rajasthan. Archaeological Survey of India, Jaipur Circle). A clay bin was found underground in ahar house in the northwestern corner of the walls. And it is noticed over seal impressions. These impressions on seals were made from round and rectilinear and the found designs are geometric.¹⁷



Ahar Culture houses structure, courtesy by H.D.Sankalia

Agriculture:

The beginning of Early Farming communities was different from region to region.). South –Asian subcontinent has all the favorable ecological conditions necessary to give rise to the early farming communities, referred to as Chalcolithic. Similar development slightly later was witnessed in parts of western India, southeast Rajasthan in the Banas River basin .The Ahar people cultivated a number of plants as noticed by the carbonised grains from excavation at Balathal e.g., wheat (*Triticum cf aestivum* Linn), rice (*Oryza sativa* Linn.), Barley (*Hordeum vulgare* Linn.) Panicum millet (*Panicum* sp.) Setaria sp., Green gram (*Vigna radiata* (L.) Wilczek, black gram (*Vigna mungo* L.) pepper, common pea, (*Pisum arvense* Linn.) , *Trianthema* sp. *Portulaca* sp. Indian jujube (*Zizyphus jujuba* Lamark), Argemone Mexican type, Cucurbitaceae type,(*Cucumis* sp.), Wild Lady finger type (*Ablemoscheus* sp.) and Italian millet (*Setaria Italica*). The Chalcolithic people of Ahar includes Balathal and Gilund have identified a range of grew a variety of crops, including wheat, barley, rice and pulses, and oil seeds in the fertile black cotton or alluvial soils suggesting a mixed farming system.¹⁸ The economy of Early farming communities of chalcolithic age had a mixed which was based on

agriculture, hunting, animal husbandry and fishing. Agriculture was the main part of chalcolithic age. Agriculture was the main characteristics of the early farming communities of Chalcolithic age and the people grew a variety of crops, including wheat, bajra¹⁹ barley, rice, Jowar, horse –gram, lentils, urad, masur black gram, green- gram, peas and grass pea.²⁰ Food was cooked with linseed oil, the grains of which are found from along with the earlier pottery. Food processing equipment's like saddle querns and grinding stones are available in all Chalcolithic sites. By constant use the querns become hollow and curved and are hence referred to as saddle querns. Grinding stones come in different shapes: round, oblong, rectangular and so on.

The cultivation of these crops alongside the domestication of animals like cattle, sheep, and goats (Shinde, 2000) demonstrates the Ahar's reliance on both plant and animal resources for sustenance of Agriculture formed the economic backbone of Ahar settlements. Excavations at, Balathal, Ojjiyana and Gilund have revealed evidence of related it.

Irrigation and water management: Use of dams and reservoirs (e.g., at Balathal) suggests advanced water-control strategies suitable for semi-arid regions.

Domestication of Animals:

The occupation of the early farming communities of Ahar site was agricultural which depending upon animal husbandry and cultivation of grains. These people were pastoral and kept large herds of cattle (cows, goat and buffalos) and they played an important part in the life of these people.²¹ The domesticated animals are represented by humped cattle, buffalo, sheep, goat, pig and dog, whereas the wild fauna comprise elephant, gaur, nilgai, black buck, four-horned antelope, chital, sambhar, wild pig, hare, mongoose, rat, pea- fowl, fowl, tortoise, freshwater fish, painted toy-carts, wheel and painted: Cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and possibly buffaloes were domesticated for milk, meat, traction, and ritual purposes. terracotta bulls were found.²² The bones of deer and pigs identify that wild animals were hunted and used for eating.²³ The animals were domesticated for the purpose of hunting (deer, nilgai, barasingha etc.) and for dairy products (–goat, sheep, buffaloes) as-milk, buttermilk, curd etc. Their preliminary analysis has also revealed that, except dog, many of these species were consumed as indicated by the charred and cut-marked bones. Though wild life was plentiful during the Chalcolithic period, their contribution to the subsistence system of Balathalians is not much, as their bones gradually decrease in the upper levels.²⁴ It appears that cattle and sheep-goat pastoralism was probably the main occupation of the inhabitants painted toy-carts, wheel and painted terracotta bulls were found.

Food and Drink:

In the early farming communities of chalcolithic culture people were vegetarian and non-vegetarian. People of chalcolithic age were farmers. Economically the seem to have been farmers but along with it they does hunting and fishing.²⁵ The evidences of grains as -lentils, urad, moong, wheat ,rice and fruits as-watermelon muskmelon noticed from many Chalcolithic sites show that they were vegetarian. Food was cooked with linseed oil, the grains of which are found from along with the earlier pottery. The fruit ber (bor) and Amla also have been noticed from this culture.. The food was made on Chulhas or hearths, because there have been found

many hearths on every houses of Ahar. The Chulhas are quite big and they indicate that some houses had large families, and cooked two or three dishes together in equally large vessels. Maybe, they were used in ceremonial purposes at the time of big gatherings. In one house, there were Six Ovens (Chulhas) in a row. People used circular and two-armed "U"-shaped domestic hearths.²⁶ for non-vegetarian people beef was most popular food for them. For food, the people of these Chalcolithic villages largely depended upon beef and venison, to some extent on buffalo, fish and mussel-shell as known from the remains of these animals. This can be noticed that these domesticated and eaten. They domesticated animals for the purpose of milk, buttermilk and curd. Hunting of wild animals like deer, pig, nilgai and aquatic fauna like fish supported the chalcolithic communities.²⁷

Dresses and Ornaments:

The site of Balathal of Rajasthan has evidence the physical remains of woven cloth, indicating that the Chalcolithic people developed this art.²⁸ Almost every Chalcolithic site has noticed a large number of perforated discs, identified as spindle whorls. In addition to the above-mentioned craft there may also have existed technologies for making colour and medicine. People of chalcolithic culture were fond of jewellery. People of chalcolithic culture were fond of jewellery. People of chalcolithic culture were fond of jewellery which were made of different types of material. *Ornaments* as usual consisted of necklaces, ear pendants, bangles, anklets and rings. A variety of beads of shell, carnelian and paste, shell bangles were noticed at many sites of chalcolithic culture.

Figurines:

The introduction of various technologies is considered to be one of the important contributions of the Chalcolithic of the subcontinent. The material culture of the Chalcolithic society of the subcontinent was varied and rich with developed socio- economic and technological features. The presence of a developed craft specialization is an important indicator of the diverse technological milieu present. A large number of terracotta objects were manufactured and used by the Chalcolithic people for domestic and religious purposes. The domestic objects included spoons, ladles, ornaments, such as beads, Several Ahar culture sites e.g., Ahar, Gilund, Ojiyana and Balathal have yielded terracotta bull figurines (Misra et al.1993) have noticed at least three types of bull figurines; stylized naturalistic without hump ; and naturalistic with hump. They suggest that some of these figurines were probably for offerings. However, Dhavalikar (1979) people may have worn them around the neck. Few white painted bull figurines of naturalistic type with hump have also been found from Ojiyana (Meena and Tripathi) At Gilund, appears to be the production centre of such figurine s(Agrawal and Kharakwal 2003). Bangles, ear-studs, etcetera. A number of sites have yielded animal figurines, such as the bull, tortoise, a variety of birds, human (male and female) figurines and a variety of miscellaneous objects, most of which have been associated with the religious beliefs of the people.

Beads:

Semi-precious stones like carnelian and steatite were used for ornaments, pointing to specialized artisans. Beads of semi-precious stones such as agate, jasper and carnelian,

terracotta, shell and steatite and less frequently of copper. Stringing necklaces can be seen along with on their dress. *There is also a burial nearby containing the skeletons of two children wearing necklaces of beads of copper, jasper and seashell indicating their superior status in comparison to other*, as we noticed an example of copper beads round the neck of a dead child was found

Tools and weapons:

The weapons which are found from excavations of chalcolithic sites include swords, arrowheads, daggers, spearheads, axes, mace-heads, Sling balls, knives etc. Many flat axes are also found from Ahar, One of the characteristic features of the Chalcolithic subcontinent is the presence of a blade industry right from the beginning of this phase. Chalcolithic sites have a considerable number of polished stone tools. The tools consist of axes and adzes and in both cases grinding and polishing obtained the cutting edge.

Metal and Metallurgy:

A small number of gold ornaments have been reported from selected sites, including mostly beads and pendants made by foil techniques. The Chalcolithic people made bangles and beads (Fig. 6) using conch, ornaments such as beads, pendants, bangles, rings, etc. Large number of beads made of shell, terracotta, some of the Chalcolithic communities close to the source of Khetri, particularly Ganeshwar-Jodhpura were fully. Evidences regarding copper metallurgy have been found in many Chalcolithic sites Located in Northeastern Rajasthan, the Ganeshwar Jodhpur is a collection of Chalcolithic settlements having similarities in material culture, production of copper tools, and geographic proximity to copper mines is the largest copper producing community in Chalcolithic South Asia (Rizvi 2007: 1).

Copper objects:

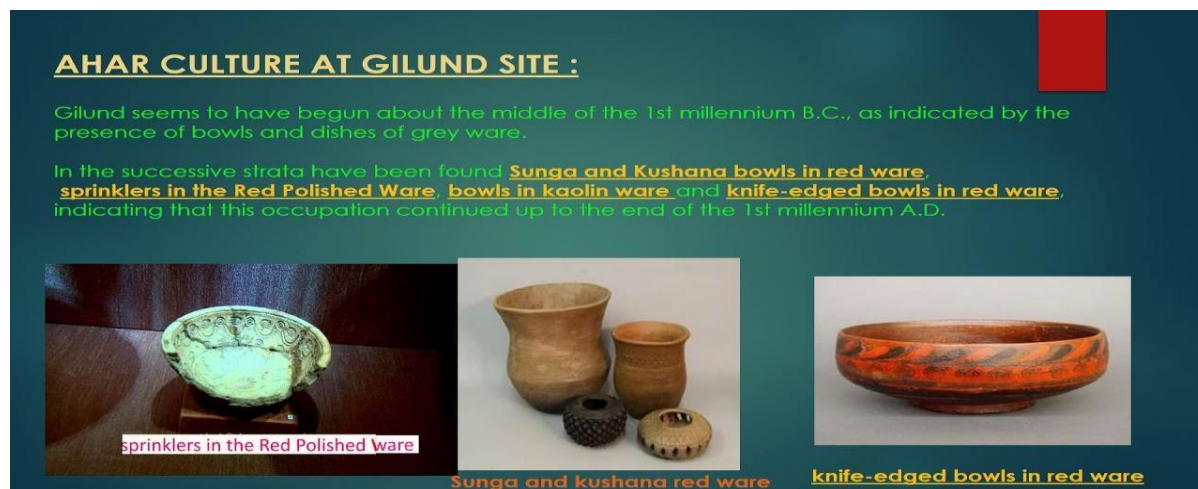
At Ahar, also known as Tambavati Nagari , five axes, one knife blade, one sheet ,a bangle and two rings were noticed. At Balathal yielded over a dozen copper –bronze objects comprising choppers, knives, razors and one specimen each of a chisel, a tanged and barbed arrowhead, an ear stud, a bangle, a six petalled flower like object and bits of copper.

Sources of copper: Mine (Rajasthan, Khetri) from the nearby Aravalli hills

Pottery:

There are many types and varieties of pottery used by the chachalcolithic early farming communities of north India.²⁹ The chalcolithic people used two types of pottery handmade and wheel turned pottery.³⁰ Various shades of pottery were noticed red, tan, chocolate, and orange also.³¹ Chalcolithic people made plain and painted pottery which is distinctive on account of its form and fabric and ornamentation as well. The chalcolithic culture people use different types of pottery, in which one was called black and red, and noticed in wide area Black and red painted pottery were noticed from Ahar ,Gilund ,Ojiyana and Balathal (Rajasthan) .(R.S.Sharma,pp.64.)³². It was made on wheel and occasionally painted with white linear designs. The painted pottery is fine in fabric and well baked, possibly at a high temperature. It has a red or bright orange matt surface on which was executed painted ornamentation in black pigment. The most characteristic shapes comprise a concave-sided bowl with sharp carination

and a loṭā-shaped vessel, with wide faring mouth and having a tubular spout.³³ The pottery of ahar culture was white painted black and red ware Dishes dominate bowls, small and medium size jars. The white painted black and red ware is the prominent features of Ahar culture. Balathal noticed, two different types e.g., grey and red ware are the main ware of this.



Distinctive Black-and-Red Ware (BRW) with white linear and dotted designs shows aesthetic and functional craft skills.

Trade:

The Chalcolithic Cultures do not appear to have existed isolation. The evidence furnished by the presence of beads, copper tools and gold ornaments, which were made of n local raw material, suggests that there was some sort of reciprocal exchange or trade among different communities.³³ Internally, similarity in pottery forms and fabric may indicate within a particular cultural zone, as it has been mentioned above, certain large sites such as Ahar, Kayatha, Navdatoli and inamgaon might have serve as the local points of collection and distribution of goods of both internal and external nature. There is evidence that Ahar communities were part of a wider trade network:

- **Long-distance trade:** Items such as marine shells and exotic stones suggest links with coastal and other inland cultures.
- **Exchange of copper tools and ornaments:** Copper goods may have been bartered for grains, animals, or crafts.
- **Storage practices:** Large storage jars and granaries indicate the accumulation and redistribution of surplus.

These networks enhanced economic resilience of Ahar and allowed for cultural interaction with regions like Gujarat and the Deccan.

Transport:

Evidences of transport facilities from Chalcolithic phases throughout Indian subcontinent indicate two types- transport via land and transport via water. The main vehicles of transport on land consist of simple carts drawn by bullocks, wagon vehicles; chariots, et cetera excavations have not revealed remains of parts of actual carts or any other wheeled

transport. These model carts were perhaps used by children as toys and at the same time testify to the skill of the toy makers. The earliest toy carts with or without frame have been reported from Chalcolithic time.

Religion:

The data at our disposal is too meagre to review the religious beliefs and practices of the Chalcolithic to analyse the material obtained from various sites in western people, but some scholars such as Terracotta animal figurines, particularly bull, have been reported from all the Ahar sites. A number of sites have yielded animal figurines such as the bull, tortoise, a variety of birds, human (male and female) and a variety of miscellaneous objects, most of which have been associated with the religious beliefs of the people.³⁵ The evidence suggests that there was a prevalence of the worship of bull and also of mother goddess among the people. It is based on the recovery of a large number of terracotta figurines of bull from Balathal, Ahar, Gilund and Ojijana Sites like Ojijana (Meena and Tripathi 2000: 67-73, IAR 1999-2000: 128-132). (Mohanty, et al. 2000: 132-141) yielded remains of innumerable bull figurines.³⁴ have attempted India in this respect. And Ojijana is the only site which has evidence (Heritage: Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in Archaeology 11: 2023-24) of the cow figurines (IAR 1999-2000: 130,132) perhaps it indicates that, cows were of similar importance like that of bull at this site. But in the case of Ahar and Gilund the bull figurines are more naturalistic.

Burial Pattern:

Balathal has yielded an animal and a few human burials. All these were noticed in the fortified enclosure. One of the burials (found at the base of dumping was an adult 35-40 age and buried in crouching posture) predates the cow dung dumping, whereas other human burials were noticed in the upper horizon layer 6. Whereas other human burials belong to the last phase of Ahar culture. In one of the burials two carnelian beads, on the abdomen and a copper pin placed near the right hand were found associated with Skelton. And in case of another burial a small globular pot was noticed at close to the head. It was placed in a yogic (sitting) posture.

Discussion and Conclusion:

The ongoing discussion about the Materialistic milieu of the people of Ahar and adjacent Chalcolithic culture, along with evidence from materialistic culture in Ahar and adjacent Chalcolithic culture suggests significant development through copper metal, stone tools and weapon. The materialistic life of the Chalcolithic culture underscores a transformative Age in human history, where technological innovation, resource utilization, and societal organization reached new heights. All the Chalcolithic culture that existed in India was non – urban. But they show a lot of progress and improvement as compared to the earlier Neolithic cultures. Chalcolithic culture denotes materialistic milieu of the people of Ahar and adjacent Chalcolithic culture such as- Polished copper stone tools and weapons, Domestication of animals, Pottery Black and red ware, Black on red ware and white painted on red ware (Wheel-made and Hand –made), Production in Agriculture, Ornaments, Clothes, Beads, Houses (Made of Mud houses, stone, thatched roofs, huts of wattle and daub), 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. Materialistic milieu of the

Ahar and adjacent chalcolithic culture in India was pivotal in the origin, development in the expansion of Ahar chalcolithic sites in many regions as- Ojiyana, Panchmata, Gilund, Balathal and Ojiyana. The findings from this region indicate that the Ahar chalcolithic people were skilled in technology for making metal 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 Ahar, Ojiyana and Gilund, which grows grains in the South Asian context. This study paves the way for future research into regional variations in Ahar chalcolithic community's technological traditions and comparisons with adjacent cultural practices. In conclusion, a thorough examination of Materialistic culture of artifacts within the Ahar chalcolithic 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 significance of Materialistic milieu of the people of Ahar and adjacent chalcolithic culture people of Northern India thereby broadening our comprehension of this ancient society.

In conclusion, the Ahar Culture's economic practices reflect an intelligent response to environmental challenges and available resources. Its economic foundation laid the groundwork for cultural complexity and sustained settlement, making it a significant example in the study of early Indian Chalcolithic societies. This study thus contributes to a deeper understanding of prehistoric economic systems in South Asia and highlights the adaptive ingenuity of early rural communities.

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