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THE UPPER PALEOLITHIC CULTURE OF THE NAGULERU, LOWER KRISHNA VALLEY

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ABSTRACT

The upper Paleolithic culture of the naguleru valley may be consider hasan extension of thenagarjunakonda valley cultural phase. Though the accurrence is limited to five sites in the naguleru valley a detailed analysis of the aftifacts brought tolight the typo technological features of the culture as can see the five sites are distributed in different Geo-Eco settings. On typological basis it can be seen that typologically all those forms available in France can not be obtained in the naguleru valley. The situation is not much different from another upper Paleolithic sites in India. Flake - Blade tradition and blade tool tradition appear to be common in the naguleru valley andat nagarjuna Konda. Similarly industries were reported from the renugunta region of the swarnamukhi valley on typo technological grounds the industries compared with the perigordian culture and the aurignacian culture of the france. Entities indicate that the rock medium is a fine grained variety of quartzite in grey and brown colours.

THE UPPER PALAEOLITHIC CULTURE

In the Naguleru valley industries datable to the upper palaeolithic times have been identified at five locations. They are close to Tatidona, Kachavaram, Srinagar, Bommarajupalle and Venkupalem. They are located at varying distances from the main course of the Naguleru. Venkupalem is in the upper reaches of the river while Srinagar is located not far away from the confluence of the Naguleruv with the river Krishna. Bommarajupalle and Kachvaram are located in the middle reaches of the river. It is observed that the density of the Upper palaeolithic locationsis far less when compared to the Lower Palaeolithic locations.Also we have no sites representing the transitional stages between the Middle Paleolithic and the Upper Palaeolithic. Geographically Upper Palaeolithic sites located in the upstream area lie not far away from the contemporary culture sites of the Gundlakamma to the south and Yerragondapalem, another Upper Palaeolithic site to the west. Similarly sites located in the middle reaches and lower reaches cannot escape the cultural impact from the Nagarjuna Konda. Thus in the present context the Upper Palaeolithic sites of the Naguleruv valley were probably under the influence of the Gundlakamma and Ngarjuna Konda.

In the area under investigation sites huge aftefact densitt have not been encountered. Even where they are picked up the aftefact yield is not much. Hence none of the Upper Palaeolithic sites of the Naguleru valley can be considered to be primary sites or sites of long duration occupation.

Among the artefacts recovered at five locations there is a general domination of blade and flake elements and show that some of the typical are not properly represented. They are not many evidences to hypothesise the local evolution of the Upper palaeolithic Industries.

PERCENTAGE REPRESENTATION OF AFTEFACT TYPES IN THE UPPER PALAEOLITHIC SITES

	TID	KCV	SNR	BRP	VKP
Parallel sided Blades	15.48	10.56	9.48	9.00	27.16
Rethouched Blades	6.63	5.93	5.10	6.43	15.95
Nothecd Blades	4.42	3.52	2.91	5.14	3.39
Denticulates	3.53	1.40	1.09	3.21	2.54
Pen Knives	2.65	2.81	2.18	1.92	2.03
Simple Points	6.19	5.63	6.56	5.78	2.71
Tanged Points	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.28	0.50
Lavallois Points	1.76	1.05	2.18	2.57	3.04
Borers	5.30	3.87	4.37	3.53	1.69
Burines	3.53	3.52	5.10	3.21	2.71
Scrapers	7.96	7.39	9.48	7.07	3.90
Retouched Flakes	9.29	10.56	11.67	12.86	7.13
Notched Flakes	3.53	4.22	3.64	4.18	1.69
Denticulates Flakes	0.00	4.92	2.18	1.92	2.37
Elura	2.21	3.16	2.91	3.85	2.37
Miniature Handaxes	0.00	0.70	1.09	0.00	1.17
Blade Cores	2.65	3.87	2.91	3.85	2.37
Lavallois Cores	1.76	2.11	2.18	3.53	1.35
Amaphorus Cores	7.07	5.63	8.02	7.07	6.79
Levallois flakes	5.30	4.57	4.37	4.50	2.03
Amaphorus Flakes	10.61	14.78	12.40	9.00	7.30
	99.87	99.90	99.82	99.90	99.83

TID : THATIDONA

BRP : BOMMARAJU PALEM

KCV : KACHAVARAM

VKP : VENKU PALEM

SNR : SRINAGAR

TYPO-IEC HNOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

The industries included in general, parallel sided blades, retouched blades and no touched blades and notched blades under the category of blade element. They have been drawn from cylindrical cores and occasionally retain a patches of cortex on their dorsal surfaces. On general look most of them appear parallel sided. In a few cases the distal ends were nipped off. A few specimens show a slight taper of the side margins towards the distal end. On the dorsal surfaces usually a single longitudinal ridge is present. However some of the examples of blade blanks and retouched blades from Venkupalem posses to flake ridges on their dorsal surfaces. Retouched flakes in most of the cases possess sign of retouch on a single margin but a few specimens from Vnkupalem and Bommarajupalle posses such signs on both the margins. A few specimens from Venkupalem show blunting of one of side margins in the case of retouched and notched blades. It is interesting that on a few specimens from Kachavaram, Bommarajupalle and Vekupalem signs of use damage are to be seen on the retouched blades. The notched blades from all the locations posses only one notch on one of the side margins of the blades. the notch on one of the side margins of the blades. The notch is obtained by careful retouch.

All the localities denticulates occur in considerable numbers. These serrated equipment are meant for cutting purposes. Most of the denticulate blades and flakes have thick backs convenient for hafted. By far Bommarajupalle and Venkupalem yielded a good number of them compared to the other localities.

Pen knives are also recovered at all the Upper Palaeolithic locations. Some of them are made on flake as well. The flake made knives are available at Venkupalem. The rest of the specimens under this category fall under blade made variety.

A variety of points are identified at the various locations. They included simple points, tanged points and a Levallois points. It is observed that the tanged points occurred only at Bommarajupalle and Venkupalem and that to in small numbers. There is a clear domination of simple points and Levallois points at Venkupalem. Within the category of points it must be noted that simple points dominated.

Simple points constituted points made on flake blanks. The craftsmen have chosen triangular and leaf shaped flake blanks for the preparation of simple points. Close to the working end signs of retouch are available on both the side margins. Some of the examples from Bommarajupalle and Venkupalem show incipient tang. Levallois points are again leaf shaped flake made points. It must be noted that there are no points made on blade blanks.

In the present industries borers made on flakes and blade blanks occur at all the sites in varying densities. Close to the working end unimarginal or bimarginal retouch is given to produce the pointed borer tip.

Though occurring in small numbers burins are available at all the localities. In large number of cases they are modeled on fluted cores. The burin facet in all the cases is only one on each specimen excepting a couple of examples from Venkupalem. These two burins at Venkupalem have two burin spalls. In the present association specimens of organic nature have not survived and therefore the activity with which the burins were associated remains a bold conjecture.

Scrapers of a variety are available at all the Upper Palaeolithic locations. End scrapers are represented in considerable number at Venkupalem and Srinagar. At all other locations scrapers constituted the side scraper variety.

In the association of the above artefacts a large number of retouched flakes are recovered. Also a few flakes with prominent notches are present at all locations. Some of the flakes tools approximate themselves to the denticulate variety. Such denticulated flakes are absent at Tatidona. The above artefacts indicate a clear domination by flake and blade blank categories.

In the Upper Palaeolithic industries of the Naguleru a few dumpy lunates are recovered at all the five locations. These look like lunates but fall short of a technical excellence achieved during the Mesolithic phase. These were termed as Elura (Allchin, B 1958). All the specimens are made on irregular blade blanks and flake blanks. In most of the cases they are made on end bits. The flake ridges do not run parallel to the chords. The arcs are irregular. In certain cases they give the appearance of bulb-tipped blades. The presence of these dumpy lunates anticipates the coming Mesolithic age.

In the above association small numbers of miniature hand axes are recovered at Kachavariam, Srinagar and Venkupalem. These were fabricated on thick flakes and small nodules and do not conform themselves to the shapes of the regular handaxes of the preceding cultural phases.

Blade cores are an essential component in the blade flake tradition of the Upper Palaeolithic. These occur at all the sites under investigation. In most of the cases they are cylindrical cores. The blade scars usually do not run all along the platform with the result that some of them retain patches of cortex across a few portions of the body. As has been already stated some of the blade cores were converted into burins.

Levallois cores and Levallois flakes occur at all the Upper Palaeolithic locations in the area. The flakes possess clear cut remnants of the faceted platform close to the proximal side. They occur in almost all the shapes, though the pointed variety dominates. On detachment of the flakes, the Levallois cores retain triangular or broad ended flake scars on them.

A large number of amorphous flakes and cores occur at all the locations. The flakes do not show signs of utilization or retouch. The corresponding cores are irregular in their shape.

In the association of above artefacts small flake bits and wasted nodules also occur along with untrimmed cores. They are considered to be the usual component where tool making was in practice.

Conclusion

The Upper palaeolithic industries of the Naguleru valley thus appeared to be biased to the flake blade tradition. As such the industries do not show all the type components expected of atypical Upper Palaeolithic culture. This is perhaps because the industries themselves in the area of our investigation were at the beginning stage and the sites were deserted soon after. If a comparison is to be established between the present industries and those of Europe, probably perigordian industry of France as good similarities with the present industries. The other evolutionary stages of France like Aurignacian etc, do not find a parallel here. Also the present industries fall short of subtypes of blade tools when compared to the industry at Yerragondapalem in the immediate vicinity to the west.

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