CHAPTER IV

MESOLITHIC CULTURE

Environment

In the plain, arid region of the Mañjra-Karanja valleys characterised by rolling landscape, scrub vegetation, the mesolithic sites are located on the fine compact sticky blackish brown soil on the high levelled ground plateau or at the foot and rarely on low levelled ground. This kind of environment of the region would have been favourable for mesolithic people for occupation in the region. During the mesolithic period as suggested by N.D. Sankalia (1969: p. 41) from the chemical test of the soil from pre-neolithic horizon in Kupgal carried out by Nijumdar, C.G., the climatic condition of the region was damper or wet. Further he presumes that the mesolithic people might have lived during this period or came to exist after this damp phase and that would be rather a new environmental feature for them.
Rock Material

Mesolithic implements are produced on the siliceous rocks such as chert, jasper, chalcedony, milky quartz, etc. The implements of the region are predominantly prepared on milky quartz, chert, chalcedony, jasper and rarely on carnelian, agate etc. The availability of required rock material in the region is already referred to in Chapter I, Part I, at the appropriate place.

Tool Types and Their Characteristics
(Plate No. 3, Figure Nos. IV & IV a)

The tools of the assemblage may be distinguished into cores i.e., fluted cores, bladish cores; scrapers of varied types, parallel sided blades and flakes; irregular blades; varieties of points; lunates and trapezes, backed blades, hollow scraper, crescent etc. The tools collected from the factory sites in the river valleys is shown in table No. 4. A brief description of the select tool types and their characteristics is given below.
6. **Fluted Core**

1. **From Wamsarpalli**: A thick roughly cylindrical fluted core, with obliquely cut base. Has faceted striking platform; more than six parallel sided fluting marks. Agate. *(Fig. IV, No. 1).* Comparable to a core of Vemula Industry *(Chirra Reddy, K., 1970; Fig. 3, No. 9, p. 231).*

2. **From Ramaswara Timadi**: Roughly cylindrical fluted core with curved base. Has faceted striking platform; more than four parallel flutings. Carnelian.

3. **From Chintakiri-I**: A flat based roughly cylindrical fluted core. Has faceted striking platform and plain at the other. Jasper. Analogous to Vemula Industry. *(Fig. 3, No. 10, p. 231).*

4. **From Ramaswara Timadi**: Roughly cylindrical chisel-shaped fluted core. Has faceted striking platform and pointed at the base, parallel sided fluting marks. Quartz.

5. **From Ramaswara Timadi**: A flat bladish core. Has faceted striking platform, more than four parallel flutings on the ventral surface. Cortex retained dorsal surface. Milky quartz.
6. From Wannarpalli: A thick small parallel sided bluish core. Has flat platform at the one end, minute flake scar marks at the ventral flat surface and more than two flutings on one of the steep slopy sides, trace of indistinct retouch marks from ventral surface at the sides. Chert. (Fig. IV, No. 10).

7. From Nungnali: A parallel sided bluish core. Has plain ventral surface, more than two parallel sided flutings on the other surface. White chalcedony.

8. Scrapers

9. From Balkoni: A thick bluish flake. Has faceted striking platform. Has retouched marks along half the periphery; bold ridge with slopy sides on the dorsal partially. Chert.

9. From Tegampur: A flake. Has faceted platform, flake scar on the ventral; secondary retouch marks from ventral confined to the distal end; irregular flutings on the dorsal. Variegated Chert. (Fig. IV, No. 4).
C. **Hollow Scrapers**

10. From Tegampur: A short hollow scraper. Has arc-like deep notch mark on the hollow margin and plain surfaces. Milky quartz. (Fig. IV a, No. 14).

D. **Bladeish flakes**

11. From Namévarra Tidari: A thick elongated bluish flake having bulb of percussion on the ventral. Has faceted platform at the distal end and flutings on the dorsal surface. Also has flutings across from one margin on the dorsal. Cortex retained partially. Variegated Chert. (Fig. IV, No. 3).

12. From Namévarra Tidari: A thick elongated roughly oval shaped flake with flake scar on the bulb. Has faceted platform at the distal end, irregular flutings on the dorsal, traces of chipplings at the margins. White chalcedony. (Fig. IV, No. 2).

13. From Namévarra Tidari: An elongated roughly parallel sided bluish flake. Has faceted narrow platform at the distal end; an indistinct secondary retouch marks confined to lateral and transverse side on the dorsal;
fluted marks with slopy sides. Jasper. (Fig. IV, No. 5).

E. Blades

14. From Belkonli: An irregular bladish flake. Has thick faceted platform, prominent bulb of percussion with flake scar on the ventral surface and traces of retouch marks from the ventral and also from the dorsal at the sides; fine irregular ripples on the sloppy sides of the ridge on the dorsal surface. Milky quartz. (Fig. IV, No. 9).

15. From Ramesvara Tikkili: An elongated bladelet. Has nipped bulb of percussion with flake scar on the ventral, traces of notches vertically confined to the lateral margins and steep retouch marks at the transverse end, parallel fluting mark with slopy sides on the dorsal surface. Chalcedony. (Fig. IV, No. 7).

16. From Wannarpalli: A parallel sided blade. The faceted platform at the base, plain ventral, traces of retouch marks confined to the margin, fluted marks on the dorsal. Chert.
17. From Tegnapur: A thick broken parallel sided blade. Has prominent bulb of percussion with flake scar marks on the ventral at the base, prominent midrib roughly at the centre on the dorsal surface, retouch marks within a deep notch at the margin near bulbar end from the ventral on one side. Agate. (Fig. IV, No. 6).

18. From Rameswara Tikaṭi: A thin broken blade. Has faceted platform at the broken end, ridge with slopy sides on the dorsal, traces of retouch marks within a deep notch from the ventral at one margin and retouch marks from the dorsal. Agate. (Fig. IVa, No. 11). Comparable to Sanganakallu (Fig. 8, No. 547 662).

19. From Ekḷara: A fluted blade broken across. One faceted platform at the base, blunted at the thick distal end, traces of retouch marks at the margin. Milky quartz. (Fig. IV a, No. 12).

20. From Ekḷara: A thick partially obliquely retouch blade. Has faceted platform at the broken end, flutings on the dorsal, secondary retouch marks within an elongated notch at one margin near the tip; indistinct
slight retouch marks from the ventral at the other. Milky quartz. (Fig. IV a, No. 12).

F. Point-gum-Scraper on Blade

21. From Belkonji: A point-gum-scraper on a blade. Has faceted platform, bulb of percussion on the ventral. Along the distal end and at one margin from the ventral are chippings resulting into a strong short point at one side of the distal end; distinct ridge with sloppy sides on the dorsal surface. Chert chalcocite in colour. (Fig. IV, No. 2).

G. Points on Blade

22. From Tegampur: A small thick point on blade caused by double oblique strokes. Has pointed at the distal, plain ventral surface, slight retouch marks on the margin. Milky quartz. (Fig. IV a, No. 16).

22 a. From Bāmāśevara Nikādi: A thin triangular shaped sharp point on blade caused by oblique strokes. Has fluting marks on the dorsal. Milky quartz. Analogous to Navaṇa (Sankalia, H.S., et al.; 1960: Fig. 54, No. 23).
From Wamsarpalli: A thin point of triangular shape on blade. Has traces of minute retouch marks at one margin, irregular chippings at the other margin, fluted mark with oblique side on the dorsal. Milky quartz. (Fig. IV a, No. 17). Comparable to Navara (Fig. 64 No. 95).

II. Points Triangular in Section

24. From Vamsawara Tikadi: A point triangular in section. Has deeply chipped at one margin; irregular flutings on the dorsal. Carnelian. (Fig. IV a, No. 19). Comparable to Jelehalli (Goshadri, M.; 1960: Pl. XIII, No. 51, p. 99). Sangamakallu (Sankalia, H.M.; 1969: Fig. 13, No. 65 NCP).

I. Backed Points

25. From Wamsarpalli: A pointed backed blade. Has steep irregularly retouches on the margins. The point is caused by oblique cut at one side and oblique retouch at the other. Milky quartz. (Fig. IV a, No. 15). Analogous to Sangamakallu (Fig. 13, No. 52 NCP).
26. From Wannarpalli: A short broken point. Has plain ventral surface, steep retouch on the thicker margin on convex side from base to tip. The other margin is sharp. Milky quartz. (Fig. IV a, No. 23).

27. From Tegampur: An asymmetric backed point. Has straight thick margin blunted by steep retouch, a bold ridge on the dorsal, and traces of retouch on the opposite thin margin. Milky quartz. (Fig. IV a, No. 21). Analagous to Senganakallu (Fig. 8, No. 575).

28. From Ramasa–vara Mikadi: A broken crescentically backed point. Has fine steep retouch marks on the thicker margin. The other margin is sharp elongated. The sharp distal end is broken. Has fluting marks on the dorsal surface. Carnelian. (Fig. IV a, No. 20).

J. Hected Blade

29. From Wannarpalli: A thick elongated crescentically backed blade. Blunted irregularly all along the length on one margin and terminating gradually at the bulbar end, ripple marks on the ventral side and prominent midrib on the dorsal. Has glossy surface. Lime Chalcedony. (Fig. IV a, No. 18).
K. Lunate: (a) Large Lunate

30. From Wannerpalli: Rather large lunate. Has blunted arc, opposite sharp margin and broken ends. Milky quartz. (Fig. IV a, No. 25). Comparable to Kibbenahalli (Goshadri, M.: 1960: Pl. (VIII, p. 14).

(b) Short Lunate

30a. From Rameswara Tikadi: A broken short, wide lunate. Has steep blunting along the elongated arc. The chord is straight and sharp. The ends are broken. Quartz. (Fig. IV a, No. 24)

(c) Tiny Lunate

30b. From Wannerpalli: A tiny lunate. Has blunted arc with steep retouch. The chord is straight and sharp. One bold midrib on dorsal. Milky quartz.

(d) Pointed Elongated Lunate

30c. From Tegempur: A pointed elongated asymmetrical lunate. Has elongated arc, blunted by steep retouch and straight chord. One of the sharp ends is broken. Milky quartz. (Fig. IV a, 30). Analogous to Sanganakallu (Fig. 8, No. 575 BST).
6. Trapeses

31. From Tegampur: A thick trapeze. The opposite oblique ends are blunted by steep retouch. One of the sharp ends is broken. The longer margin is sharp on; thinly finished; prominent ridge with fluting mark on the dorsal. Milky quartz. (Fig. IV a, No. 27).

Comparable to Jalahalli (Seshadri, M.; 1969: Pl. XII, No. 3, p. 90), Kovas (Sankalia, H.B.; et. al., 1960: Fig. 64, No. 26) etc.

Techniques

The industry of mesolithic assemblage of Sida region is characterised by flake tools such as small scrapers of varied types made on thick bladish flakes and small flakes in less quantity, parallel sided blades, backed points, lunates of varied types, points, trapezes, hollow scrapers, fluted cores etc. They are prepared mostly on jasper, obsidian, chert, milky quartz etc. Rarely on carnelian, agate, etc. In the collection finished implements are less in number.

Generally microliths such as parallel sided blades, and bladish flakes, either thick or thin in size,
are prepared by pressure flaking method as elsewhere referred to for the mesolithic i.e., microlithic tools of Navasa (Sankalia, H.D., et al.; 1960: p. 117) etc. The other implements such as crescents of varied types, backed blades, lunates, trapezes, points are produced on blades by means of blunting and pressure retouch as detailed elsewhere for the mesolithic tools of Renigunta region (Murthy, M.M.K., 1970: p. 109) etc. The flakes such as scrapers of varied types are prepared by Levellinoïd technique as has been described in the Chapter I, Part I at the appropriate place. However, the flakes occur in almost all the mesolithic sites. There are great differences in their size as in the mesolithic tools of Renigunta region (1970: ps. 120-121) etc. The trapezes are prepared on lunates by retouching slightly at the ends of the lunates, trapezes as elsewhere referred to regarding the tools of Navasa (Sankalia, H.D., et al.; 1960: p. 132).

**General Observations**

The nature of the implements of the mesolithic assemblage without any ceramics is distinguishingly geometric and non-geometric categories. The waste
products are more in the factory sites. The tools are differentiated in accordance with the nature, shape and technological aspects. Likewise, the flakes tool such as scrapers of varied types; parallel sided blades, varieties of lunates, strong point on blades of varied types, the fluted cores are struck by pressure flaking method. The fluted cores are cylindrical, tubular in shape and a few with pointed or chisel tip. Most of the flakes have faceted platform. Sometimes the striking platforms are obliquely cut, at times cortex retained at the lower surfaces and flutings on the upper surfaces. And rarely the flutings are made at right angles to the main longer ridge. Besides they are a few amorphous cores. Blades, flakes and cores have retouch marks at the sides. The flakes such as scrapers of varied type are thicker in size and less in number among the collections. The parallel sided blades have with or without retouch marks at the sides. A few of the implements have slight retouch marks. The blades are sometimes blunted obliquely, and the points with one end tapering into point are blunted at one side or one side. Both thick and thin semi-circular crescents have the retouch marks mostly at one arc and. At times they are pointed at one end. The lunates are classified into large, short, tiny and pointed elongated categories.
Table No. 4: Distribution of Microliths collected from the Shevabja Valleys in Bider District

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<th>Name of locality</th>
<th>Scrapers</th>
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<th>Parallel</th>
<th>Lanceolate</th>
<th>Flakes</th>
<th>Blades</th>
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Fig. No. IV: Nos. 1, 10, Fluted Cores (Wannargalll); 2, 3, 5, Blade flakes (Ramayya Tikadi); 4, Scraper (Tegampur); 6, 7, 8, Blades (Tegampur, Ramayya Tikadi & Beltkoni); 8, Point-cum-scraper (Belkoni).
Fig. No. IVa: Nos. 11, 12 & 13, Blades (Ramāśvara Tikadi & Eklār);
14, Hollow scraper, 21, Asymmetrical backed point, 26, Trapeze (Tegampur); 15, Backed point (Vānmarpalli); 16 & 17, Point on blades (Ramāśvara Tikadi & Vānmarpalli); 18, Backed blade, 22, Tiny Lunate, 23, Backed point, 25, Large Lunate (Vānmarpalli); 19, Point triangular in section, 20, Backed point, 24, Short Lunate (Ramāśvara Tikadi).