

# The Neolithic Revolution: Agriculture, Lifestyle and its Consequences

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## ABSTRACT

The adoption of agriculture in the Neolithic was one of the most important events in human history. The appearance and subsequent expansion of agriculture in different areas of the planet took place approximately 10,000 to 5,000 years ago. Before that, humans used hunter-gatherer techniques to procure their livelihood. The transition to agriculture, which later led to the emergence and development of the first urban civilisation, allowed to obtain an unimaginable wealth and material prosperity for the Neolithic hunter-gatherer populations, which has caused this process to have been called the “Neolithic Revolution”. However, not all were advantages. In some cases, the adoption of agriculture and a sedentary way of life had consequences whose effects are being felt today.

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### Objective:

- Ø discuss the stage of human history which turned the progress of man from savagery to civilization;
- Ø describe the origin of agriculture and history of cereal cultivation in India;
- Ø describe the early history of animal husbandry in our country;
- Ø understand forms and production of the earliest tools and equipments of agriculture and carpentry;

**Keywords:** Agricultural transition/ Plant domestication/Irrigation/

## INTRODUCTION

The Neolithic Revolution was a process of transition from a nomadic lifestyle of hunter-gatherer communities to one of agriculture and pastoralism, as well as the start of a sedentary lifestyle. This transition took place at a varying pace in different regions of the world. It is assumed that the major proportion of the human population underwent this process in the period between 10,500 and 6,000 years ago. The Neolithic Revolution was a consequence of a transition from gathering food, which was typical of pre-agrarian societies, to food production, which is observed in agricultural societies. It was accompanied by fundamental changes, which were characteristic of the whole process, such as development of sedentary village life, growth in population, use of ground-stone tools, development of ceramics, and the emergence of new social organisation.

This process takes place between the two poles designated by ‘wild’ and ‘domestic’. The term is usually referred to as, “a sustained multi-generational, mutualistic relationship in which one organism assumes a significant degree of influence over another organism which is dependent on the scope of the influence exerted by environmental, biological and the reproduction and care of another organism in order to secure a more predictable cultural factors.

In the case of plant domestication, depending on the means used by man, the process can be divided into several stages:

- 1) Unconscious selection of plants for desirable traits, by 8,500 B.C.;
- 2) Conscious cultivation of plants with desired traits, about 10,500 years ago;
- 3) Deliberate breeding to improve traits, in the eighteenth century;

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- 4) .scientific breeding: genetic mechanisms known and exploited, at the beginning of the twentieth century, and
- 5) Direct genetic manipulation, from the twentieth to the twenty-first century.

A popular stereotype often equates domestication and taming. However, it is answer to the questions of how, where and when plant domestication, which initiated important to differentiate between the two concepts. Taming is usually defined as the the development of agriculture, was practiced by humans for the first time. In the last conditioned behavioural modification of a wild-born animal, when its natural few decades, interdisciplinary research, conducted by botanists, geographers, avoidance of humans becomes reduced and it accepts the presence of humans.

Archaeologists, anthropologists, and environmental historians have provided Domestication is a permanent genetic modification of a bred lineage that leads to an information that allows us to clear up at least some doubt on the origin of agriculture. inherited predisposition toward humans.

### **On The Origin And Adoption Of Agriculture**

It is undeniable that the appearance and expansion of agriculture during the Neolithic has had consequences of great relevance in the subsequent development of Humanity. That is why it is still necessary to inquire about its origin and the reasons that led to its adoption, issues that have given rise to numerous hypotheses.

In relation to this, Smith (1975) raised the possibility that the extinction of some animal species had been a direct consequence of their overexploitation by Paleolithic hunter-gatherers. Given the scarcity of resources, they chose to change their way of life Regarding the possibility that the transition to an agricultural mode of production had adopting agriculture as an alternative to achieve a more constant flow of food resources.

Winterhalder and Kennett share Childe's opinion, arguing that under these new that affected environmental conditions and caused an increase in temperatures that environmental circumstances, hunter-gatherers were forced to change their way of life triggered the extinction of various animal and plant species that were unable to adapt to and diet, opting for the domestication of some species that, due to their characteristics, the new conditions, although it should not be overlooked, and on all with regard to the were ideal for it. At first they would have done it on a small scale until they were able to former, the incidence of human hunting activity as one of the factors that contributed to establish a properly agricultural economy (2006: 6). Olsson (2001) is also in favor of those modifications.

The fact that the change towards an agricultural way of life was due to environmental factors that caused genetic changes in some species, making them more prone to In relation to this, Smith (1975) raised the possibility that the extinction of some animal domestication, which facilitated the change towards an agricultural production system. species had been a direct consequence of their overexploitation by Paleolithic hunter-According to Galor and Moav (2002), this change in the way of life increased the gatherers. Given the scarcity of resources, they chose to change their way of life evolutionary potential of some individuals who were concerned with developing this adopting agriculture as an alternative to achieve a more constant flow of food resources. New socioeconomic system, based on agriculture, in their respective human groups.

### **CONSEQUENCES OF ADOPTING AGRICULTURE**

The adoption of agriculture was of enormous importance for human beings, which proposals that, in a certain way, conceived Prehistory as little more than a mere produced consequences, not always positive, that conditioned its later development. One of the most obvious consequences occurred in its relationship with the environment, which was subjected to various modifications, some of them pernicious, to adapt it to human needs. Gatherers from the mainland during the Younger Dryas , approximately a thousand make various modifications that, in some respects, were traumatic. For example, greater years before the arrival by sea of the first settlers on the aforementioned island (2008:

Equality among members of hunter-gatherer groups was replaced by hierarchical social 11601). Blondel and Aronson argue that an essential characteristic of Mediterranean structures that led to notable inequalities. As a consequence, some individuals engaged environments is the profound modification to which they have been subjected for in activities unrelated to food production, which gave rise to the social division of thousands of years, as well as the introduction of foreign species whose presence had a labour that, at times, was linked to gender, which caused important changes in their negative impact on the native flora and fauna, which produced a decline of ecological Relationships. For Weisdorf (2004), the appearance of these individuals played an diversity (Zeder, 2008:11603). In its early stages, agriculture was confined to the coastal important role in the consolidation of the agricultural way of life and the sedentarization areas of the Mediterranean, to be later introduced in other areas of Europe. These of human groups. Technological consequences of the Neolithic Revolution

The development of technology was another significant consequence of the Neolithic Revolution. The appearance of large human settlements gave rise to a social group engaged in the production of tools and other goods. The growing

demand for better agricultural tools and weapons, as well as contacts among communities, enabled people to exchange their inventions, and brought about systematic development of new technologies. The Neolithic Revolution contributed to the rapid and systematic technological development of human societies. This process began with the use of river floods and the burning of forests for cultivation, constructing ever more efficient The development of technology was another significant consequence of the Neolithic tools and leading to the development of complex irrigation systems and the Revolution. The appearance of large human settlements gave rise to a social group introduction of various land management techniques.

### **Social consequences of the Neolithic Revolution**

One of the consequences brought about by the Neolithic Revolution was a surplus of food, which had an impact on the growth in the human population and an increase in the number of individual human communities. This was possible due to the introduction of a sedentary or semi-sedentary lifestyle, forced by agriculture. The transition from a nomadic lifestyle of hunter-gatherers to a sedentary lifestyle of seems that the changes induced by it were most visible in its social, medical and agriculturalists enabled people to raise more children.

The emergence of large communities meant the need for new types of leadership, which were not necessary in relatively small, egalitarian groups of hunter-gatherers. This development of governmental organisation also brought about the emergence of a social elite, whose main role consisted of making decisions and managing the community. Developing agriculture led to the formation of social classes. Those groups later specialised in the production of food, manufacture of products, and trade women in agricultural communities could raise children at two year intervals of food and craft products, as well as defence and management of the community. (Diamond 1997). One result of the phenomena initiated by the Neolithic Revolution was the The emergence of large communities meant the need for new types of leadership, establishment of the first cities and the first state structures.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Neolithic Revolution is the first in the history of the human race which, due to a Euphrates and Tigris region. Over time, they developed a technique to increase the radical change in lifestyle, allowed for a systematic development of humankind. What fertility of the soil, which yielded smaller crops due to cultivation. This was achieved is more, this revolutionary transition seems to have provided the foundations for the by means of prolonged fallow periods or by fertilisation (organic and inorganic subsequent revolutions, which mark the further stages in the development of our fertilisers). People also systematically worked on improving domesticated species of civilisation, i.e., the scientific revolution, industrial revolution, technological revolution, plants and animals through selective breeding of plants and line and cross breeding digital revolution, and nanotechnology revolution.

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