

SECTION

2

GHANAIAN
PRE-HISTORY



STATE AND KINGDOMS IN PRE-COLONIAL TIMES

Emergence of Complex Societies

Introduction

Welcome to Section 2. In this section, we will be looking at the lifestyle of the first hunters-gatherers who lived in Ghana. We will explore how these early inhabitants lived, what they ate, how they hunted, and how they adapted to their environment. We shall also explore the prehistoric period in Ghana. This will include an analysis of the phases of pre-history and the characteristics of first-farmer settlers in Ghana.

At the end of this section, you should be able to:

- Examine the nature of the earliest human culture in Ghana.
- Analyse the pre-historic periods in Ghana.

Key Ideas

- **Hunter-gatherers** were early human beings who lived in Ghana and who survived by hunting for food, gathering, and scavenging.
- **Material culture** refers to the physical objects such as stones, spears, etc. made and used by early humans in their environment.
- **Rock shelters** are shallow rock openings at the base of a cliff or bluff.
- **Prehistory** is the period in Ghana before the art of writing started.
- **Foraging** is the practice of searching for and gathering wild and edible foods.

LIFESTYLE OF THE FIRST HUNTER GATHERERS OF GHANA

Hunter-gatherer societies had a profound connection with their natural surroundings, which enabled them to practice sustainable methods of harvesting. These practices ensured that the resources they relied on, including food, were preserved for future use. They possessed intricate knowledge of animal behaviour and migration patterns, and were acutely aware of the seasonal availability of different plant species.

In Ghana, the earliest hunter-gatherers lived around 10,000 years ago. Their way of life revolved around the following key activities:

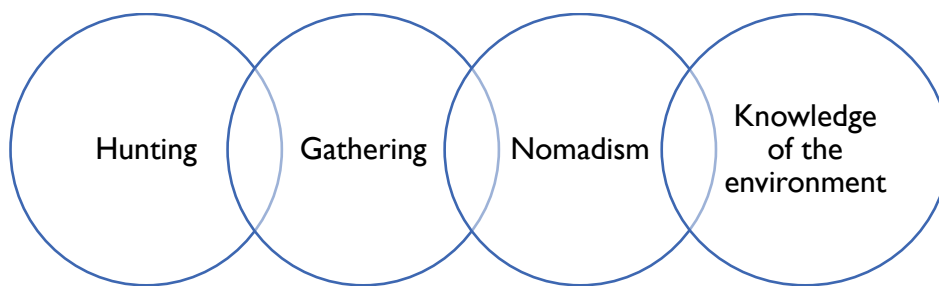


Fig. 2.1: Activities of first hunter-gatherers in Ghana

Hunting

Hunting was one of the primary economic activities of pre-colonial Ghanaians, particularly in the forest regions, where the dense vegetation made it ideal for such activities. Hunting was also prevalent in the savannah and other vegetation zones across Ghana. It was a male-dominated profession, with many men dedicating their lives to hunting. Some hunters even founded villages, many of which bear their names. For instance, the people of Adaklu-Ahunda in the Volta Region believe their town was founded by a hunter.

In the prehistoric era, Ghanaian hunters crafted tools from wood with stone heads for hunting. Stone axes, known locally as “Nyame Akuma” (God’s axe), were used to hunt animals. Other tools included Acheulian handaxes, cleavers, flake tools, blades, and microlyths. As technology advanced, so did hunting techniques, with spears and arrows replacing older methods. Not all animals were considered fit for hunting, but deer, duiker, wild buffalo, wild dogs, grass cutters, royal antelope, mongoose, chimpanzee, guinea pig, and even crocodiles were commonly hunted. Some animals were sought for their meat, while others were prized for their skins, tails, teeth, or tusks.

Gathering

In prehistoric times, Ghanaians also engaged in gathering to supplement their diet. They collected shellfish and giant snails, especially in forest areas. Women and

children played a key role in gathering tubers, fruits, and nuts from the surrounding environment, ensuring a variety of food sources beyond hunting.

Nomadism

Environmental changes, such as declining rainfall, led prehistoric Ghanaians to adopt nomadism as a survival strategy. As food sources dwindled, they migrated in search of better living conditions. Some settled near rivers to make use of water resources, while others moved to forested areas to take advantage of the animals, fruits, and nuts available there. This nomadic lifestyle allowed them to adapt to the shifting environment and find sustenance where possible.

Knowledge of the Environment

Prehistoric Ghanaians were deeply attuned to their environment and recognised the importance of sustainability. They practised environmental stewardship, ensuring that they did not deplete the natural resources they relied on. As their technological abilities advanced, they developed more sophisticated tools and techniques for hunting and gathering.

Foraging became a critical means of securing food, relying on the seasonal availability of plants and animals. However, environmental challenges such as reduced rainfall and climate change led to the drying up of rivers and the extinction of certain species. With increasing population pressure, prehistoric Ghanaians had to find innovative solutions to produce more food. This eventually led to the domestication of animals and the shift from a nomadic to a sedentary lifestyle.

Over time, they began to establish permanent settlements, starting with huts made in wattle and daub style. These small villages gradually expanded into the towns and cities we know today, such as Accra, Kumasi, Tamale, and Ho, which all began as humble village settlements.



Fig. 2.2: Pottery found at what seems to be a secondary burial site of the megalithic culture



Fig. 2.3: Prehistoric grinding stone.

Activity 2.1

Take a walk outside as a class or in your community and look for any wild fruits, nuts, or plants. See if you can find any that might have been eaten by early Ghanaians.

After the walk, think about how our food has changed. Why do you think we don't eat as many wild foods today? How has the way we get our food changed?

Notes from Nature Walk

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Activity 2.2

1. On your own, fill in the table below to discover how people lived in early Ghana using the provided information and any additional source material you can find. If you have access to the internet, a library, or other resources, use these to enhance your research and add more details.

Hint: Sources may include oral tradition, archaeology/material culture, pictures, and video.

How did early Ghanaians live?	Detail and explanations	Which primary sources support your ideas?
Challenges		
Adaptations		
Methods of hunting and gathering		

2. Match each of the following activities with their appropriate phases of pre-history in Ghana:

- Nomadism
- Hunting of small animals
- Gathering of fruits and nuts
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Food production
- Village settlement
- Leisure activities
- Domestication of animals
- Use of pebble tools
- Making of small tools with wooden handles
- Care of the environment
- Conservation of water bodies

Consider how each activity fits into the different stages of pre-historic life in Ghana, from early nomadic practices to settled village life.

Phases of Pre-history in Ghana	Activity
Hunting	
Gathering	
Nomadism	
Knowledge of the Environment	

Evidence of Earliest Material Culture in Rock Shelters/ Ancient Sites in Ghana

The rock shelters in Ghana have provided valuable insight into the earliest material culture of the region. Various archaeological sites such as Kintampo, Abetifi, Jilik, Tusik, Kpatritinga, Gingana, Yilkpabongo, and Begho have been studied to understand the cultural history of the area. These sites have offered evidence of human occupation and cultural developments spanning thousands of years.

Kintampo: One significant site is Kintampo, located in the Bono East region of Ghana. Excavations at Kintampo have revealed evidence of a complex culture dating back to the Stone Age. Stone tools, pottery, and animal bones have been discovered, indicating early human activities such as hunting, gathering, and pottery production.

Abetifi: This is an important site situated in the eastern part of the country. The rock shelters at Abetifi have provided evidence of early human settlement around 3000 BCE. Excavations have uncovered pottery, grinding stones, and other tools, suggesting agricultural practices and the processing of plant resources. The discovery of iron artefacts further indicates technological advancements and the development of metalworking skills in the region.

Jilik: Jilik, located in northern Ghana, has also yielded crucial information about the early material culture of the area. Excavations at Jilik have revealed stone tools, pottery, and evidence of iron smelting dating back to the Iron Age. The presence of ironworking indicates the emergence of more complex societies with specialised craftspeople.

Other sites, such as **Kambago, Tusik, Kpatritinga, Gingana, Yilpabongo,** and Begho, have provided similar archaeological evidence, shedding light on the cultural diversity and development of different communities across Ghana's history. These sites have offered insights into the technological advancements, trade networks, and socio-economic structures of these ancient societies.

Activity 2.3

1. Using the map below, locate and annotate the sites where the earliest human cultures were discovered in Ghana. Add notes to each site detailing the significant finds and what these discoveries reveal about early Ghanaian culture. Highlight key artefacts and findings to provide insights into the lives and practices of Ghana's earliest inhabitants.



Fig. 2.4: Map showing sites where the earliest human culture can be found in Ghana

Activity 2.4

1. In pairs, look at pictures or replicas of artefacts from early Ghanaian cultures found in rock shelters like Kintampo and Abetifi. Each group should focus on a different site and describe the types of artefacts found there. Create a simple poster or digital presentation to showcase your findings and explain why these artefacts are important for understanding early human life in Ghana.
2. In your small group, each member will independently choose one word that best describes how people lived in ancient times. After writing down your words, look at the words chosen by other group members. Identify which words appear most frequently and which ones are unique. Then, compare your group's words with those from other groups. Find out which words are common across all groups. Finally, create a bar graph to visually represent the frequency of each word, showing how often each one was chosen.

Elements of Earliest Human Culture in Ghana

In the earliest human cultures in Ghana, several elements played a significant role in shaping their way of life. Here are some key aspects:



Fig. 2.5: Elements of human culture in Ghana

Comparing the Living Conditions of the Earliest Humans in Ghana to Today

The living conditions of the earliest humans in Ghana, who were hunter-gatherers, were vastly different from those of modern Ghanaians. The chart/poster below compares these living conditions, especially with respect to shelter and housing, food, health care, and technology.

	Earliest times	Today
Shelter and Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nomadic/ temporary shelters Lived in caves, rock shelters, simple huts Housing materials included branches, leaves, animal skins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanent settlements Live in houses Housing materials include bricks, concrete, wood Access to electricity, plumbing, etc.
Food and Subsistence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hunting game Collecting wild plant Fishing Diets included wild animals, edible plants, nuts, tubers, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agrarian-based Subsistence farming Fishing Livestock rearing Diverse range of diets including local and imported
Health and Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional medicine Herbal treatment Natural methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to medical facilities Trained professionals Vaccinations
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tools made from stones, wood, bones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to smartphones, computers, the internet, etc.

Fig. 2.6: Comparing the Living Conditions of the Earliest Humans in Ghana to Today

Primary Materials Used by Early Ghanaians for Tool Making

In ancient Ghana, early inhabitants used materials like stone, wood, clay, and bone to craft tools essential for hunting, farming, and various daily activities. For instance, those residing in the Shai, Kpone, and Prampram regions relied heavily on stone tools, a fact supported by archaeological finds at Segra Hills in the Shai area. As technology progressed, so did the sophistication of these tools, reflecting the advancements made by early Ghanaians in their tool-making techniques.

How the Tools Made by Early Ghanaians Change over Time

The tools made by early Ghanaians changed over time due to factors such as changes in hunting and gathering practices, improvement in the technological ability of early humans, discovery of iron, influence from other cultures, and the need for specialisation.

1. **Changes in Hunting and Gathering Practices:** As the environment in early Ghana evolved, so did the methods of hunting and gathering. Early humans adapted their tools to better fit these environmental shifts, leading to changes in their practices. These adaptations were crucial for their survival as they adjusted to new challenges.
2. **Advancements in Technological Skills:** Early Ghanaians continually refined their technological abilities, leading to the development of more sophisticated tools. These innovations were essential for coping with the changing climatic and environmental conditions, reflecting their growing expertise and adaptability.
3. **Cultural Influences:** Interaction with other cultures through migration brought new ideas and techniques to early Ghanaians. By learning from these encounters, they adopted and adapted various tools and methods, leading to significant advancements in their own tool-making practices.
4. **Specialisation:** With increasing population and survival needs, early Ghanaians became highly specialised in tool-making. This specialisation allowed them to create a diverse range of tools tailored to their evolving requirements, showcasing their ingenuity and resourcefulness.

What Early Tools Reveal About their Activities, Skills, and Technological Advancements

The tools made by early humans say a lot about them. The early human tools provide insights into their daily activities, skills, and technological progress. The types of tools they created reflect their adaptation to environmental changes and their evolving hunting and gathering methods. Improvements in tool design indicate advancements in their technological abilities, while the influence of other cultures shows how they incorporated new techniques. Specialisation in tool-making highlights their response to population growth and survival needs.

Let's now explore what these tools reveal about the early humans who lived in Ghana.

1. It showed that early humans had the ability to use materials to their advantage.
2. It showed that the early humans were able to adapt to their environment against all the odds.
3. It revealed the level of sophistication of early humans in terms of skills and technological abilities.
4. It showed that early humans possessed a high level of artistic ability.
5. It confirmed the resourcefulness, skilfulness, and technological growth of early humans.

How Early Humans in Ghana Found and Obtained Food

Early humans in Ghana found and obtained food through various methods.

Below are some of the ways:

1. **They resorted to hunting.** With the discovery of crude stone tools and later well-sharpened ones and iron tools such as spears, early humans in Ghana

hunted for small games. These included birds, antelopes, and grasscutter for their food.

2. **Early humans resorted to food gathering.** The early humans made use of the environment to collect edible fruits, nuts, berries, and vegetables for food.
3. **They embarked on foraging:** The early humans went in search of insects, honey, and other small sources of food for survival.
4. **They were into fishing.** The early Ghanaians who lived in the coastal areas and the inland areas where rivers were common engaged in fishing. This was made possible with the discovery of hooks and lines and later nets. They fished in rivers and lakes.
5. **Others embarked on insect collection for food:** Some early humans in Ghana collected insects such as flying termites, crickets, and shea caterpillars for food.
6. **They resorted to root and tuber collection.** Early Ghanaians also fed on roots and tubers of wild yam for their diet. In the dried seasons, they dug them with the aid of their tools.

Types of Shelter Built by Early Ghanaians

Early Ghanaians built shelters various forms. Some of these forms are:

1. **Round huts:** These forms of shelter were made from mud, thatch, and wood. They are common in the Savannah Zone of Ghana.
2. **Trunk of tree houses:** These shelters were common in the forest areas of Ghana, where forests abound with huge and tall trees.
3. **Caves:** Some early Ghanaians lived in natural caves. This was common in areas that abounded in rocky formations, such as the Shai Hill areas.
4. **Wattle and daub houses:** These were made from a framework that was made out of wooden strips called wattle. The framework was then covered with a mixture of clay, mud, and sometimes plant materials. It was common in the Ashanti regions. Traces of this form of shelter can still be found in some parts of the country.
5. **Mud houses:** They were constructed from mud and earth. They were renowned for their high-level ventilation. Some were decorated with some traditional designs.
6. **Grass houses:** These were common in the pre-historic coastal part of Ghana, where these grasses were common.

These shelters provided protection from the elements and served as places to rest and store food.

How Early Humans in Ghana Lived Together and Organised their Communities

Early humans who lived in Ghana lived and organised their communities in some unique ways. They lived in small nomadic groups. These groups were often made up of:

- Extended family members such as parents, grandparents, children, and siblings.
- Close kin members, which included aunts, uncles, and other relatives.
- Band members are made up of a small group, usually between 20 and 50 individuals. Members of a band worked together and shared resources.

The organisation of these communities is often influenced by motivations such as:

- Shared resources, which included food, water, and even shelter (huts, caves, etc.).
- The need for mutual resources: They lived together to defend themselves against predators and attacks by other enemies of the early humans.
- Informal leadership: With the passage of time, informal leaders emerged. The emergence of these leaders was based on factors such as experience, wisdom, and charisma.
- Cultural practices: Early humans organised themselves by coming together to engage in storytelling, music, dance, and arts and crafts.
- They also engaged in common spiritual practices.

How the Elements of the Earliest Human Culture in Ghana Evolved Over Time

Human culture has evolved from simple beginnings to more complex forms over time. In Ghanaian society, this evolution includes the adoption of cultural elements from other societies, such as food, clothing, shelter, forms of government, and healthcare. As these elements have adapted to changing human needs, some positive changes have occurred. Efforts have also been made to eliminate harmful practices, including 'panyarring' (the forceful capture and seizure of individuals until debts are repaid), human sacrifices, female genital mutilation, widowhood rites, and Trokosi practices.

Activity 2.5

Complete the chart below to explain the key elements of the early Ghanaian culture.

Element of culture	What did early Ghanaians do in this element of culture?	What evidence do we have?	What inferences can we make about the wider early Ghanaian societies from this?
Obtaining food			
Housing and shelter			
Technology and tools			

Activity 2.6

Compare the activities of early hunters and gatherers with those of Ghanaians today. First, take notes on these topics:

1. **Food Collection:**

- **Early Hunters and Gatherers:** How did they hunt and gather food?
- **Modern Ghanaians:** How do people get their food today?

2. **Tools and Technology:**

- **Early Hunters and Gatherers:** What tools did they use?
- **Modern Ghanaians:** What tools and technology are used now?

3. **Housing:**

- **Early Hunters and Gatherers:** What were their shelters like?
- **Modern Ghanaians:** What are modern houses like?

4. **Lifestyle:**

- **Early Hunters and Gatherers:** What was their way of life?
- **Modern Ghanaians:** How does modern life differ?

After taking notes, create a poster showing the similarities and differences between early and modern activities. Use pictures and short descriptions to make your poster clear and interesting.

Activity 2.7

1. Write a poem that captures the essence of the earliest human culture in Ghana. Reflect on their way of life, their tools, food, and daily activities. Once your poem is ready, share it on social media and tag your teacher and friends to invite their thoughts and feedback.
2.
 - a. Identify and demonstrate four ways in which hunter-gatherer practices still influence our lives today. This could include traditional hunting methods, gathering wild foods, use of specific tools, or cultural practices. Present your findings through a visual or written report, illustrating how these ancient practices persist in modern society.

Table 2.1: Four traces of hunter-gatherer practices in our societies today

Hunter-gatherer activity	Traces of it in our societies
Hunting for small games	
Harvesting of root tubers, e.g., wild yam	
Harvesting wild honey	
Fetching water from waterfalls, e.g., Wli Water Falls	

- b. Write on how the activities in the table above are practised in recent times.
3. Think of five (5) ways to help conserve resources, inspired by how hunter-gatherers managed their environment. Share your ideas on social media and tag your friends and teachers.



Fig. 2.7: How to promote sustainability in Ghana

4. Think about how Ghanaians can use inexpensive materials and resources for building houses today. Write down your ideas in the box below. If you have a social media account, share your thoughts online and tag others.

Pre-Historic Periods in Ghana

Explore the fascinating journey of Ghana's ancient past, where the foundations of society were laid long before written records. This era marks a time of significant developments and transformations, including early human activities, innovations, and cultural practices that shaped the early Ghanaian way of life. Delve into how early Ghanaians adapted to their environment, developed tools, and built communities, setting the stage for the rich history that followed.

Definition of Pre-History

The pre-history of Ghana refers to the period before the art of writing was introduced into the country. It is also known as the preliterate period. Archaeology is the main source of history in the study of pre-history.

In Ghana, the prehistoric period extends from 50,000 BCE to 700 CE.

Phases of Pre-History

There are three phases of the prehistoric period in Ghana. The phases of the prehistoric period in Ghana include:

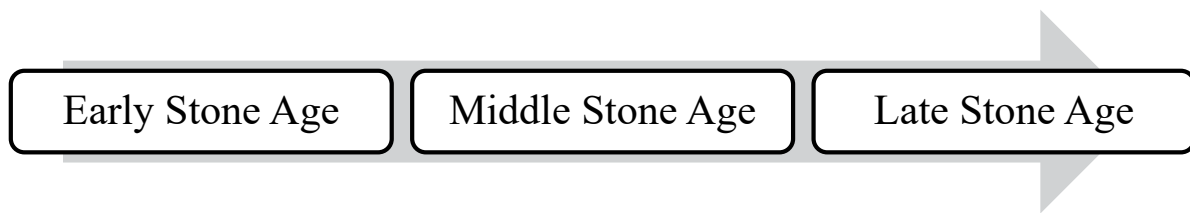


Fig. 2.8: Phases of pre-history

The Early Stone Age: The Early Stone Age was the period when human beings used parent stones instead of flakes for the manufacture of tools. The earliest tools discovered in Ghana were found in the fossil gravel of the rivers Volta, Dayi, Oti, and Birim. Others were found in a fossil marine beach at Asokrochona near Tema. These early tools were called Acheulean tools. The oldest of the stone tools in this age were large, heavy, and pear-shaped. Some of their tools were U-shaped.

These tools were used for hunting, food gathering, and meat preparation. The main material for toolmaking in the Stone Age was stone. Early Ghanaians used materials such as stone cores, hammerstones, flint, and quartzite.

Table 2.2: The characteristics and functions of different early Stone Age tools found in Ghana include:

Tool	Characteristics	Function
Scrappers	These were made out of parent stones	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Used for scrapping and chopping 2. Used for scrapping animal hides
Hand axes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Made from stone 2. Oval-shaped with straight edge 	Butchering animals and scrapping of hides.
Choppers	Have a sharp chopping edge that is typically straight or slightly curved.	For chopping, scrapping, and processing wood, plants, and animals.
Arrow heads	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Small and pointed 2. Made from stone 	For hunting of animals
Spears	Long wooden shafts with pointed tips	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hunting large game animals 2. For defensive purposes
Grinding Stones	Made from coarse-grained stones	Used for grinding seeds, nuts, and other plant materials
Hammerstones	Large heavy stones	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Used for shaping other stones 2. Used for pounding nuts and seeds



Fig. 2.9: Stone arrow head



Fig. 2.10: Stone Age Hand Axe



Fig. 2.11: Stone Spearhead

Features of Ghana's Mid-Stone Age and Late Stone Age

Middle Stone Age: This period was characterised by improvements in the technology used by Acheulian toolmakers. The new technique, '*Prepared Core Technique*,' tended to use flakes more than cores. The manufacturers of these tools were, therefore, referred to as 'Flake Technologists.' In some parts of Ghana, the people combined the old core-tool technique and the new flake-tool technique. The use of the two techniques was largely dictated by the environmental conditions in which they found themselves. An example is found in the grassland and forest regions of middle and southern Ghana, which is similar to the 'Sangoan Tradition,' named after the original site of Sango Bay in Uganda. The Sangoan tradition is well documented from cultural materials excavated nearly two decades ago at the site of Asokrochona, located near Tema Beach. As a result of this, some archaeologists in Ghana have named the site where these materials were found as 'Asokrochoian Tradition'. The tool kits of the Sangoan tradition in Ghana included hand axes, picks, choppers, gouges, axes, and scrappers.

In Northern Ghana, Middle Stone Age men and women used the 'prepared core' technique to produce flake tools that are widely distributed in the confluence region of the Black and White Volta Rivers. A stone industry called Aterian was known to have evolved from this technique. Tools from this industry included flaked knives and arrowheads with thick bases fixed in wooden shafts. The Middle Stone Age (MSA) saw improvements in human's tool-making abilities and craftsmanship. The MSA made humans engage more in problem-solving through complex thinking systems. It also made humans in this era engage in more complex social structures and cultural practices.



Fig. 2.12: Stone hand axe

Late Stone Age: The Late Stone Age is also known as the ‘Era of Blade-Tool Technologists.’ The people of the Late Stone Age were versatile in their attempts to produce adequate technology to meet the growing economic demand of their times. A new technique known as the ‘Bipolar Punch’ was adopted. By producing these tools, people made use of a new tool called a burin or chisel, which helped in the production of fishing equipment such as bone harpoons, bone fishhooks, stone arrowheads, etc. A great variety of information has been obtained from studies conducted in several rock shelters at Kintampo in the Bono East Region and several shelters along the Kwahu escarpment.

Also, the Late Stone Age people hunted for animals such as bears, guinea pigs, mongooses, chimpanzees, and the royal antelope by using poisoned stone arrowheads and setting up traps, etc. Their shelters included rock shelters, caves, and open-air camps. They were found in rock shelters in Kintampo, Kwahu escarpment, Adukwu Shai, and Gao Lagoon sites near Kpone. They used the techniques of poisoned stone arrowheads and traps to hunt for animals such as bears, duikers, guinea pigs, mongooses, chimpanzees, and the royal antelope. They also gathered shellfish and giant snails for food. Late Stone Age sites located in the animal-rich grasslands of coastal and northern Ghana showed abundant distribution of microlith hunting equipment. In addition, the organic remains of a number of plants used for food preparation and other domestic purposes have also survived in rock shelters and caves, namely *Celtis intergrifolia* (net tree), *Canarium schweinfurthii* (incense tree), and *Elaeis guineensis* (oil palm tree).

The Late Stone Age witnessed the spread of *Homo sapiens* in Ghana to other parts of Ghana. There was a refinement of tools in the Late Stone Age. The tools, such as microliths, used in this era were lighter. This indicates an improvement in humans’ tool-making ability. The inhabitants in the Late Stone Age exhibited greater diversity of human experience. The LSA saw a significant growth in symbolic expression and artistic expression.

Developments in Early Stone Age tool making impacted heavily on hunting, gathering, and daily life activities in the following ways: In the first place, it led to improvements in hunting and butchering of animals by early Stone Age humans. It enabled them to develop more complex social structures and cooperation. It improved their ability to adapt successfully to their environment and ecosystems. It improved their application of technology and innovations. The discovery of grinding tools, for instance, improved their ability to process food.

Meanwhile, the technological ingenuity and resourcefulness of the early Ghanaians in terms of tool making teach us vital lessons as follows: We learn to ensure sustainable use of our resources: This means that we must avoid acts and actions such as deforestation, charcoal burning, illegal mining, sand winning, illegal fishing, and water pollution. We also learn to be resilient in the face of challenges. Again, we must be innovative in solving our problems, which include climate change effects. Furthermore, we learn to be adaptable to our situations. Finally, there is the need for cultural preservation on our part.

Activity 2.8: Group Work

1. In pairs, create a chart to describe the main features of Ghana's Middle Stone Age. Include details about the tools used, types of shelters, and everyday activities of people during this period. Use illustrations or simple drawings to make your chart visually engaging. If you need help, use prompts such as "What materials were used for making tools?" or "What did shelters look like during this time?" This activity will help you visualise and understand the characteristics of this historical period.
2. In groups of three, create a poster comparing the technological advancements of the Late Stone Age with those of the Middle Stone Age. Highlight key improvements in tools, techniques, and daily life. Include images, diagrams, or sketches to illustrate these advancements. Ensure that each group member contributes to the poster and take turns presenting different sections to the class.

Activity 2.9

Scenario

Imagine you are an archaeologist exploring two ancient sites in Ghana. The first site dates back to the Middle Stone Age, and the second to the Late Stone Age. As you carefully brush away the dust from the artefacts at each site, you notice some striking differences between the tools and materials used by the people from each period.

At the Middle Stone Age site, you find large, heavy tools made from rough stones, likely used for hunting and cutting. The tools appear basic, with little refinement, and you imagine how difficult it must have been to use them efficiently. As you continue to explore, you see simple shelters, perhaps temporary ones built from wood and branches, showing a nomadic lifestyle where people constantly moved in search of food.

When you move on to the Late Stone Age site, however, the tools are much smaller and more specialised. You find finely crafted blades and arrowheads made from sharp stones, with wooden handles attached to them. You can tell that the people here had a much more refined technique and likely focused on specific tasks such as farming or hunting smaller game. You even find signs of permanent settlement—foundations of huts made from clay and stone, suggesting that these people no longer had to move as frequently.

As you reflect on your findings, you begin to see how much life must have changed between these two periods. The people of the Late Stone Age had clearly advanced in technology, social organisation, and lifestyle.

Activity 2.10

Imagine you are part of an ancient community in Ghana, living during the transition from the Middle Stone Age to the Late Stone Age. As time passes, your community begins to use more refined tools and develop new technologies that make daily life easier. In groups of five, explore and discuss the following:

- How did technology improve between the Middle and Late Stone Age?
- What were the key innovations that changed the way early Ghanaian societies lived?
- Did these technological advancements make life easier or more challenging for early Ghanaians? Why?

Once you have discussed these points, create a short presentation or visual diagram to showcase your group's ideas about how improved technology helped early Ghanaian societies and share with your class.

Activity 2.11

Examine the sources provided below and determine whether they originate from the Middle Stone Age or Late Stone Age. As you assess each source, annotate it with your thoughts and observations, explaining the reasons behind your conclusions.

Table 2.3: Assessment of Sources

Source 1 Pottery	Source 2 Quartz
Source 3 Celts	Source 4 Sandstone

After completing your analysis, answer these questions:

- What features helped you identify whether the source is from the Middle or Late Stone Age?
- How do these sources reflect the technological or cultural changes during each period?
- Why do you think these changes were significant for early Ghanaian societies?

Be creative in your annotations, and share your findings with the class through a visual display or short presentation!

Characteristics of Earliest Farmer Settlers or Communities

The earliest farming communities in Ghana marked a significant shift from the hunter-gatherer lifestyle, as people began to settle in one place and rely on agriculture for their survival. These early settlers cultivated crops, domesticated animals, and developed more permanent housing. Their way of life not only transformed the landscape but also laid the foundation for the growth of more complex societies. The transition to farming brought about changes in social organisation, technology, and daily life, which played a key role in shaping the early culture of Ghana.

Earliest Farmer-Settlers

In the pre-historic era, the people of Ghana, in a bid to establish a relationship between humanity and plant and animal production, adopted an economic process known as **Foraging**. This means that the prehistoric people engaged in the procurement of plant and animal resources for food in an ad hoc manner through hunting and gathering methods, depending on the availability of these resources within a particular environment. From about 10,000 BCE, some circumstances made it impossible for the prehistoric man's economic life to be sustainable solely through the economic system of 'Foraging' as a means to get a supply of food. Some of these developments were:

- First, the changes in the climate reduced the amount of rainfall, with rivers and lakes drying up. Consequently, certain animals and plants disappeared.
- Second, there was a considerable increase in population growth, which necessitated prehistoric men and women producing more food to feed the people. These conditions naturally demanded that mankind adopt a better means of food production to ensure its survival.

Between 10,000 and 2,000 BCE, the prehistoric man and woman had to adopt a new economic order called "Food Production". There are at least two stages that characterised this period of food production, and these are:

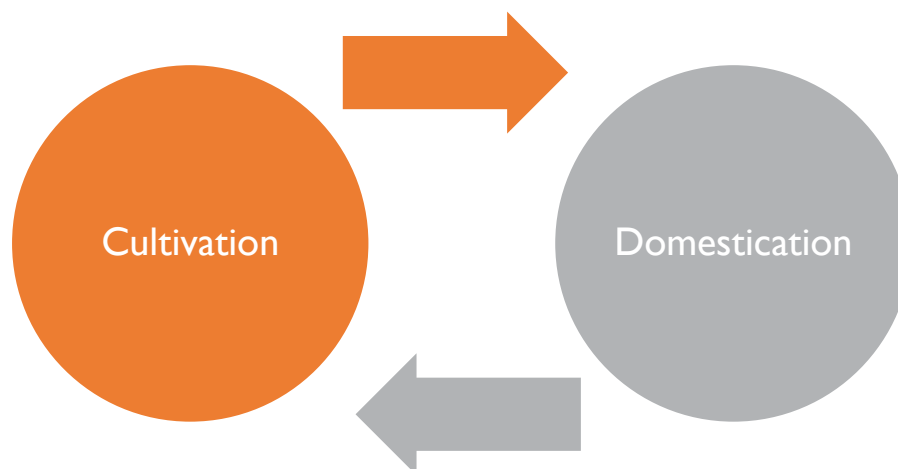


Fig. 2.13: Stage of food production

First Village Builders

The process of human **sedentism** accompanied the evolution of food production. The prehistoric man and woman abandoned their long-term nomadic practices and lived in caves and rocks to settle life by way of building permanent houses. In Ghana, archaeological excavations have led to the discovery of the remains of fossil mud, laterite blocks, and stone blocks used in the construction of the pre-historic “**Wattle-and-Daub**” style of building. This style of building technology, which is still in use in Ghana, is known to the Dangme as *Zutsu*. This kind of building of prehistoric settlements has been discovered at Boyase Hill near Kumasi Airport and Hani in the Bono Region of Ghana. Its inhabitants were engaged in industries such as the production of stone beads, stone arrowheads, clay pots, and milling stones. It must be noted that much bigger prehistoric settlements were built at Nkukoa Buoho near Kumasi and at Gambaga in north-eastern Ghana.

Examples of the material remains left by the first farming communities include weathered pottery shards, grinding stones, microliths, stone arrowheads, daub and stone blocks, stone beads, as well as the teeth of cattle or goats. These early settlers also used polished stone axes, known locally as *nyame akuma*. These artefacts provide valuable insights into their daily lives, tools, and agricultural practices.

Modern Ghana owes its first agricultural and human settlement foundation to the credit of the *Kintampo culture*.

The earliest farmers depended on crops such as sorghum, millet, and guinea corn. They raised livestock such as cattle, goats, and sheep.

Characteristics of the Settlements of the Earliest Farmers and Community Builders

The following are the characteristics of the earliest farmers and community

- **They practised sedentism.** They had more permanent communities after abandoning a nomadic lifestyle.
- **They engaged in agriculture techniques and practices such as crop rotation, shifting cultivation, irrigation, and domestication of both animals and plants.** Shifting cultivation was made possible because of the abundance of farmlands for cultivation. This ensures renewable resource utilisation and resource sustainability.
- **They lived more cooperatively and communally.** They came together to build their settlements or cooperated in farming and fishing. They collaborated in undertaking social activities such as funerals.
- **Social hierarchies emerged in their communities with the increase in population.** They had leaders, elders, and some specialists in arts and crafts holding positions of authority.
- **There were food surpluses in the settlements.** This was influenced by improvements in agriculture practices and technology.

- **Craft specialisation emerged in their communities.** There were specialists in weaving, carving, pottery making, metal works, etc.
- **Their communities developed religious connections to nature, ancestors, and the Supreme Being.**

Tools and Techniques Used by Earliest Farmers for Cultivating Crops and Raising Animals

1. Tools

Earliest farmers and community builders made use of various tools and techniques for cultivating crops and raising animals. **Examples of the tools included:**

- **Digging sticks** for digging and planting seeds.
- **Stone axes** for chopping wood and for clearing land for farming.
- **Flat stones and wooden tools** for weeding and cultivating the soil.
- **Baskets** for carrying and storing crops.
- **Hooks and lines** for fishing.

2. Techniques

The techniques included:

- Cattle herding.
- Irrigation of canals.
- Fishing
- Herding of sheep and goats for meat, milk, and wool.
- Trapping for small games and birds.
- Crop rotation.

Activity 2.12

Imagine you are an archaeologist on a dig site, uncovering the remains of an ancient farming settlement in Ghana. As you carefully search through the layers of earth, what types of evidence do you expect to discover? And which of these discoveries would be the most valuable to you as an archaeologist, and why?

Hint: In your response, explain why certain pieces of evidence would provide important clues about the daily lives of the first farmer-settlers. Reflect on how these discoveries could help you understand their way of life, the crops they grew, and how they built their communities. Write your ideas clearly and use examples from what you've learned about ancient settlements.

Activity 2.13

1. a. Annotate the map below with the following sites:

- Boyase Hill
- Nkukoa Buoho
- Hani
- Gambaga
- Abetifi
- Banda
- Kintampo
- Begho



Fig. 2.14: Annotated map showing archaeological sites

- b. What kind of community do you think has been found at each site, and why? What artefacts would you expect an archaeologist to find? Would there be similarities between any of the sites?

Activity 2.14

1. How can you and your classmates contribute to the sustainable management of Ghana's natural resources? Write your ideas below, considering practical steps you can take to make a positive impact.
2. Conduct an interview with an elder in your community to gather information about an early human settlement in your area. Write a detailed account of the settlement's history based on the interviewee's stories and insights.
3. Explore how climate change has influenced food production in Ghana. Write a brief report discussing the effects on agriculture and what can be done to mitigate these challenges.
4. Study the archaeological findings from sites like Boyase Hill and Kintampo. Investigate the building techniques and industries revealed by these sites. Write a summary of your findings, focusing on what the evidence tells us about early human activities in these areas.
5. Investigate the *Kintampo Culture* and write a two-page essay about its significance. Include details on the culture's practices, technologies, and how it has influenced present-day Ghanaian culture.
6. How can Ghanaians use cheap and accessible materials for building homes today? Write a report on various affordable building materials and their potential for improving housing conditions in Ghana.

Review Questions

1. What positive lessons can we learn from the lifestyle of the hunter-gatherer societies who lived in Ghana?
2. Discuss four factors that have contributed to the transition from foraging to the adoption of farming as a more sustainable means of survival.
3. By drawing lessons from the lifestyle of the first village builders, show how modern societies have improved upon food production.

Extended Reading

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Glossary

WORDS

MEANING

Chronology	is a fundamental concept in history that refers to the arrangement of events in the order in which they occurred.
Conventional Origins of History	The conventional origin of history is about what is popularly accepted as the origin of history.
Foraging	is the practice of searching for and gathering wild and edible foods.
Gathering	refers to the practice of collecting wild plants, fruits, nuts, seeds, and other natural resources for food or medicine.
Historical skills	refer to the key skills that history learners need to possess in order to understand some important historical concepts.
History	is the study of important past events and people that had an effect on human societies.
Hunter-gatherers	were early human beings who lived in Ghana and who survived by hunting for food, gathering, and scavenging.
Hunting	is the practice of people pursuing, capturing, or killing wild animals for food, skins, hides, or trade.
Late Stone Age	The people of the Late Stone Age were versatile in their attempts to produce adequate technology to meet the growing economic demand of their times.
Material culture	refers to the physical objects such as stones, spears, etc. made and used by early humans in their environment.
Middle Stone Age	This period was characterised by improvements in the technology used by Acheulian tool makers.
Misconceptions	of history refer to false, mistaken, and inaccurate beliefs or understandings of history.
Nomadism	is a way of life that is associated with the movement of people from one place to another, mainly in search of pasture for animals or for food.
Non-conventional origins of history	This is about how specific ethnic groups define history.
Periodisation	in history refers to the division of time into distinct periods to allow for better understanding of historical events and their significance.
Prehistory	is the period in Ghana before the art of writing started.
Relevance	is the benefit of history to the individual and the society. This includes you and the society, including our country, ethnic group, religion, and homes.
Rock shelters	are shallow rock openings at the base of a cliff or bluff.
The Early Stone Age	was the period when human beings used parent stones instead of flakes for the manufacture of tools.
The pre-history of Ghana	refers to the period before the art of writing was introduced into the country.

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