



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Library Science

ART AND CRAFT OF INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION

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ABSTRACT

The Indus Valley Civilization is the oldest civilization of Indian history. The discovery of this civilization marked the beginning of the dawn of a new era. The Indus valley Civilization also known as the Harappan Civilization, flourishing in Indus River valley and surrounding areas from around 3300 to 1300 BCE, known for its advanced urban planning, standardized weights and measures, and unique seals with animal motifs. Indus Valley Civilization was renowned for its town planning, Art and craft. The houses in the city followed a planned system. Lanes and roads were broad and there was proper lighting arrangement in the streets. In This Paper we discuss various Art and Craft of Indus valley civilization Seals, Stone Statues, Dancing Girls, Ornaments, Pottery, and Metal Work.

INTRODUCTION

Indus Valley Civilization was renowned for its town planning, Art and craft. The houses in the city followed a planned system. Lanes and roads were broad and there was proper lighting arrangement in the streets. Although Indus Valley Civilization was thousands of year old yet its people were conscious of art and sculpture and other crafts. The Copper and bronze utensils, idols of human and animals, boats and toys found related to that age make it clear to us about their dexterity in making such things. If we see their ornaments from gold, silver, ivory, bones, precious stones and copper. They were also expert in making seals, weaving cotton and woolen clothes and masonry. Hence, the people of Indus valley civilization were technologically more advanced than the civilization of Egypt and Babylonia.

However, sculpture, seals, pottery, jewellery and terracotta figures comprise of the art forms found in different civilization. Sites, but the art and craft of Indus valley civilization was totally different from them. Definitely, the artists of that time had a good knowledge of art and high level of imagination.

The Portrayal of human and animal figures was very much realistic in nature. The important sites excavated in India were Lothal and Dholavira in Gujarat, Kalibangan in Rajasthan, Rochar in Punjab etc. The architecture of Indus valley Civilization was very unique. The evolution of the architecture of civilization occurs in succession. It has been influenced by the local culture and vice-versa.

Art and Craft of Indus Valley Civilization Mainly Includes

- Seals** - The archaeologists discovered thousands of seals and most of them were made of agate, copper and terracotta. These seals were made mainly for commercial purpose. The people used these seals as mascot or talisman. The size of a standard Harappan seal was 2*2 square inches, and it was made of steatite. Some ivory seals have also been discovered. These seals have a wide range of motifs, mostly of animals such as the bull with or without the hump, tiger and elephant. There was a seal found in Mohenjo-Daro named the Pashupati seal. This seal looks like a human figure seated with its legs crossed on the right side of the figure, an elephant and a tiger could be seen and a rhinoceros and on the left a rhinoceros and a buffalo. There are also two antelopes shown below the seal. These seals often feature a single, large animal such as buffaloes, rhinoceros and elephant.
- Stone Statues** - Indus valley civilization stone sculptures are comparatively few in number. Eleven were excavated at Mohenjo-daro and two at Harappa. They are made of alabaster, steatite, limestone, sandstone and grey stone. The stone, bronze or terracotta. Statues found in Harappan

sites were not in large quantities but were refined. Found at Harappa and Mohenjo-daro, the stone statues are perfect example of their dimensional handling volumes. The two main stone figures are the bearded man and male torso. The bearded man is understood as a priest who is wrapped in a shawl that is coming from under the right arm and covers the left shoulder. The trefoil patterns are used to decorate the shawl. They eyes look a little elongated and partially closed as in thoughtful concentration. The nose is medium size and well shaped. The mouth is averagely sized with a short cut moustache, beard and whiskers. There is an armlet on the right hand and the holes around the neck imply a necklace.

- Dancing Girl** - The dancing girl statue is known as one of the best artefacts from the Indus valley. It is a bronze statue with a height of four-inch. This statue was found in Mohenjo-daro and it depicts a girl whose long hair is tied in a bun. Her left arm is covered in bone bangles, her right arm has a bracelet and cowry shell necklace is also visible around her neck. Her right hand is on her hip, and the left hand is grasped in traditional Indian dance from making the tribhanga posture. Braided hair, head slightly tilted back, flat nose and large eyes are the salient features of this work. This figure is full of expression and bodily vigour.
- Ornaments and Other Miscellaneous Objects** - Beautiful worked gold and silver ornaments including necklaces, bracelets, pendants and earrings have been found at Harappa sites. Terracotta bangles are found. The Harappans made ceramic bangles, rings, pendants, vessels and figurines. Bangles were often made of conch shells. Beads, bracelets and decorative inlay work show the existence of crafts person skilled in shell work. Beads, pins made of bones are found. Bead making was a craft known in earlier cultures, but in the Harappan civilization new materials style and techniques came into trend.
- Pottery** - The typical Harappan pottery is a fine, well built. Wheel made with a bright red slip, decorated with painted black designs. Polychrome painting is rare. The decorative patterns range from simple horizontal lines to geometric patterns and pictorial motifs. Some of design such as fish, scales, peal leaves and intersecting circles have their roots in the early Harappan phase. Human figures are rare and crude. Harappan clay pots and ornamental pieces were one of its main attraction, even back then, all over the world. The craftsmanship of the Harappan pottery is trays of various sizes, cups, cooking pots and other pots. Harappan culture craftsman and sculptures were equally skilled. Precious stones were carved into beads and given the shape of necklace. They could create human like images in stone as well. The Harappan sculptors were clearly brilliant and creative as

seen by these specimens.

6. **Metal Work** – Harappan civilization achieved remarkable height in metal work as well. They knew well how to produce copper and bronze pots, flower vases, pictures of people animals and bird. The polish and fineness of their metal works are shown by a bronze figure of female dancer discovered at Mohenjodaro.

CONCLUSION

The Indus valley Civilization had very highly skilled artists and craftsman. The artists made a variety of realistic artefacts like seals, pottery, terracotta figures etc. It predated Mesopotamian major cultures and was contemporary with Sumerian cultures. However, it acquired a lot of ideas from central Asia as well, and it gathered the best of idea and technology in many ways. It is relevant and significant in that regard.

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