

Art of Ancient India and the Aegean Fortuitous Parallels or Cultural Contacts?

by A.S. Bhalla

DESCRIPTION:

Art in physical forms and shapes (e.g. buildings and paintings) existed in both prehistoric and modern societies. This book examines similarities and differences between art in ancient Indian (Indus) civilizations and that of the Aegean civilizations (i.e. Minoan, Mycenaean and the Cycladic). In prehistoric cultures, art was distinct from the modern, which was defined in terms of utility or practicality rather than aesthetics. It was expressed not in terms of the beauty of an object, but rather its purpose, such as for worship through representations of gods and goddesses (male and female sculptures) or the use of figurines as votive offerings; it was also used for trade and commerce (stamp seals) and for indication of social hierarchy (jewellery and ornaments). Demand for prestige objects in the Minoan and Mycenaean societies grew in response to royal and elite patronage, which was absent in the Indus Valley. The book discusses production and consumption patterns of objects such as pottery, figurines, seals, jewellery and paintings to show striking similarities between the Indian and Aegean civilizations. The comparison raises questions about possible cross-cultural influences, which became much more significant and direct following Alexander's invasion and the subsequent adaptation of Indian art under the Indo-Greek kingdoms.

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Foreword - Dr Dimitrios Th. Vassiliadis

Preface

Introduction

Issues relating to Chronology

Definition. Scope and Coverage of Art

Structure of the Book

1. A Brief Introduction to Ancient Societies

Indus (India)

Minoan (Crete)

Mycenaean (Greek Mainland)

Cycladic

2. Egalitarianism, Elitism and Prestige Goods

Towards a Framework of Analysis

How Unequal or Elitist were Ancient Societies?

3. The Art of the Indus Valley and the Aegean

Pottery

Sculpture

Male Busts and Stone Figures

Frescoes and Paintings

Seals and Signet Rings

Jewellery

Architecture

Concluding Remarks

ISBN:

9781803277615 (pb)

PRICE:

\$45.00 (pb)

PUBLICATION DATE:

04 July 2024 (pb)

BINDING:

Paperback

SIZE:

6 x9

PAGES:

166

PUBLISHER:

Archaeopress Publishing

IMPRINT:

Archaeopress Publishing

READER INTERESTS:

Art & Art History

Asian and Pacific Studies

4. The Indus Valley and Minoan Crete: Fortuitous Parallels or Cultural/Historical Contacts?

Parallels between the Indus Valley and Minoan Crete

Indirect Contacts

Direct Contacts

Cross-Cultural Influences in Ancient Art

Functionality of Ancient Art

Concluding Remarks

5. Direct Greek Influences on Indian Gandhara Art

Pottery

Sculpture

Painting

Seals and Signet Rings

Jewellery

Coins

Architecture

Concluding Remarks

6. Conclusion: Patronage, Pomp and Power

Royal and Elite Patronage

The Social Context

Peace and Stability

Parallels between the Indus and the Aegean: Coincidence or Contacts?

Concluding Remarks

References

Index

CONTRIBUTORS BIOGRAPHIES:

Dr A.S. Bhalla is a former Fellow of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, UK, and former Special Adviser to the President of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Ottawa, Canada. He has held academic positions at the Universities of Cambridge, Manchester, Oxford and Yale. His previous publications on the history of art include Royal Tombs of India, Buddhist Art in Asia, Monuments, Power and Poverty in India: From Ashoka to the Raj, Glimpses of Medieval Switzerland, and Imperial India: A Pictorial History.