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A CASE STUDY ON INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION: ALTERATION AND RE-APPEARANCE OF ANCIENT ARTIFACTS AND ITS ROLE IN MODERN ECONOMY

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ABSTRACT

Indus Valley Civilization or Harappan Civilization has been noted as the ancient civilization of the world. The Indus civilization is significant for its homogeneity and standardization in all aspects of the civilized society. This civilization has unique attributes of both the Tangible and Intangible Heritage. The Intangible Heritage of this civilization exemplifies the traditions, norms, rites and rituals, religious and social lives of the Indus Valley people. The legacy of this civilization denominates the urban life of the people which has been transferred to the next generations. In this context, the Indus artifacts are unsurpassed sources to map the Indus Valley cultural heritage. Through the process of alteration and then Re-appearance of these Indus Valley artifacts, the connection of present with past is possible. To elaborate the importance of altered and Re-appeared artifacts and its role in the present economy is the focusing point of this manuscript. With this, the Cultural mapping process of Intangible Indus heritage is the valuable feature of this writing too.

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INTRODUCTION

Culture is the best illustrator of any community that expresses the identity of human creeds. We split the cultural appearances to show our sagacity of uniqueness. If we peep into past, in 1952, two American anthropologists, Kluckhohn and Kroeber appraised the definitions and concepts of culture. With this, they compiled diverse definitions of the culture too (Apte, 1994). Since that period of time, different evolutionary definitions have been generated by different scholars to exemplify the superlative connotation of the culture. In Later stages, different explanations of 'Culture' have been designed in different societies or communities, but near past, a definition about 'Culture' considered to be the imperative one. Like, "Culture is a woolly set of basic assumptions and worth, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioral conventions that carve up a group of people, and that sways each member's behavior and his/her interpretations of the 'meaning' of other people's behavior." (Spencer-Oatey, 2008). In deeper meanings, culture can be ascribed further into Tangible and Intangible Culture Heritage. In a broader spectrum, Tangible refers 'immoveable' heritage such as historical places, monuments, vernacular buildings, historical

structures, archaeological sites etc. But on the contrary side, the approach of Intangible Heritage is; that heritage which may or may not be felt physically, generally 'moveable'. This intangible heritage illustrates the 'identity' of the community with meanings and symbols (Relph, 1976). The techniques about the making of textiles, jewelry, printing, potter etc. and language, craving, traditions, and others express the way of community's life. All ancient civilizations have been noted with 'Intangible Heritage' which depicts their lives from Neolithic to Modern Age. Studying intangible heritage, the skills, customs, and specific norms had existed in all the regions associated with ancient civilizations. The Indus valley or Harappan Civilization is considered to be a vital civilized community of the ancient world containing intangible attributes. Indus Valley Civilization or Harappan Civilization is stretched over the parts of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and some regions of India. On the whole, it covers some of the regions from India as well as Pakistan (Singh, 2008). This civilization is named after Harappa, which is noted as the important site of this civilization. Overall, Harappa is the mother site of this great civilization (Sameer *et al.* 2018). In the ancient world, the culture of the Indus Valley Civilization is the principal urbanized culture (Wright, 2010; Agrawal, 2007; Possehl,

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2002). As an ancient civilization, Indus Valley Civilization has all the cultural attributes which others have like; this civilization is identified with urban centers, trade networks, bronze technology, seals, and dominantly writing system (Kenoyer, 2008; Possehl, 1998). Simultaneously, this great civilization had been noted with the Neolithic culture in which every aspect of social life can be judged. The record of metropolitan life is also found after recent studies. In Indus Valley, there were 5 metropolitan urban cities (Fig 1) such as Mohenjodaro, Harappa, Ganweriwala (Pakistan), Dholavira, and Rakhigiri (India) (Wright, 2010). Even social, religion, agricultural, and cultural norms were there. Agricultural system was also unique that is the attribute which denominated food habits of the people. In the Neolithic continuation, barely (*Hordeum vulgare*) and wheat (*Triticum aestivum*) dominated farming, and sheep, goats, and cattle were herding too (Fuller, 2011a; Chen *et al.* 2010). With this, other crops farming was also there like rice (*Oryza sativa*), millets (*Setaria italica*, *Panicum miliaceum*). Resultantly, from 3200 BCE to 1300 BCE, the agriculture of this civilization was in developed form (Sameer *et al.* 2018). With this agricultural significance, some other aspects of Indus Valley are also superior. Bronze technology was also the imperative facet that illustrates this civilization as Bronze Age civilization (Shinde *et al.* 2018) without ambiguity. Techniques of farming, techniques of bronze technology, language, the ceramic techniques, religious practices, social norms, and legends, all these attributes enlighten Intangible Culture Heritage of Indus Valley Civilization. The best way out to map these attributes of the Indus Valley with modern technique of Cultural Mapping. Whether, some archaeologists presented their research results since last decades and highlighted archaeological artifacts as well as anthropological aspects, but still it is need of the hour to map the cultural denomination of the Indus Valley Civilization. In this regard, the best mode is the mapping of intangible cultural which is the focus of this manuscript. Another goal of this paper is to present the process of alteration and reappearance of the ancient artifacts as well as the role of altered and reappeared artifacts in the modern age economy.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Intangible Cultural Mapping

Intangible Cultural Heritage depicts crucial attitudes of the people which they transfer these attitudes to the next generation which is based on customs, expressions, and traditions (Bouchenki, 2007). With the model (Fig 2) of 'identity' and its components, the significance and understanding of Intangible Cultural Mapping can be denominated.

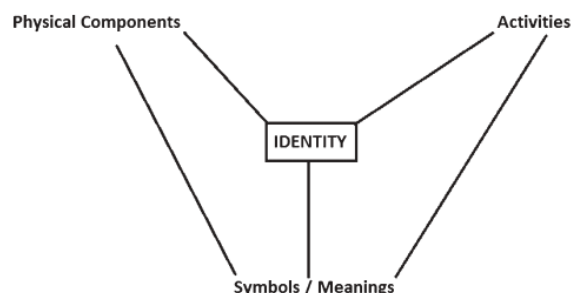


Fig 2 The placement of 'identity' and its components. (After, Relph, 1976).

This model splits up the meaning or symbols as well. So, the mapping process of Intangible Cultural Heritage, systematically and with hierarchy map the customs and traditions well. On the whole, Cultural mapping is a process of collecting, recording, analyzing, and synthesizing, in order to collect data about cultural assets, networks, links, and patterns of any community. In a broader spectrum, this methodology can provide the intangible heritage including languages, ethnic groups, customs and traditions, arts, religion, cuisines, and architecture. So, the intangible heritage of the Indus Valley Civilization can be mapped with some tools such as 'toolkit'. This toolkit is used by the coordinators or program officers of the project. Cultural consultants, heritage specialists, Intangible heritage coordinators, students or researchers use this toolkit to map the intangible heritage. With the help of this toolkit, a central database of Indus Valley's intangible heritage can be carried out to find out the maximum information about the ancient culture. The model (Fig 3) defines the elements of the Intangible Heritage of the Indus Valley. The most appealing data is collected after the research on artifacts, which elaborates the ancient culture well.

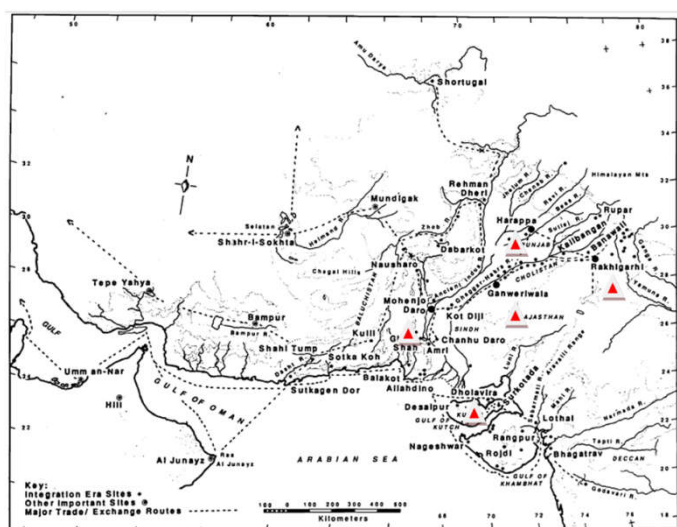


Fig 1 This map illustrating the 5 metropolitan urban sites with other major sites of Indus Valley Civilization (After Kenoyer, 1986).

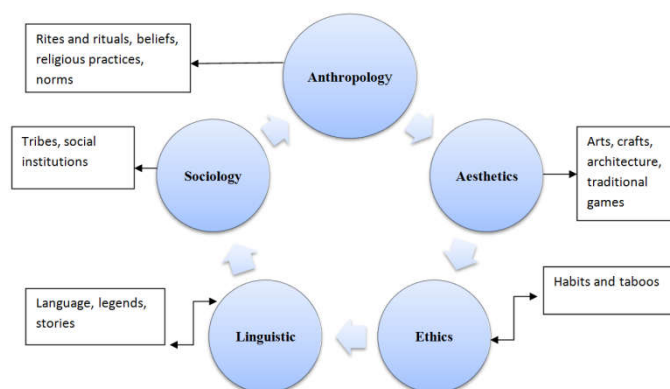


Fig 3 categories and elements of the intangible heritage of Indus Valley

All the database is done in excel software and then export it to the GIS (Geographical Information System) system and before this process GPS (Geographical Positioning System) is used to get coordinates of any site or place. The documentation of the

Indus Valley's Intangibles Heritage is done with digital cameras, GPS, Campus, graph papers, physical mapping of the Indus Valley sites, and the most important one is the study on museums. In museums or at archaeological sites, ceramics, coins, terracotta figurines, terracotta cakes, chard blades, seeds, beads, stone tools, stone objects, bangles, bronze objects, seals, and inscription are the resources which can provide the intangible attributes of this civilization.

Alteration and Re-appearance of Indus Valley artifacts

The precious artifacts are rich and unique in appearance. The artifacts depict the aboriginal and social-cultural characteristics of this great civilization. These artifacts are valuable to read the ancient background with concrete understanding. The following artifacts are good study material regarding alteration and Re-appearance in Modern Age. The Indus Valley ceramics are different in styles with different designs and motifs which are applied both inner and outer surfaces of the ceramics. Line relief, geometrical patterns, floral motifs, connected triangle motifs, etc.. Such kinds of designs are used on the decoration pieces as well as households. Hatched triangle designs and intersecting floral patterns, which were applied on the upper surface of the Indus Valley ceramics, are used on the rim of modern days' pots which connects the present and past. Connected circles, eye motifs, mixed geometrical, floral patterns, and leave patterns on ancient ceramics are used on modern clothes, toys, decoration pieces, mobile pouches, handbags, school bags, stationeries, electronics covers, house ornaments, and on the modern units of construction.

Terracotta figurines were small toys made with mud, were used by children in their different ancient games as these figurines were also used in the ceremonial festival, occurred in Indus Valley Civilization. In the present time, such terracotta figurines are made by the local people as replicas. The bangles have also been found on the sites, during excavations, and are also displayed in the museums. These bangles have exclusive design and making styles. Such kind of designs and styles are also used on modern bangles as well as bracelets respectively. It was a regular practice of the Indus Valley people to make large pots for cooking purposes. The necks rim, and bottom of the pots had been painted with appliqué. In modern life, the people prefer to purchase the antiques. Indus valley seals (Fig 4) are the best illustrators of Indus religious and social lives of the people.



Fig 4 Harappan/ Indus Valley Seals (Adapted from SmartPrep. In)

These seals depict agriculture, rituals, trade activities, anthropological background, and political culture of the Indus valley. The depiction of Unicorn, Bull, Rhinoceros, Antelope, Sheep, Buffalo, and Elephant on the seals is the distinctive feature and these depicted animals had different history and legends.

RESULTS

Indus Valley or Harappan Civilization has been noted as one of three cradles of the ancient civilizations of the world. Past studies tell, when it was in the mature phase, its population was over five million people (Jane, 2008). So, the population of Indus Valley had been defined as the aboriginal as well as urban which emerged in the middle of 3rd millennium B.C (Mughal, 1988). Thus, the attributes of Intangible Cultural Heritage of this civilization are enriched with the urban aspects. To map these attributes is inevitable to carve put the culmination point of the Indus Culture. After mapping the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Indus Valley, to know about the past practices of ancient people as well as their transformation to the next generation, has become possible. In detail, Intangible Cultural heritage covers past and the practices, with ethnicities background, and unique experiences (Saleh *et al.* 2007).

Intangible record of Indus Valley phases (Early to Late Harappan)

Expressions of traditions, linguistics, arts, social practices; festive events, rites and rituals, and traditions craftsmanship are the domains of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Such aspects of this civilization have been traced out after the conduction of the Cultural Mapping methods. Indus Valley Civilization has its phases like Early Harappan Phase (3500-3300 BCE Circa), Harappan Phase (3300- 2800 BCE Circa), Matura Harappan (2800-1900 BCE Circa), Late Harappan (1900- 1300 BCE Circa), and Post Harappan (1300-600 BCE Circa) and then Iron Age. The Intangible Cultural denomination of these phases has been traced out through the application of the Mapping process. In this regard, the surveys, excavations, laboratory works, a database from museums, and archaeological and anthropological materials, are best sources to carve out the culmination point of this civilization. The previous studies put the Indus Valley people lives in the picture which depicts that the people had proper arts, unique agricultural activities, marvelous craftsmanship, language or script (which is undeciphered), religious system, social system, and artistic values.

The role of Indus Valley artifacts

The growth rates of any country are measurable after using Gross Domestic Production (GDP) (Gordon, 1999). For the enhancement of GDP, there are many ways. One of them, and crucial is the tourism and trade. The altered and Re-appeared artifacts of the Indus Valley Civilization are best sources to enhance the local and international trade. In this regard, the economy of the Sub-continent may increase within no time. Furthermore, the replicas of the antiquities have been sold out to the foreigners during their visits to the museum, archaeological sites, and international conferences. This has two important benefits; one is the enhancement of GDP, other is promotions of Indus Culture to the other parts of the modern

world. Through the stylization and alteration of the artifacts, the economy of the region may be enhanced in different stages. The revival of the designs, used on these ancient pots is the best tool to depict on modern goods for the hierarchy of present with past.

DISCUSSION

A Revival of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Indus Valley Civilization

In the present age, every state of the world is known by its cultural norms. Through these cultural norms, the society has the strong relationship of the present with past. If we peep into the Early Harappan to Late Harappan Phases, the unanimity in the Intangible Culture is found. This unanimity is observed through the minute study on the Indus Valley artifacts which are the best source to revive the ancient culture in the present age. This practice is possible when we apply the methods of Digital Intangible Cultural Heritage, which is the sub-field of Intangible Culture (Muqem, 2015). In a broader spectrum, this digital Intangible Cultural Heritage is executed with digital media which preserve the Intangible Cultural Heritage (Kalay *et al.* 2007). Through this digital media sources, the cultural property of Indus Valley is preserved. Cuisines, skills, crafts, dances, festivals, rituals, music, linguistics, scripts, and family system of the Indus Valley Civilization has been traced out. This is the exposure which portrays the Indus Valley Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Hierarchy between Past and Present

Past is always alive if present has a hierarchy with it. Visiting all archaeological sites of Indus Valley Civilization is the best exposure to analyzing the continuation of the past to present. The Harappa Village, which is very close to Harappa site of Indus Valley Civilization still, has the attributes of this civilization as it was practiced in the Neolithic age. One aspect of this civilization was the double stories houses and this tradition is still followed by the local people of this Harappa Village. Thus, the ancient Intangible Cultural Heritage is alive if it has the hierarchy with the present one.

The role of Indus artifacts in the enhancement economy

In the modification of the Indus artifacts and its further Re-appearance in different goods, is the exquisite practice which enhances the economy of the region. All the styles and designs of the ancient ceramics are applied on the clothes, households, decoration pieces, and vernacular good. Through this job, the local and international markets get mobility in the production of the goods. All the national and international platforms are the sources to enhance the marketing of these altered artifacts or replicas. For the growth of the tourism industry, these altered and Re-appeared artifacts play a vital role too.

CONCLUSION

The Mature Phase of Indus Valley Civilization is full of urban activities which have been noted by many archaeologists or anthropologists. These urban activities depict the civic life of the people. Through the Cultural Mapping, all these activities including agricultural, architectural, religious, social, and cultural have been traced out. Through this process, the rest of the world also has approaches to understand this aboriginal

civilization. Whether this civilization had a trade, exchange, and political influences of the other contemporaries, but its Intangible Cultural Heritage illustrate the different and unique stories about it. Its traditions, cultural norms, and civic life is unparalleled. Cultural Mapping gives the record of its metropolitan cities (planned cities) which had a social hierarchy that demonstrates as full fledges civilization with the attributes of civic life. Other intangible aspects of this civilization are, people were good at the accuracy of the measurement, people fabricated the uniformity in weights, and people had Bronze Technology through which they made weapons, plough tools, and domestic tools. The process of Cultural Mapping provides the identity and continuation of any community. Thus, the Mapping of Indus Valley Intangible Cultural Heritage illustrates enriching community, urban planning, and transformation process of Intangible Cultural Heritage to next generations retrospectively. Finally, the Indus artifacts or antiquities have been imperative not only in the past but in the present too. Through the alteration or modification, these artifacts may increase the economy of the region.

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