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CULTURAL HISTORY OF INDIAN ARTS WITH SUBCONTINENT

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Cultural History of Indian Arts with Subcontinent

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Abstract – The role of these cultural diplomats was significant in contributing to the better sociocultural understanding and building relationship between people of different faiths, sects and regions. Bachhofer provided a rigorous framework of stylistic analysis, which included details of individual forms and overall composition. While he was trained in Western art history, he was also sensitive to the distinctiveness of Indian art. The art of Indian subcontinent is idealistic in nature with strong traces of different cultures and civilizations in it. It is evident from the history that the cultural diplomats in the region were the invaders, warriors that brought the cultural diffusion through hard power but along with them there were a great number of soft power promoters as artists, suifs, poets, musicians, and story tellers. The role of these cultural diplomats was significant in contributing to the better sociocultural understanding and building relationship between people of different faiths, sects and regions.

Keywords: Cultural, History, Indian, Arts Subcontinent, relationship, regions, Western, etc.

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INTRODUCTION

Before partition in 1947, the Indian subcontinent includes Pakistan, India and Bangladesh; today, the three independent countries and nations. This Indian Subcontinent has a history of some five millennium years and was spread over the area of one and a half millions of square miles (Swarup, 1968). The region is rich in natural as well as physical beauty. It has mountains, plains, forests, deserts, lakes, hills, and rivers with different climate and seasons throughout the year. This natural beauty has deep influence on the culture and life style of the people of the region. This land has been an object of invasion either from the route of mountains or the sea, bringing with it the new masses and ideas and assimilating and changing the culture of the people. The invaders were the Aryans, the Dravidians, the Parthians, the Greeks, the Sakas, the Kushans, the Huns, the Turks, the Afghans, and the Mongols (Singh, 2008) who all brought their unique cultures with them and the amalgamation gave rise to a new Indian Civilization.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

The history of Indian subcontinent starts with the Indus Valley Civilization and the coming of Aryans both are known as Pre-Vedic and Vedic periods. The Indus River Civilization dates back to 2300 – 1750 BC and had two main cities; Harappa in western Punjab and Mohenjo-Daro on the lower Indus in Sindh – now the

two important provinces of Pakistan. Both cities were urban grain growing civilizations and were believed to have run by Aryans who came from Iran (Mcintosh, 2008).

Effects of culture on intercultural relations: There is evidence of cultural relationships of Indus valley civilization with other communities like the similar items are found in Mesopotamia (Mcintosh, 2008).



Figure-1 Aryan Migration or Vedic Period (1750-1000 BC)

The Aryans were nomads who worshipped gods (their gods were all representation of nature). Their literature known as Rig Veda has many hymns for the gods, they distinguished between small gods and the Supreme Creator. Their worship includes sacrifice followed by the prayers. The Aryans expanded their empire first towards the valleys of Ganges and the Jamuna and later to include the whole of Northern India (Sharma, 1999).

North India/South India: The Satavahan ruled over Northern Deccan and extended to South for the period of nearly 300 years and their empire flourish with trade in towns and ports. The Romans convoy came to its western coasts for spices, diamonds and pearls and from eastern ports the ships went to Ceylon, Burma, Malaya, Java and Annam. They also had vast plains on the wide river valley in eastern coast. The Satavahanas were catholic and offered charities to Buddhism and gifted marvelously to shrines and monasteries where the monks could live and meditate (Thaper, 2002).

Effects of culture on intercultural relations: The Buddhist teachings promoted peace as they advocated for religion as a personal entity and spread the message of love and harmony among the people of different communities. The story tellers used to narrate the stories of kings and common people of different cultures which brought them together without even visiting the other societies and bringing the culture familiarity as is still seen between the people living at the Afghanistan and Peshawar borders of Pakistan.

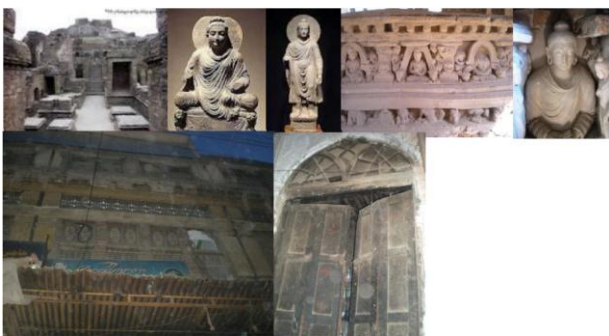


Figure-2 Effects of culture on intercultural relations

As Akbar was pro Hindu and married a Hindu woman. He brought the idea of fusion of Hindu and Muslim culture. The art of his time had blend of both cultures, thus idealistic in nature. Jahangir and Shahjahan his successors maintained the same outlook of the society but Aurangzeb Alamgir (A.D. 1658-1707) break that spells again into conventional Muslim policy (Richard, 1995). Art in the Muslim era flourished due to their good taste and generosity in aesthetic sense. The artists, writers, poets, thinkers, scholars from all over Asia came to their courts.



It was a period of Indo-Islamic culmination of expression and glory in arts (music, painting, crafts and architecture) and culture (Richard, 1995). All the Mughal emperors encouraged the artists and musicians and thus the people of different religions come together and also the sufis saints of the time paved a way in bringing people together.

CONCLUSION:

The art of Indian subcontinent is idealistic in nature with strong traces of different cultures and civilizations in it. It is evident from the history that the cultural diplomats in the region were the invaders, warriors that brought the cultural diffusion through hard power but along with them there were a great number of soft power promoters as artists, suifs, poets, musicians, and story tellers. The role of these cultural diplomats was significant in contributing to the better sociocultural understanding and building relationship between people of different faiths, sects and regions.

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