



From Raw Earth To Timeless Art; The Evolution Of Stone In Sculpture- A Review

Ratan Kanwar

Assistant Professor

MRSPTU, BATHINDA

Abstract:

The Earth, once a lifeless block of the sun's fire, gradually cooled over millions of years, forming sea lakes, and rivers. Geological changes have led to the formation of various types of stones, which are integral parts of the Earth. In ancient times, a large part of the Earth was covered with water, and as the floods slowed down, land began to emerge. The process of ocean disappearance is difficult to confirm, but it is believed to have started from the Stone Age and continued continuously for several thousand years. Signs of life started appearing on Earth around 800 million years ago, and it took millions of years for its gradual development. India's geographical conditions have been explained in Manusmriti in four forms: Brahmavatra, Brahmarshidesh, Madhadesh, and Aryavarta. The literal meaning of Aryavart is "to return," suggesting someone's return to work. India, the birthplace of the Vedic religion and culture, has been a significant place in history. The Aryans, who favoured this region due to its fertility, were drawn to the vast oceans, mountains, and rivers. India's history of culture and art is extensive, with ancient sculpture and architecture being a major part of human life. The development of architecture and sculpture in India has been gradual, with evidence dating back to the Vedic period.

India is a religious country, and sculptures have been an integral part of its culture since ancient times. Art is an essential part of culture, contributing to making the human mind clear, beautiful, and orderly. Since ancient times, the study of art has been an essential part of education, as it is considered the result of the belief that its tool is a means, not an end. Through this tool, the person reaches completeness.

Keywords: earth, crust formation, religion, and development of art.

Introduction:

It is estimated that millions of years ago this earth was a lifeless block of the blazing fire of the sun. The earth gradually cooled down after many movements and changes over many years. The Earth originated from a small part of the sun, and most geologists completely accepted this opinion. Due to geographical reasons or various processes occurring in the interior of the earth, it is difficult to confirm when the ocean started to disappear. Over time, the sea gradually began to disappear completely, and desert lands started to appear. Scholars estimate that signs of life started appearing on Earth about 800 million years ago, and it took millions of years for its gradual development.

In this context, it is mentioned in 'Agni Purana' that when the ocean started surging and immersing the earth in water as per the orders of lord Brahma, 'Veva swat Manu' who lived in the Himalayas, sat on the bank of river Kritamala and offered prayers. Along with human development, civilization and culture have also expanded. The value of a country's culture can be judged based on its ancient sculpture and architecture. These are a major part of human life. Art always attracts both the heart and eyes. The "Shiva Sutra Vimarshini" describes various conditions of art. According to it, art gives everyone the means to experience supreme bliss through sight or hearing.

In the present review development of art in the human history along with evolution of human is reviewed.

Discussion:

Gradually, the flood started slowing down, and due to the receding of the sea, land began to appear. Through innumerable changes, sea lakes and countless rivers formed on Earth. Due to the movement and pressure resulting from geological changes on the earth, soil was transformed into rocks and the formation of several types of stones became possible.[1] The earth is snowy in some places, desert in some places, forest in some places, and oceanic in some places. Stones are an integral part of the Earth.

Surface areas other than the aquatic area are under the stony area. The combined form of stones and soil is land on which terrestrial animals live. We can see stones as integral parts of the earth, in different forms.[2]

Almost all theories related to the origin of Earth prove that Earth and other planets originated in the form of hot gaseous substances. These hot gaseous substances convert into a thin liquid, cool down over time, and appear solid.[3]

Wood's gaseous theory, Laplace's nebula hypothesis, and Jeans and Jeffries' tidal theory are especially noteworthy among the major theories. The most reliable method for deciding the chronology of the Earth's origin is Carbon Dating. According to this method, the chronology of the earth's origin is 4.6 billion years.[4]

About the earth's shape, it has been confirmed that it is spherical and not completely round. Its equatorial diameter is approximately 12762 km (7927 miles), and its polar diameter is approximately 12714 km (7900 miles). If the unevenness of the earth's surface is not considered and the sea level is considered continuous, then this shape of the Earth can be called 'geoid'.[5]

From the various facts obtained, it is known that, in ancient times, a large part of the Earth was covered with water.

In religious Puranas, Lord Varaha saves the earth with tusks. This story reminds us of a retreating sea. In the Shekhawati region, a vast expanse of sand is spread, where shells, conch shells, and innumerable cowries are found at various places, suggesting that this area once lay in the sea. Even in the present era, similar types of sand deposits are seen in the coastal areas of rivers and seas.[6]

Despite all kinds of criticisms, it is certain that this entire process started from the Stone Age and continued continuously for several thousand years.[7]

Many experts believe that unique changes in climate occasionally occur because of natural causes. They contend that the last three to four thousand years were when the desert regions of Rajasthan originated.

The area appearing from sea level was named "Maru". "Desert. The origin of the word "Maru" is from the Junagarh inscriptions of Rigveda, Mahabharata, Brihad Samhita, Sammohatantra, and Rudra Daman. The description of the "Maru" can also be seen in the context of Raghu's Victory, in the poetry written by the great poet Kalidas.[8]

They believed that humans evolved from a creature of the monkey species, which must not have been more than a few lakh years old. It took thousands of years for humans to rise above the animal level and become civilized.[9]

In accepting the earth's existence, the universe was divided into three parts under the Vedas, known as the earth world, space world, and heaven world.

In the oldest Veda, the Rigveda, the earth is called by the names 'Bhoomi', and 'Kshama' and is described as 'Mahi' (great), Urvi (Wide), 'Uttana' (wide), and 'Apara' (limitless). Apart from this, the Earth is said to be spherical or circular because it is covered by oceans.

The origin of this creation is described in ancient texts from many countries. Similarly, in India, the origin of creation is considered to have started with the incident of 'Mahapralaya'. [10] While he was doing this, suddenly, a small fish fell onto his fingers along with water. At that time, an unknown voice asked him to keep the fish safe. At no time, the fish assumed a large form. Manu, along with his sons, women, and other sages, and all living animals, trees, plants, and flowers boarded about and tied that boat to a horn of the same huge fish. In this way, everyone survived the great cataclysm, which is why 'Manu' was recognized as the first humans. [11]

The geographical conditions of India's existence have been explained in Manusmriti in four forms: Brahmavatra, Brahmarshidesh, Madhadesh, and Aryavarta. Making its limitations clear, it has been written that:

“Aasmudratu ve poorvadasmudratu pashchyat,

Tayorevantram Giryorarayvatam prachkshte”

That is, “The land situated between the eastern and western sea, the northern Himalayas and southern Vindhya has been recognized by the name of Aryavarta.” [12]

The literal meaning of 'Aryavart' lies in the word itself, 'Aavart,' meaning to return. This word indicates someone's return to work. Some scholars believe that Aryans had come from outside, which seems to be an imagination. This implies that when the flood situation ended, the entire sea of the Uttargiri region or Teri-Bhavar began to dry. As a result, the Aryan people returned to Aryavarta from Brahmavata, that is, the distance from Haridwar to the Manasarovar region. Hence, it was natural for Bharat Varsha to be named Aryavart. Frequency of Aryans (returning home). This was explained by Aryavarta.

The religion, justice, conduct, and governance mentioned in detail in the Puranas seem to have been created only for India. India is the place where the all-round development and propagation of the Vedic religion and culture took place.

Many facts are associated with the name 'Bharat.' Rishabh, who was a later descendant of 'Manu', his son Bharat embodies the name of Bharat Varsha. On the other hand, under a reference compiled in "Vayu Purana," Dushyant Shakuntala's son has been considered responsible for the name Bharat. Another reason is that this country was named Bharat because it was the land of residence of the people of Bharata. [13]

India's natural environment has played an important role in influencing and inspiring the lives of its people. The creation of a natural environment has been possible with the help of sea, river, and mountain. [14] In 'Estreya Brahman' it has been confirmed that the earth is surrounded by sea on all sides. This confirmation is also made clear by the mantra of Rigveda-

“O Indra, we consider you to be the one with beautiful weapons and beautiful protection, the one with beautiful eyes, the one who fills the four oceans with water, the one who is praised again and the remover of sorrows.” [15]

Regarding the seas, there has been relief that the seas of Vedic India kept changing with time due to earthquakes, heavy rains, and floods, due to which necessary changes started taking place in their geographical conditions.

The main reason for the Aryans liking this region is that the sea, lakes, and rivers are believed to be responsible for maintaining the fertility of the land.

Various examples of the origin of the plants and medicines grown here are the mountain ranges, starting from the Vedas and extending to the later literature.[16] Hence, it becomes clear that the vast oceans, skyscraper mountains, and flowing rivers have played an important role in the upliftment of spiritual and material life from the distant past to the present time in India, which provides a platform for innovation for the artists and litterateurs here.

Culture is also considered the same. If we want to know the cultural activities of a country, then it is very important to look at its literature and religious beliefs.[17]

If Indian culture is assessed in the context of world culture, it appears to be wishing for human welfare and has also demonstrated diversity in unity in diversity. Three eternal elements have been given importance in Indian culture-

“Satyam, Sivam, Sundaram.” [18]

The human heart was purified and refined with their help.

It is considered natural to be guided by his true form in philosophy, his Shiva form in policy (discipline), and his beautiful form in art.

The origin of culture has only become possible by combining these three basic elements.

They have played an important role in human interest and welfare.[19] A renowned expert has opined that India is the only country where family and social responsibility, complete devotion to god, belief in the transience of life, the inevitability of rebirth and karma, feeling of compassion towards every living being, feeling of brotherhood towards human being, richness of beauty, moving towards immortality and such feelings are given priority which help in achieving the goal in human beings, love for life arises and the desire to survive becomes stronger, apart from this, tolerance, generosity, and greatness are counted among its main ideals.[20]

It has been in India since ancient times that different castes and sub-castes tried to enter here, due to which many times a situation of inequality arose and a situation of great confusion started arising in establishing the path of equality but with the help of attachment to one God through complete self-confidence and self-devotion it achieved unity.[21]

As a result, the invaders were automatically destroyed and India's name went up in history as valiant, invincible, and self-strong, and was inscribed in golden letters. Indian culture has made a prestigious and unforgettable place in the history of world culture.[22]

The history of Indian culture and art has been extensive. In every era, through his development efforts, man has tried to achieve the ultimate limits of proficiency and efficiency, progress and expansion through his activities.[23]

Indian sculpture and architecture are of the best quality in the entire world, it is a matter of pride for the country.[24]

Since ancient times, people from different countries have composed various types of stories regarding the supernatural creation of the first human being by a deity.

In these myths, the influence of natural, social, and economic environments can be seen.

“Kalanam Pravaram Chitram Dharamkartham Moksha dam.”

(That is, religion, wealth, work, and salvation are achieved through art. Therefore, instead of ‘art for art’s sake,’ art has been considered a means for life)²⁵. The culture of a country symbolizes its spiritual, scientific, and artistic achievements. If we want to touch on the story of honor and glory of any country, then it is very important to explore its culture. Literature, art or craft, architecture, music, sculpture, dance, and drama are considered special contributions to artistic development. Therefore, to study the culture of a country, it is necessary to acquire knowledge of the arts.[26]

There has been a gradual development of architecture and sculpture in India. Evidence of statues in the Vedic period has been discussed, but it is difficult to find the remains of statues of that time. It is well known that India is a religious country, and that sculpture is an integral part of religion. These statues, carved in different types of stones and shapes, have assigned identity to our religion.

Indian sculptures are not only the expression of man’s faith but also the embodiment of a very rich, diverse, spiritual, and philosophical background.

Since ancient times, humans have made paintings and statues for worship and enjoyment. Indian man made the idol an easy way to reach that supernatural mystery through which he could touch that power.

Along with the story of human life, the wide development of art has also been possible.[27] The paintings carved by the man of that time reveal his artistic inclination. Human dedication to artistic beauty is linked to human origin, which he attempts to display through his physical signs. If the aim is to identify the value of a country’s culture, then it is very important to touch on its ancient sculpture, architecture, and literature. Indian sculpture literature has achieved a high status worldwide.

The statue is identical to a book, which contains together the images of the primal form of philosophical thinking the subline of metaphysics, and the ecstasy of devotional mysticism.[28]

Since ancient times, humans have created paintings and statues for worship and enjoyment. In ancient times, idol worship was an integral part of India’s daily routine, as well as in other countries. The proof is that many idols have been found in different locations. Because of many reasons, the practice of idol worship started disappearing in other places, but in India, this tradition has maintained its unique identity even till today.[29]

The reason for making statues was not only for worship, but also for pay and entertainment. Many toys, such as men, animals, birds, fish, crocodiles, etc., have been given shape by modeling them. The idols are made from metal to clay, gold, silver, copper, brass, bronze, tin, glass, iron, bone, ivory, gems, wood, stone, clay, etc. have been adopted as a medium.[30]

Art is an essential part of culture, which contributes to making the human mind clear, beautiful, and orderly. Considering religion and philosophical beliefs as important, unique experiments have been done in Indian arts.[31]

If we look at it, if culture is the soul of a country, then civilization is considered the body of the country. The progressive artist made it his main goal to use the new tools and instruments created by civilization. This is the reason that along with civilization, the artifacts stay dynamic, reflecting the traditional form of culture and adopting changes.[32]

In the oldest Indian texts, four main proposes of life were mentioned. Dharama, 2-Artha, 3-Kama, and Moksha. The purpose of art performed by humans is also considered to be the achievement of these means. This fact is made meaningful by the Chitra sutra of Vishnudharmottara purana.[33]

The word 'Art' originates from a Latin word 'Art,' which means 'Workmanship.' Art expresses any special feelings that arise in the heart.

In the context of art, many Indian and many Western scholars expressed different opinions.[34]

According to Acharya Kshemaraja, art is something that provides satisfaction to the soul, presents objects with a sense of self, and resonates with the mind; this is what is called art. [35]

Ancient critics have considered this merely a means of entertainment. However, Bhattikavya clearly defined art in his words, dividing it into categories such as literature, music, fine arts, drama, animal behaviour, and logical criticism. Some Indian philosophers considered art not just as an aesthetic expression but as an intellectual one. In Kamasutra, 64 arts and 72 types of fine arts have been elaborately described, of which 86 can be listed. These arts include singing, dancing, instrumental music, painting, sculpture, weaving, and many others.[36]

According to great Indian thinkers, art is an expression of the aesthetic sense, which is synonymous with art. Poet Rabindranath Tagore also believes that art is the form of the essence of beauty, and this should be understood in relation to the soul rather than merely as a form of beauty. Maithili Sharan Gupta, in his famous work "Saket," accepted the power of eloquence as a form of art. This art is known as the harmonious restoration of disagreements, which is a means to provide joy.[37]

Plato also described the arts based on their utility and aesthetic value in his philosophical works, and he made clear distinctions between those that are useful and those that are purely aesthetic.

Arts and fine art were prominent. In terms of utility, it is believed that they are related to all physical comfort levels. According to them, the arts used for decorating are considered utilitarian arts, while fine arts are those that are important for beauty. These include architecture, painting, dance, musical arts, and drama.[38]

Since ancient times, the study of art has been an essential part of education. A person is not considered to be cultured without them. Art is considered the result of the belief that its tool is a means, not an end. Through this tool, the person attains completeness, and that knowledge moves towards science, from the Vedas to Vedanta, and ultimately, from bliss to supreme bliss.

Conclusion:

The development of art in human history is deeply associated with religion and culture. art consistently progressed from prehistoric times to modern ones, passing through various stages of development. Changes in art have been persistent along with human evolution.

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