

PAINTING STUDY MATERIAL FOR CLASS 11TH BASED NCERT

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NAME : BULL SEAL
MEDIUM : WHITE STONE/STEATITE
PERIOD : CIRCA 2500 BC
LOCATION : MOHENJODARO
SIZE : 2.5 × 2.5 × 1.4 cms.
COLLECTION : NATIONAL MUSEUM, NEW DELHI.

THEME / SUBJECT MATTER : A low relief square seal of a humped bull with engravings on top in a pictographic script.

DESCRIPTION : This Zebu/Humped Bull seal is a fine example of animal study showing great strength and vigor of this bovine animal. Such detailing is a great artistic achievement at such an early date. It is a square seal engraved in a pictographic script. Although the iconography* cannot be properly identified, it is likely that this popular cattle-motif is related to the significance of the bull as a fertility and lunar symbol in ancient Mesopotamia. It could be the leader who stands for their protection and ensures breeding and reproduction or it could just be an animal used to sacrifice/offering to god by a powerful tribe.

The embossed body of the bull is strong with wide curved large horns and a dominant hump; the folds of skin hanging from the neck are incised realistically. The seal made in a low relief has all the bodily details from sharp horns to hardened hoofs carved thoroughly. This bull is perhaps a prototype of the Shiva's bull-Nandi.

Seals are another significant aspect of the Indus art and craft. They were produced for mainly commercial purpose. These are engraved in a 'pictographic script' often used as amulets (taveez), carried as modern day identity cards. Numerous square seals are found engraved with images of animals (bulls, rhinoceroses, elephants, etc.), fantastic beasts (unicorns) and human or divine figures. The seals were mostly made of steatite (soft stone found in rivers) with a loop for suspension on the opposite side covered with a mineral called natron and fired to obtain white surface.

To be continues.....