

Kunst und Kultur im Bergbau: Indien

Art and Culture in Mining: India

Искусство и культура в горной промышленности: Индия

Von/by

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Abstract

Agriculture and mining are the two basic industries, without which our civilization would not have reached the heights that it has. The art of mining in India dates back to the antiquity,

perhaps to the dawn of history. Iron, copper, gold, tin and diamonds were used in that hoary past. Archaeological excavations of the Indus Valley Civilization at Mohenjo-Daro, dated 5000 - 3000 B.C. revealed that the ancients were working for semi-precious stones. The Rg Veda contains words, ACHATA, DHAM and SANADHAM for melting and tempering, while zinc smelting was known in Zawar, Rajasthan 200 years ago. There are remnants of ancient mining art in Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh. Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador to the court of Chandragupta Maurya (300 B.C.) refers to them, while Kautilya, in his Artha Sastra, devotes two chapters to mining. The Iron Pillar in Delhi is a very good example of metallurgical skill of the smiths then. It is interesting to note that the later developments of mines in the modern period were exactly in those areas where ancient mining and metallurgy were undertaken, e.g. Kolar, Huttl, Zawar, Agnigundala and Khetri. Brooke refers to art of fire-setting in these mines. There have been accounts of gems and gem cutters in the writings of VARAHAMIHARA, PLINY, Jean-Baptist TAVERNIER, Marco POLO and others. Some of the most famous diamonds, like the Kohinoor, the Pitta and the Regent were obtained from the diamond-bearing conglomerates in the Krishna Basin. Books and photos of the mining and metallurgy practices, on the cultural and social aspects are still available.

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