

Unicorn of the Indus Valley Civilization in Epics and Mythologies: A Comparative Study

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Abstract:

This research paper conducts a thorough examination with primary objectives focused on acquiring a comprehensive understanding of scrutinizing portfolio analysis, navigating the complexities of the stock market, addressing risk management considerations, and exploring the psychological facets of trading, the study aims to provide valuable insights for investors and researchers. Employing a descriptive research design, the paper establishes a structured framework for data collection, analysis, and interpretation, ensuring the reliability and validity of the study's outcomes. The research emphasizes technical analysis, specifically delving into candlestick patterns, and systematically evaluates indicators, oscillators, and trading strategies prevalent in financial markets. Distinguishing investing from trading and illuminating the divergence from speculative activities like gambling are additional focal points.

In terms of data collection, the paper opts for a secondary method, utilizing existing information from literature, articles, and databases. This pragmatic choice aligns with considerations of accessibility, cost-effectiveness, and time efficiency, facilitating an in-depth analysis of the company's financial landscape and investment dynamics. Ultimately, the research contributes a nuanced understanding of financial markets and investment strategies, offering insights crucial for investors, analysts, and researchers navigating the complex terrain of corporate finance.

In this piece of research, an attempt is made to show whether there is a relation in between the unicorn, a single-horned male bovine of the Indus valley civilization and mythological characters like, the *R̥ṣyaśṛṅga*, *Ekaśṛṅga*, *Isiṅga*, *dīptaśṛṅga* and *nidhiśṛṅga* which are depicted in the Vedic and Buddhist literature. There is a bundle of controversies about the scepticism of the single-horned bull of the Indus valley civilization, which may not be easy to decode completely without deciphering the Indus inscriptions. Few scholars have attempted to scout the link between the Indus valley civilization and the Vedic and Buddhist mythologies, as there may be a connection between the unicorn of the Indus Valley Civilization and the above-mentioned mythological characters.

Introduction

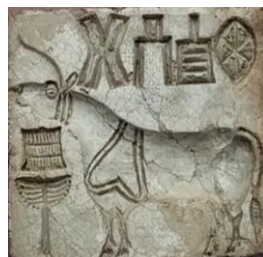


Figure 1: Unicorn Seal, Harappa, Punjab Province, Pakistan (Steatite, 11081/A21204)

The history of the Indus Valley civilization has long been shrouded in mystery and controversy. Given that the script has not been completely decoded, it is difficult to draw any definitive conclusions about the culture. One of the most controversial seals of the Indus valley civilization is the unicorn seal. It becomes clear that there are many different ways to depict a one-horned animal throughout history and space, which makes sense given that unicorns are mythical creatures. There are regional variances because artists in various locations and eras only have the fantastic heritage that was governed by a religious code as a model. The Indus artists were quite proficient at showing two horns if they wanted to. “In the face of this we are bound, I think, to conclude that a one- horned creature is intended to be understood on these seals, and unless there is any truth in the ancient tradition of a one horned ox in India, we must regard this creature as fabulous.¹ The mythological tradition around the unicorn was fairly powerful, and this can be seen frequently in the writings of Greek authors. Many of them affirm the unicorn's historical existence and believe that India was the place where it first existed.²

Carrying a single horn in its forehead, the beast present in many seals of Indus valley civilization along with some written undeciphered inscription made it a part of the enigma. There is abundant proof that the *Rigveda*, have been composed between 1500 BC and 1200 BC. Some periods may be contemporary with the ‘mature’ Harappan civilization (2500 BC to 1900 BC). The place of the composition of *Rigveda*, i.e., the region between the Indus and the now dried up Saraswathi River and the discoverer sites of Indus Valley civilization, are the same. If the two cultures are contemporary, so there is a possibility that they have shared the same culture.³⁻⁶ According to S.R. Rao,⁷ there is a similarity between the Harappan signs and the later Brahmi script of the 5th century BC. So, the unicorn of the Indus valley civilization might have shared some conceptual understanding or ritualistic thoughts with the early Vedic period.

R̥ṣyaśṛṅga in Vedic literature



Figure 2: Entrance of the Rashyamuni temple

Few scholars are trying to compare *R̥ṣyaśṛṅga* mentioned in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*, *nidhiśṛṅga* in *Viṣṇudharmottara-Purāṇa* and the *Ekaśṛṅga* of the Buddhist mythology with the Unicorn of the Indus valley. In the story of *Rishyasrighathe* sage, *Vibhandaka Kaiyapa* got his semen ejaculated after seeing the nymph *Urvasi* in a lake and the semen was lapped by hind drinking water from the lake. The hind was a daughter of the gods who was transformed by *Brahma* into a hind and was fated to give birth to a sage to be freed. And in this process, she gave birth to a son named *R̥ṣyaśṛṅga* who had a horn in his forehead. The naïve sage was brought up in a peaceful forest and was unknown about the rest of the world. In that period, the king of *Anga* faced drought as because he was wrong to a *Brahman*. After assuaging with the *Brahmans* and taking their advice, the king ordered the minister to bring *R̥ṣyaśṛṅga* who has the power to bring rain. With their command, a courtesan went with a number of women to bring

R̥ṣyaśr̥ṅga to *Anga*. After reaching the forest, the courtesan sent her daughter to lure the sage. The daughter tempted the sage and the enchanted sage got inside a boat and the courtesans tactfully managed to bring *R̥ṣyaśr̥ṅga* to *Lomapada* who had arranged a beautiful forest for the sage and kept him with female companions. (M.B., II, chapters 1 10-r 12). In *Bala Khanda* of *Ramayana* *R̥ṣyaśr̥ṅga* was the brother -in-law of *Rama* and son of *Vibhandak Rishi* and celestial paramour *Urvasi*. *Indra*, the King of the Gods, sent *Urvasi* in to entice *Vibhandak* and interfere with his penance. *Urvasi* abandoned the baby and her lover after fulfilling her task and ascended to the heavens. After this experience, *Vibandhak* had a strong aversion to women, and he raised the boy alone in a jungle, away from society. No girls or ladies were ever seen by *R̥ṣyaśr̥ṅga*, and he was never made aware of their existence. The highland area in the middle of Nepal, today known as Resunga in the Gulmi District of the Lumbini Zone, is associated to *R̥ṣyaśr̥ṅga's* early upbringing. *Santa* was the child of *Raja Romapada*, the ruler of *Angadesh* (modern-day Jharkhand/West Bengal), and his wife *Vershini*, *Kausalya's* older sister. She was treated as the daughter of *Dasaratha* and *Kausalya*, who had been childless for many years.



Figure 3: Sculpture of sage *R̥ṣyaśr̥ṅga* in Rishyamuni temple at Kigga

While the king *Romapada* and *Santa* were engaged in conversation one day, a Brahmin arrived to request assistance with farming during the rainy season. *Romapada* paid no attention to the plight of the *Brahmin*. The *Brahmin* was infuriated by this and fled the realm. There was little rain during the monsoon season because *Indra*, the god of rain, was unable to take his devotee's insult. *Romapada* is informed that the drought and famine plaguing the kingdom of *Anga* can only be stopped by a brahmin who possesses the abilities that come from maintaining absolute chastity. Only *R̥ṣyaśr̥ṅga* is such a person. He needs to be transported to the city and convinced to perform the required rituals. The king sends young women, and subsequently his daughter *Santa*, to acquaint the boy with normal society despite his fear of the boy's father's authority and wrath. *R̥ṣyaśr̥ṅga* does this, employs his abilities, the kingdom experiences abundant rains, and marries *Santa*. Most of the narrative focuses on the young man's emotions as he first encounters women. Later, when *Dasaratha* was childless, *R̥ṣyaśr̥ṅga* (*Ekaśr̥ṅga*) performed the *Putrakameshti Yagna*, which resulted in the birth of four sons: *Rama*, *Bharata*, *Lakshmana*, and *Satrughna*. There is a temple of the sage *R̥ṣyaśr̥ṅga* named as *Rishyamuni* temple situated about 6 kms from Sringeri near Sirimane water falls. Legend has it that the famed Rishyasringar Maharishi once resided in this ancient temple. Rishyasringar is the source of the name Sringeri. Rishyasringar is thought to bring abundance in both rain and prosperity.

In *Viṣṇudharmottara-Purāṇa* III, 62, 3. *Nidhiśṛṅgān* was described *vṛṣān*, which means (painted) bulls which have treasures on their horns. In Vedic literature, the horn is related with Gods. As *Siva* is described as *Diptashringa* and *Ekaśṛṅga* in *Linga Purana* and *Vishnu* referred as *Ekshringatanu* in *Satvata Samhita*.⁸ In the *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas*, horn is clearly associated with *Siva* and *Vishnu*. One of *Siva's* names in the *Mahabharata*, chapter XIII, verse 1263, is *Sringin*, or "the Horned One," *Siva* is described as being "goat-shaped" and "antelope-shaped" in the *Linga Purana* (*ajascha mrigarupascha*). which may highlight his propensity for hunting antelopes and wild goats, which are both closely associated with *Agni* in later Vedic literature.⁹ *Shiva* is also mentioned as the 'Protector of Treasures'.¹⁰ It's also noteworthy that horn played a significant role in *Saivite* rites. The horn and cups fashioned of *palas'a* leaves were used to decorate a *Siva-linga*, according to the *Linga Purana*, chapter XXV, verse 22.

Representation of unicorn as a chief priest (*Vrishabha*)

The single-horned Bull is represented as the metamorphic chief priest because the face of the bull always remains towards the direction of the fire pot or the fire altar i.e., facing the fire and maybe contrive with the sacred Brahman or the chief priest chanting the Mantras. In *Rgveda* there are many references to *Vrishabha* , the Bull was compared to a priest who conducts *yajna* .So the Bull which is a very powerful animal mentioned as the *Rgvedic* priest *Hotr* i.e., one of the four principal priest .

*'Agnimile purohitam, Yajñasya
devam rutvijam, Hotaram ratna dhatamam'*

It means: I give thanks to *Agni*, who is the *Purohita*, the community's well-wisher, *Ritvija*, and *Hotaram*—the priests who call upon and invoke the gods to partake of the sacrifices. *Agni*, who serves as a mediator between earth and heaven, uses the sound of crackling flames to inform the Gods about the *Yajna* and to transport them to the location of the sacrifice. Before every *Yajna*, the chief *Agni* must be reactivated and invoked.

In *Rig Veda* (3.27.15) *Agni* and the invoker of *Agni* is compared to Bull as the human priest.

*Vrishanam tva, vayam vrishan Vrishanaha ,
samidhimahi, agne didyatam brihat.*

Agni is sparked like a bull, and as we are bulls ourselves, we sparked thee as a bull. Bull, you shine so brightly.

Rigveda (1.31.5) quotes:

*Tvamagne vrishabha pushtivardhanam,
udyatasruche bhavasi Sharavayaha*

It means: The *hotri* priest, who knows what to present, puts the ladle up and utters the *mantra* formula while making an offering, should summon *Agni*, saying, "Thou *Agni*, art a bull that makes our stock multiply." These two priests, who ask the gods to attend the *yajna*, are likewise mentioned in numerous verses of the *Rig Veda* (1.142.8).¹¹

Even in mediaeval architecture, the idea of depicting the head priest as a bull with a single horn seems to have been popular. The sage *Rṣyaśṛṅga*, is shown in the two images of the panels on the exterior walls of the temples that are presented below. In the first image, *Rṣyaśṛṅga* is seen presenting the three royal queens of *Dasharatha* with *prasada* while sporting a bull's head and an antelope's single horn. The head priest offering sacrifices to *Agni* and leading the *yajna* can be seen in the second image, which also features *Rṣyaśṛṅga*

with a single horn on his forehead. *R̥ṣyaśṛṅga* is a compound noun formed from the words "*Rishi*" and "*shringa*," where "*shringa*" can refer to a horn.



Figure 4: *R̥ṣyaśṛṅga* as the chief priest (with a single horn) conducting Yajna for Dasharatha and royal queens.

This is a conclusive proof to the fact that the head priest was symbolized as a bull with a single horn and *Yajnopavita* as a concept in Indus seals was later changed to anthropomorphic form of man with bull's head and single horn. There are other similar quotations that back up the rationale behind naming *Agni*. The priestly bulls, who serve as *Agni's* igniter, are depicted metaphorically on seals. The single-horned bull is not a direct representation of the domestic animal in art, but rather more of a metaphor or symbol. Thus, the Bull is portrayed as the top priest with a *Kaṇḍūyanī*, or a single antelope horn, and many folds on his head that the priests use to itch the body as needed.¹²

***Isisiṅga* or *Ekaśṛṅga* in buddhist mythology**

Naḷinikā Jātaka

The Nainik Jtaka (J 526) introduces the Buddha's previous existence as a sage who lived by himself in the Himlayas. He excretes semen, which causes a doe who eats the local grass to become pregnant. Later, the deer gives birth to a human male named *Isisiṅga* (Pali), who grows up in extreme isolation from people and, most especially, from women. Even the differences in the two people's bodies and outward looks are unknown to him. A drought is brought on in the nation and blamed on the boy after the boy's ascetic power disturbs the god *Sakka*, the lord of heaven. Then, in order to break the young seer's asceticism and weaken his influence, he persuades the King to send his daughter to seduce him. The King and his daughter agree to participate in the conspiracy in good faith and for the betterment of the country after accepting *Sakka's* logic. While the father is away in the forest gathering roots and fruits, the girl disguises herself as an ascetic and seduces the boy, who has never seen a woman before. The kid actually loses his powers as a result of their revelry, and the girl then leaves. When his father comes home, the enamoured youngster tells him about the girl, only to have him reprimand and admonish him. Then he apologises for his behaviour.

Alambusā Jātaka

The *Alambus Jtaka's* (Jtaka 523) also tells a similar tale of *Isisiṅga* from one of *Bodhisatta's* earlier lives. Here, *Sakka* picks a celestial nymph to entice the hermit. The result is the same: *Sakka* is stopped, the sage is duped, and he repents. He responds by giving the seductress a blessing. The narrative is also found in the *Mahvastu* (Jones' translation, pp. 139–147), but in that text, *Ekaarga*—as he is referred to here—is a *Bodhisattva*, and *Nalin* is *Yaodhar* in a previous existence. The fact that *Ekarga* is unaware of

his marriage to the girl is a significant change in this rendition of the narrative. He gives in to worldly obligations, finally ascends to the throne, and fathers 32 children before returning to the forest once more and regaining his former abilities.

Geographical Similarities between the two cultures

The Rig Veda, thought to have been composed between 1500 BC and 1200 BC, is now supported by a growing body of evidence as being far earlier.³⁻⁶ Some areas might have existed before the "mature" Harappan civilization (2500 BC to 1900 BC). The majority of the Harappan civilization, based on sites excavated, was also located in this area North Western India saw an increase in the number of towns and villages after 4000 BC, concentrating on the fertile alluvial soil around the rivers. The third millennium BC saw a rise in agriculture that laid the foundation for the large, populated towns of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa. American anthropologist James G. Shaffer asserts that the early Indic civilization went through four distinct stages of development. The early food-producing phase (6500–5000 BC) is the first and is distinguished by the lack of pottery. The regionalization age (5000–2600 BC), the second phase, is characterised by distinctive regional styles in toilets and other artefacts. The integration age (2600–1900 BC) is the third phase, which is characterised by a marked cultural homogeneity and the establishment of urban centres like Mohenjo–Daro and Harappa. The localization era (1900–1300 BC) is the fourth phase, and it is distinguished by the merging of regional ceramic styles with patterns from the integration era. Decentralization and reorganisation characterised this time period, during which the same traditions persisted but were modified. The most astounding discovery in Indian archaeology is that the chain of cultural advancements from Mehrgarh to Harappa to modern India does not appear to have been interrupted in any significant way.

Conclusions

The Rig Veda is considered to have been produced mostly in the area between the Indus and the (now dried up) Saraswathi rivers in the north-western Indian subcontinent. Consequently, it is feasible that the two cultures were one and the same if they existed at the same time. Based on the geography and the few cultural similarities of these two contemporary cultures, the Indus Valley Civilization and the Vedic period, it is quite tough to say that these two cultures are strictly different from each other. So, without the presence of proper evidence, it is hard to give a bona fide conclusion about the continuation of Indus culture to Vedic period.

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