A1099-Indus-Balochistan-Kulli Mehi Culture-Dish-N­aga Design-2500 BCE

**Formal Label:** Indus-Balochistan-Kulli Mehi Culture-Dish-N­aga Design-2500 BCE

**Case no.: 3**

**Accession Number: A1099**

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**Display Description:**

Kulli-Mehi Culture Ceramics dating to the “mature” Harappan Period, 3A (Harappa A Phase) c 2500 BCE are characterized by fine-line, linear black painting over a pinkish or buff ground, with an occasional dark red vertical or horizontal band dividing motif zones. The Kulli-Mehi group is divided into two distinct types based on the style of decoration: 1) purely geometric designs and 2) geometric designs combined with stylized animals and plants. It is probable that the second type developed out of the first. Animal and plant motifs are comparable to Nal culture types.

Kulli Mehi Culture figurines are mostly made from molds. Brahman bull figurines are portrayed with elongated bodies, curved horns, powerful muzzles, and disproportionately large, round eyes.

Nal Culture Ceramics also dating to the “mature” Harappan Period, 3A (Harappa A Phase) c 2500 BCE consist of wheel-made bowls and canisters with a distinctive ring base and sides with precise geometric drawings of animals and plants, which are infilled with red, green and yellow pigments. Pottery can have repeated motifs vertically divided by red bars outlined by black.

Of animal figurines, most are made from molds and feature Brahman bulls which are portrayed with long, curved horns, powerful muzzle, and large

round eyes. Distinctive black linear motifs are characteristic of the Kulli-Mehi Culture Ceramics.

**LC Classification:** DS425

**Date or Time Horizon:** 2500 BCE

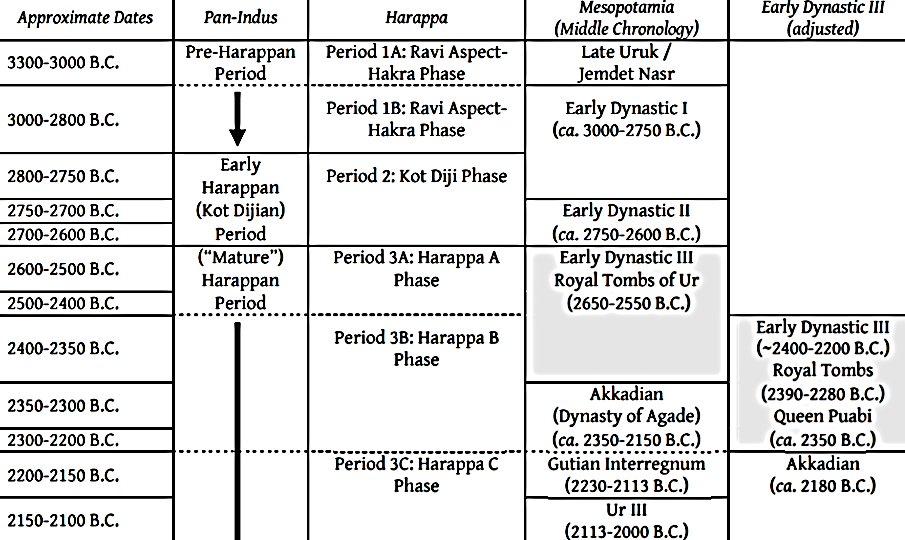


Fig. Comparison of the chronologies of the Indus Civilization Cultures and Mesopotamia (after Lamberg-Karlovsky & Sabloff 1995; Meadow, Kenoyer & Wright. 1998; 1999; 2001; Postgate 1995: Reade 2001).

**Geographical Area:** Indus Valley

**Cultural Affiliation:** Indus Civilization

**Medium:** Terracotta

**Dimensions: Dia. 142.25 mm ; 5.60 in  
Weight: 7.25 oz, 208 gm**

**Provenance: Ex European Collection, 1969-2016.**

**Condition:** Fractured rim segment, re-attached

**Discussion:** The Sanskrit word *Naga* has its root *nag* the word for “serpent”. In Indian mythology, Nagas are primarily sub-marine serpent-beings. The encircling Naga is an emblem of the amphisbaenic serpent that resurrects itself by shedding its skin periodically. It symbolizes, in Jungian psychological terms, the regeneration of a new trans-personal self from the limited ego. The Naga is distinguished from the traditional interpretations of the serpent in the Garden of Eden myth: the emergence of the new enlightened self is distinguished from self-knowledge as a transgression against Yahweh. This juxtaposition of the Indian Naga and the Biblical serpent distinguishes Eastern spiritual enlightenment and Judeo-Christian sin against Yahweh.

This bowl may have been used in a ritual context that contained sanctified water that conferred upon the acolyte the blessings of the amphisbaenic Naga in the unfolding of the trans-personal self. In Hindu mythology this is expressed as the self-sacrifice of the primordial being (the Naga in this case) for the sake of creating the world. This parallels the self-sacrifice of “the christ” or “the anointed-one” for the salvation of humanity (see Elder 2012: 46). Of course, in Christianity sanctified water is conferred upon the acolyte in the Eucharist.

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