



## Mains Marathon

**Day 4:** Bronze sculpture making was started in Indus valley civilization (IVC) and reached its Zenith in Chola reign. Discuss (150 Words)

14 Jul 2022 | GS Paper 1 | Indian Heritage & Culture

### Approach / Explanation / Answer

- Start your answer by giving a brief about bronze sculpture.
- Describe the evolution of Bronze sculpture from the Indus valley Civilization to present.
- Discuss how bronze sculpture reached its zenith during Chola Period.
- Conclude suitably.

### Answer

Indians had **mastered sculptors the casting process as much as they had mastered bronze medium and terracotta sculpture** and carving in stone.

The **cire-perdu or 'lost-wax' process** for casting was learnt as long ago as the Indus Valley Culture. Along with it was discovered the process of making alloy of metals by mixing copper, zinc and tin which is called bronze.

Interesting **images of Jain Tirthankaras have been discovered from Chausa, Bihar, belonging to the Kushana Period** during the second century CE. These bronzes show how the Indian sculptors had mastered the modelling of masculine human physique and simplified muscles.

**Bronze sculptures and statuettes of Buddhist, Hindu and Jain icons have been discovered from many regions of India** dating from the second century until the sixteenth century. Most of these were used for ritual worship and are characterised by exquisite beauty and aesthetic appeal.

At the same time the **metal-casting process continued to be utilised for making articles for various purposes of daily use, such as utensils for cooking, eating, drinking, etc.**

Present-day tribal communities also utilise the 'lost-wax' process for their art expressions. Perhaps **the 'Dancing Girl' from Mohenjodaro is the earliest bronze sculpture datable to 2500 BCE**. The limbs and torso of this female figurine are simplified in tubular form. A similar group of bronze statuettes have been discovered from archaeological excavation at Daimabad (Maharashtra) datable to 1500 BCE.

The bronze casting technique and **making of bronze images of traditional icons reached a high stage of development in South India during the medieval period.**

Although bronze images were modelled and cast during the Pallava Period in the eighth and ninth centuries, some of the **most beautiful and exquisite statues were produced during the Chola Period in Tamil Nadu** from the tenth to the twelfth century.

The distinguished patron during the tenth century was the widowed Chola queen, Sembiyan Maha Devi. **Chola bronzes are the most sought-after collectors' items by art lovers all over the world.**

The **well-known dancing figure of Shiva as Nataraja** evolved and fully developed during the Chola Period and since then many variations of this complex bronze image have been modelled.

The Bronze technique and art of fashioning bronze images of chola period is still skillfully practised in India, particularly in Kumbakonam (Tamil Nadu). It shows the significance of the Bronze sculpture of the Chola Period even in the present era.

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