

Archaeoarchitecture of Ancient India: From Neolithic Pits to Indus Bricks

Dr. Indira Malapaka

Pondicherry, India

Abstract: *This article traces the evolution of ancient Indian house-making techniques from the Neolithic period (c. 7000-2500 BCE) through to the Common Era, integrating archaeological evidence with literary references. It highlights the transition from rudimentary shelters like mud-brick houses at Mehrgarh and wattle and daub huts at Bhirrana and Chirand, including unique pit dwellings at Burzahom, reflecting early settled agricultural lifestyles. The Indus Valley Civilization (c. 2600-1900 BCE) is presented as a pinnacle of urban sophistication, characterized by standardized baked and unbaked brick construction, sophisticated drainage systems, and planned settlements with central courtyards designed for privacy and climate control. While direct IVC texts are absent, later Sanskrit works like the Arthaśāstra provide conceptual parallels. The Vedic period and beyond (c. 1500 BCE onwards) saw a greater reliance on timber, mud, and thatch, with literary sources like the Vedas detailing architectural elements and the emergence of foundational principles later codified in Vastu Shastra. The article concludes by discussing the continued use of mud and brick, regional adaptations, and advanced timber joinery in later periods, emphasizing the enduring legacy of sustainable and adaptable building practices in India.*

Keywords: Ancient Indian Architecture, Neolithic Dwellings, Indus Valley Cities, Mud Brick Construction, Timber Techniques, Vastu Shastra

1. Introduction

India's architectural heritage is a tapestry woven over millennia, reflecting a continuous evolution of human ingenuity, cultural values, and adaptation to diverse environments. From the earliest human settlements to the flourishing of complex urban centers, the methods and materials employed in constructing dwellings reveal a profound understanding of local resources, climatic imperatives, and community needs. This journey through time explores not just the physical structures but the underlying principles and societal advancements that shaped domestic spaces across the subcontinent.

2. Historical Background

The narrative of human habitation in India begins with the profound shift from transient, nomadic lifestyles to more settled forms of existence. This pivotal transformation, driven by the advent of agriculture and the domestication of animals, fundamentally reshaped how early communities conceived of and built their homes. As societies grew more organized and population centers emerged, the demands on housing evolved, leading to innovations in materials, structural design, and urban planning. Subsequent eras, marked by distinct cultural and economic shifts, further refined these techniques, incorporating new knowledge, specialized craftsmanship, and philosophical approaches to living spaces. This long trajectory underscores an unbroken tradition of architectural development, where each period built upon the foundations laid by its predecessors, adapting and refining techniques to meet the changing needs of a dynamic civilization.

Neolithic Dwellings: The Dawn of Settled Life (c. 7000-2500 BCE)

The Neolithic period in India, a transformative era marking the shift from a nomadic hunter-gatherer existence to settled agricultural communities, profoundly influenced the

evolution of housing. This fundamental change necessitated more permanent shelters, leading to innovative approaches in construction. Archaeological excavations at sites such as Mehrgarh (now in Pakistan), Bhirrana, Kunal, Chirand, and Burzahom in India have unveiled the earliest forms of these dwellings, providing invaluable insights into their design, materials, and the burgeoning understanding of human habitation.

At **Mehrgarh**, one of the earliest Neolithic sites, dating back to approximately 7000 BCE, compelling evidence of rudimentary mud-brick houses has been unearthed. These structures typically presented a rectangular or square footprint, carefully constructed using sun-dried mud bricks. The presence of multiple rooms within some of these early homes suggests a developing spatial awareness and an organizational approach to living spaces. Crucially, the discovery of storage pits adjacent to or within these dwellings strongly indicates a settled agricultural lifestyle, where surplus food needed to be stored, directly correlating with the need for more permanent abodes.

Further insights into early mud-brick construction come from **Bhirrana**, where similar structures underscore the widespread adoption of locally available earth as a primary building material. The walls were frequently plastered with mud, a technique that not only provided a smoother finish but also offered protection against the elements. Intricate details suggest the use of reeds or split bamboo for creating internal screens or partitions, which were then meticulously plastered with mud, exemplifying the **wattle and daub** technique. This method, involving a network of interwoven branches or reeds (wattle) coated with a sticky material like mud or clay (daub), was a common and effective building practice across many early agricultural societies globally, demonstrating a shared architectural ingenuity.

In **Chirand** (Bihar), dating to around 2500 BCE, archaeologists have uncovered fascinating examples of circular or semi-circular huts, again employing the wattle and

daub method. The walls of these huts were often plastered with mud on both internal and external surfaces. The remarkable preservation of impressions of reeds and bamboo on burnt clay lumps found at the site provides direct physical evidence of the underlying structural framework of these dwellings. Furthermore, the systematic planning observed in Neolithic settlements at locations like **Mahagara** in the Belan Valley supports the extensive use of screens crafted from materials such as bamboo, straw, grass, and leaves. These screens, then meticulously plastered with mud, served as both walls and roofs, showcasing an ingenious use of natural resources for effective shelter.

A unique adaptation to environmental conditions is evident at **Burzahom** (Kashmir), where pit dwellings, dating to approximately 3000 BCE, represent a distinct form of Neolithic housing. These structures were subterranean or semi-subterranean, excavated into the earth, providing natural insulation against the harsh cold of the region. Typically circular or oval in shape, these pits often featured post-holes arranged around their perimeter, suggesting the presence of a superstructural roof, likely constructed from timber and thatch, covering the excavated pit. Many of these pit-dwellings included steps leading down into the living space, and the discovery of hearths within strongly confirms their function as residential abodes, offering warmth and comfort.

While direct written records from the Neolithic period are non-existent, later Vedic texts and Puranas offer valuable, albeit indirect, glimpses into the conception of primitive shelters, often drawing parallels with the natural world. For instance, the **Aparajitapreccha**, a later architectural treatise, refers to *trmachanda* as an early type of house structure, alluding to a simple dwelling covered with grass or thatch. More profoundly, texts such as the **Matsya Purana**, **Brihat Samhita**, and **Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra** collectively suggest that the primitive house, or the very first form of shelter on Earth, was modeled after a tree. They propose that the branches (*śākha*) of a tree formed the fundamental basis of this early shelter. This profound conceptual link could be interpreted as a literary echo of the earliest architectural innovations, where natural elements like tree branches and leaves were initially utilized, gradually evolving into more refined techniques like wattle and daub construction. These ancient literary insights, while allegorical, provide a valuable cultural lens through which to understand the primal origins of Indian house-making.

Indus Valley Civilization: Urban Sophistication (c. 2600-1900 BCE)

The Indus Valley Civilization (IVC), stretching across vast regions and encompassing magnificent urban centers such as Harappa, Mohenjo-Daro, Lothal, Dholavira, and Rakhigarhi, represents an unparalleled leap in architectural planning and construction techniques in ancient India. In stark contrast to the more rustic and organically evolving Neolithic dwellings, IVC cities were characterized by their meticulously planned grid patterns, the remarkable standardization of brick sizes, and an astounding level of sophisticated public infrastructure. This period showcases an advanced understanding of urban design, engineering, and resource management.

The defining characteristic of IVC housing, and indeed its entire urban fabric, was the extensive and intelligent use of both **baked and unbaked bricks**. **Baked bricks (or burnt bricks)** were predominantly employed for monumental public structures, intricate drainage systems, and the crucial lower courses of residential buildings. Their superior durability and water resistance made them ideal for these applications, particularly for structures exposed to moisture. A remarkable aspect was the uniformity in brick sizes, typically maintaining a 4:2:1 ratio for length, width, and height, observed consistently across diverse sites. This standardization is a powerful testament to highly organized production, skilled labor, and perhaps even a centralized authority overseeing construction. These bricks were often laid in the robust **English bond style**, a method that alternates long sides (stretchers) and short sides (headers) in successive courses, providing maximum load-bearing strength and stability. For enhanced watertightness, particularly in vital drainage channels and bathing areas, gypsum mortar or natural tar was occasionally used as a bonding agent.

In contrast, **unbaked (sun-dried) mud bricks** were extensively utilized for the upper portions of walls in residential houses. Their inherent thermal properties provided excellent insulation against the intense heat of the region, making the interiors cooler and more comfortable. Beyond bricks, **mud and plaster** were also integral for finishing surfaces, offering both aesthetic appeal and a protective layer. **Timber and wood** played a crucial role in the structural integrity and functional aspects of these homes, used for doors, windows, and essential roof supports. Clay models of houses from the IVC provide intriguing glimpses, suggesting that doors were sometimes elaborately carved or painted. Windows likely featured shutters made of wood or woven reeds and matting, and in some instances, may have incorporated latticework grills to allow for light and air circulation while maintaining privacy.

The planning of Indus Valley houses revealed a sophisticated understanding of comfort, privacy, and sanitation. Houses varied significantly in size, ranging from humble single-room tenements, possibly accommodating laborers or smaller families, to expansive, multi-roomed, and even double-storied residences. A pervasive architectural principle was the organization of rooms around a central courtyard. This **central courtyard** served multiple vital functions: it facilitated excellent ventilation, allowed ample natural light to penetrate the surrounding rooms, and ensured a degree of privacy from the outside world. This design reflected a deep understanding of the local climate, promoting natural cooling and airflow.

Privacy was a paramount consideration in IVC domestic architecture. Doorways and windows were generally positioned to face side lanes or smaller alleys rather than directly onto the bustling main streets. Furthermore, it was common for a strategically placed wall to block a direct view into the courtyard from the lane, ensuring intimate family life remained secluded. An incredibly advanced and distinctive feature of IVC housing was its highly sophisticated **sanitation system**. Most houses incorporated private bathing areas, meticulously paved with burnt bricks, and these were seamlessly connected to an exceptionally well-organized

network of covered drains that ran meticulously along the streets. Larger residences often boasted private wells for water access and even individual toilets, showcasing a public health consciousness far ahead of its time. Finally, **kitchens** were a common feature, with many houses featuring both indoor and outdoor cooking areas. The outdoor kitchen would have been utilized during warmer months to prevent the heating of interior spaces, a practical tradition that resonates with cooking practices in some traditional Indian homes even today. Despite the thick walls and inward-facing designs, buildings were generally well-ventilated, indicating thoughtful consideration of airflow and natural cooling strategies.

While the undeciphered script of the Indus Valley Civilization means we lack direct literary accounts of their house-making techniques, later Sanskrit texts provide intriguing, albeit indirect, evidence of long-standing Indian architectural traditions that may have their roots in such advanced urban planning. Kautilya's **Arthaśāstra**, a monumental treatise on statecraft from a much later period (c. 4th-3rd century BCE), contains remarkably detailed guidelines on town planning, the construction of fortifications, and the design of various civil structures. The comprehensive nature of these guidelines hints at a deeply ingrained and evolving tradition of organized construction that could well have been influenced by, or at least share conceptual parallels with, the meticulous urban planning of the IVC. Furthermore, the **Arthaśāstra**'s emphasis on meticulous water management and robust civic infrastructure finds striking resonance with the extraordinarily advanced drainage systems discovered at Indus Valley sites, suggesting a continuity of core architectural and engineering principles over millennia.

Vedic Period and Beyond: Timber, Mud, and the Emergence of Vastu Shastra (c. 1500-600 BCE onwards)

Following the gradual decline of the Indus Valley Civilization, the Vedic period witnessed a significant transformation in settlement patterns and architectural styles across India. Early Vedic structures were primarily constructed from highly perishable materials such as wood, bamboo, mud, clay, and thatch. This initial reliance on ephemeral resources reflects a society that was predominantly pastoral and less urbanized than its Indus Valley predecessor. However, despite the scarcity of surviving physical structures from this early phase, a rich body of literary sources from the Vedic period offers invaluable and surprisingly detailed insights into their building practices, traditions, and the nascent architectural concepts that would later form the foundation of Vastu Shastra.

3. Materials and Techniques

Wood and Timber were unequivocally the dominant building materials during the Vedic period. The **Rigveda**, the oldest Vedic text, frequently refers to terms like *grha*, *dhama*, and *harmya*, all denoting various types of houses, indicating the establishment of recognized domestic structures. The **Atharvaveda**, in particular, offers more granular descriptions, mentioning specific architectural components such as doors, grand assembly halls, and various types of pillars. It emphasizes the crucial role of wooden posts as central structural supports, often drawing evocative

comparisons to the sturdy trunk of a tree, with the thatched roofs likened to its outstretched branches, a beautiful analogy found in texts like the **Ashvalayanagrhyasutra**. This highlights an organic and deeply intuitive understanding of structural form, drawing inspiration directly from nature. Ancient Indian carpentry was remarkably advanced, attested by references to highly specialized artisans and the use of sophisticated tools like adzes, chisels, and mallets. Crucially, their mastery extended to intricate joinery techniques that frequently obviated the need for metal fasteners. Methods such as mortise and tenon joints, dovetail joints, and the ingenious use of wooden pegs allowed for the creation of robust and enduring timber frames, showcasing a profound understanding of wood mechanics. Even later texts like the **Kāmasūtra** (2nd century CE) acknowledge wood carving as one of the 64 arts, underscoring the aesthetic and highly skilled dimension of woodworking in ancient India.

Mud and Clay continued to be indispensable building materials, particularly for walls. These were often combined with straw or other fibrous materials for reinforcement, employing techniques akin to cob construction or the enduring wattle and daub method. Earth was also extensively used for flooring and roofing, especially in rural settings, where its thermal properties – providing excellent insulation against both heat and cold – coupled with its affordability and widespread local availability, made it a perennial and practical choice for countless dwellings.

Thatch remained the most common material for roofs. Crafted from straw, reeds, or palm leaves, thatched roofs offered superb insulation and were readily available. Their lightweight nature and ease of replacement made them ideal for the climate and prevalent resources. While wood and mud primarily characterized early Vedic construction, the gradual introduction and increasing use of **stone** for more permanent structures began to emerge. This transition was particularly noticeable in monumental architecture and later, in the construction of temples and significant public buildings, as distinctly observed during the Mauryan period (3rd century BCE).

Architectural Principles and Literary Guidance: The Vedic period witnessed the germination of foundational architectural principles that would eventually blossom into the comprehensive system known as **Vastu Shastra**. These principles meticulously guided everything from the selection of building sites to the precise orientation of structures and the internal arrangement of spaces. They often integrated complex astronomical and astrological considerations, reflecting a holistic worldview that sought harmony between human habitation and the cosmos.

While comprehensive Vastu Shastra treatises such as **Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra** (authored by King Bhoja, 11th century CE), **Mayamata** (c. 1000 CE), and **Mānasāra** (c. 1300 CE) are from much later periods, they represent the codification and elaboration of traditions that undoubtedly existed in nascent and oral forms during the Vedic era. These texts provide exhaustive guidelines covering every aspect of architecture: meticulous site examination, detailed soil analysis, precise measurement systems, qualifications and responsibilities of the *sthapati* (the master architect),

appropriate building materials, and even the auspicious consecration of building plans. They demonstrate a deeply formalized architectural system, blending practical engineering with spiritual and philosophical tenets.

A significant aspect of Vedic house construction was the profound **emphasis on the elements** – fire, water, earth, and air. Houses almost invariably included a fire pit or hearth, central for cooking, warmth, and ritualistic practices. Access to reliable water sources, whether through wells or proximity to rivers, was paramount. Designs consistently emphasized good ventilation and the integration of open spaces, reflecting a practical understanding of climate control and the importance of natural airflow within dwellings.

Beyond the generalized descriptions, specific literary references offer vivid glimpses into Vedic architectural concepts. The **Rigveda** contains simple but powerful references to *grha*, *dhama*, and *harmya*, all signifying 'a house', underscoring the establishment of fundamental domestic structures. The **Yajurveda** and **Atharvaveda** delve deeper, mentioning specific architectural elements such as doors, assembly halls, various types of pillars, and even forts, indicating a developing architectural vocabulary and a more sophisticated understanding of construction. The **Atharvaveda**, in particular, is renowned for its rich descriptions of house construction methods, almost akin to an early builder's manual. The **Ashvalayanagruhasutra** offers a poetic and profound insight, suggesting that early buildings were conceptually patterned on a tree, with a central post acting as a sturdy trunk and the thatched roofs resembling its sprawling branches. This analogy beautifully highlights the organic and natural inspiration that underpinned early Indian architecture. Furthermore, the **Matsya Purana**, **Markandeya Purana**, and **Vayu Purana** collectively reinforce the idea of the tree as the primordial model for primitive houses, where shelter was initially sought under shady trees or by using their branches. This mythological or allegorical account likely reflects the very earliest stages of human shelter construction, a deep-seated memory of primal protection. Finally, **Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra**, King Bhoja's monumental work, provides an unparalleled level of detail, not only on house construction but also on intricate town planning, the design of formidable forts, and the specific roles of various craftsmen. This demonstrates a highly formalized architectural system, where every aspect of building, from site selection and soil testing to auspicious timings for construction, was meticulously considered, underscoring the intertwined spiritual and practical dimensions of ancient Indian building practices.

Evolution towards Brick and Mud Houses in Later Periods (Post-Vedic to Common Era)

While the Indus Valley Civilization brilliantly utilized bricks on a grand scale, and the early Vedic period largely relied on the versatile combination of wood and mud, subsequent historical periods in India witnessed a dynamic and complex evolution in the application and interplay of these fundamental building materials and techniques. This ongoing adaptation was influenced by shifting societal structures, technological advancements, regional environmental factors, and emerging aesthetic preferences.

The **Mauryan Period (c. 322-185 BCE)** marked a pivotal transition, especially in monumental architecture, where there was a discernible shift from the primary use of wood and clay towards the more durable and imposing medium of stone. This is magnificently exemplified by Emperor Ashoka's famed pillars and the awe-inspiring rock-cut architecture of the period, which stand as enduring testaments to the mastery of stone carving and construction. However, it is crucial to note that despite this monumental shift, wood largely retained its pre-eminence as the dominant material for domestic architecture. The remarkable Lomas Rishi cave in the Barabar Hills, although an impressive rock-cut structure, deliberately imitates wooden architectural forms, such as arched entrances and barrel-vaulted ceilings. This artistic mimicry provides compelling evidence of the continued and profound influence of timber construction on the architectural imagination of the era, even when working with stone.

Crucially, the **continued use of mud and brick** remained a pervasive and fundamental aspect of building practices throughout various regions and successive periods. For common dwellings, particularly in rural India, mud, wattle and daub, and thatch have remained central building materials across millennia, adapted continuously to local climatic conditions and the readily available resources. The inherent thermal properties of mud, which provide excellent insulation against extreme temperature fluctuations, coupled with its remarkable malleability and low cost, cemented its status as an ideal and perennial choice for vernacular architecture, ensuring comfort in diverse environments.

As Indian civilization progressed and diversified, **regional variations** in house-making techniques became increasingly pronounced and distinctive. For example, in regions experiencing heavy monsoon rainfall, the architectural response was typically the adoption of steeply **sloping roofs**, designed to facilitate efficient water runoff and prevent leakage. Conversely, in arid regions, **flat roofs** were often preferred, as they served not only as an additional usable space but also as ideal sleeping areas during warm nights, allowing residents to escape the indoor heat. The utilization of specific local materials further enriched this regional diversity: the distinctive laterite stone in coastal areas like Goa or the widespread use of particular wood types such as teak and jackfruit in the verdant landscapes of Kerala led to the emergence of truly unique and aesthetically rich regional architectural styles, each deeply rooted in its local ecology.

The mastery of **specialized joinery** in timber construction continued to evolve with remarkable sophistication. Examples include the ingenious *kattumaram* system found in Kerala, where rafters are intricately interlocked, and nail-less purlins are employed, showcasing an advanced understanding of structural dynamics. Similarly, in the challenging Himalayan regions, techniques involving floating tenons and wooden wedges demonstrate innovative methods for creating durable and resilient wooden frames capable of withstanding seismic activity. These advanced joinery techniques were not merely structural; they incorporated a deep, intuitive understanding of wood's natural properties, allowing for expansion and contraction during seasonal changes, thereby enhancing the overall longevity and even earthquake resistance of structures.

Finally, with the re-emergence and growth of **urban centers** in the post-Vedic era, a complex blend of brick, timber, and occasionally stone came into play. This fusion reflected a sophisticated balance of practicality, social status, and aesthetic considerations. While grand palaces, temples, and fortifications might have utilized more durable and expensive materials like cut stone to convey power and permanence, the vast majority of urban dwellings continued to predominantly employ brick and timber, often finished with protective and decorative layers of mud or lime plaster. This blend of materials ensured both structural integrity and affordability, enabling the construction of dense urban environments that housed a growing population.

4. Conclusion

The chronicle of ancient Indian house-making techniques stands as a profound testament to human ingenuity, resilience, and an enduring capacity for adaptation. From the most basic pit dwellings and the fundamental wattle-and-daub huts crafted by early Neolithic farmers, through the meticulously planned and remarkably standardized brick cities of the mighty Indus Valley Civilization, and extending to the sophisticated timber and earth constructions that characterized the Vedic and subsequent periods, each successive era meticulously built upon and innovated upon the accumulated knowledge of its predecessors. Literary references, ranging from the earliest allusions found within the sacred Vedas to the extraordinarily detailed and prescriptive architectural treatises of Vastu Shastra, provide an invaluable conceptual framework that beautifully complements the tangible and irrefutable evidence unearthed through archaeological discovery, offering a truly comprehensive understanding of ancient Indian domestic architecture.

These ancient building techniques were far more than mere functional responses to shelter needs; they were intricately woven into the fabric of cultural practices, deeply informed by a profound understanding of local environmental conditions, and consistently shaped by a nuanced appreciation for the intrinsic properties of available materials. The persistent emphasis on the utilization of locally sourced materials, a remarkable responsiveness to prevailing climatic conditions, and an overarching consideration for community well-being—all distinctly evident in the remarkable evolution of these ancient building practices—offer timeless and invaluable lessons for contemporary sustainable architecture. The enduring legacy of ancient Indian house-making, characterized by its extraordinary adaptability, robust durability, and frequently breathtaking aesthetic sensibility, continues to resonate vibrantly in the myriad traditional and vernacular architectural forms found across the vast and diverse subcontinent even to this day.

References

General Overviews & Synthesis:

- [1] **Chakrabarti, D. K.** *India: An Archaeological History*. Oxford University Press, 2009.
- [2] **Allchin, B., & Allchin, F. R.** *The Rise of Civilization in India and Pakistan*. Cambridge University Press, 1982.

- [3] **Singh, Upinder.** *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the 12th Century*. Pearson Education India, 2008.

Neolithic Period (Specific Sites & Practices):

- [4] **Jarrige, J.-F.** (various publications). *Excavations at Mehrgarh*.
- [5] **Sahi, M. D. N.** (1984). *Aspects of Indian Archaeology*.
- [6] **Sharma, A. K.** (1993). *Excavations at Burzahom*.
- [7] **Agrawal, D. P.** (2007). *The Archaeology of India*. DK Printworld (P) Ltd.

Indus Valley Civilization (Architecture & Urbanism):

- [8] **Marshall, J.** (1931). *Mohenjo-Daro and the Indus Civilization*. Arthur Probsthain.
- [9] **Mackay, E. J. H.** (1938). *Further Excavations at Mohenjo-Daro*. Government of India Press.
- [10] **Wheeler, R. E. M.** (1968). *The Indus Civilization*. Cambridge University Press.
- [11] **Possehl, G. L.** (2002). *The Indus Civilization: A Contemporary Perspective*. AltaMira Press.
- [12] **Kenoyer, J. M.** (1998). *Ancient Cities of the Indus Valley Civilization*. Oxford University Press.

Vedic Period & Literary Sources (Architectural Concepts):

- [13] **Renou, Louis.** (1954). *La Maison Védique*. Journal Asiatique.
- [14] **Dutta, B. B.** (1925). *Town Planning in Ancient India*. Thacker, Spink & Co.
- [15] **Kautilya (Chanakya).** *Arthashastra*. (Translated by R. Shamasastri or L.N. Rangarajan).
- [16] **Vedic Texts (Rigveda, Atharvaveda, Yajurveda, Grhyasutras)**

Puranas (e.g., Matsya Purana, Markandeya Purana, Vayu Purana):

Vastu Shastra Treatises (Later Codifications):

- [17] **Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra** by King Bhoja.
- [18] **Mayamata** (Translated by Bruno Dagens). Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts.
- [19] **Mānasāra** (Translated by P.K. Acharya). Oxford University Press.
- [20] **Aparajitapreccha** (Less commonly translated, but mentioned in academic works on Vastu).

Building Materials and Techniques (General):

- [21] Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) Reports: Annual Reports and Memoir series often contain detailed descriptions of excavated structures and materials from various sites across different periods.
- [22] Various academic journals focusing on South Asian Archaeology and Architectural History (e.g., *South Asian Studies*, *Journal of Indian Archaeology*, *Ancient India*).