

The ancient people

It is believed that about 30,000 years ago man started use of stones for hunting and gathering. he used to live in caves. During that period of constant struggle against nature and wild beasts for survival, man gradually developed skills to make stones sharp and edgy and started using them as weapons. People of that age used stones for making ornaments and jewellery from shell, clay, stone and even animal teeth.

To make jewellery without the help of any machines or technology, would not have been easy. Transforming a stone into a weapon itself must have been quite an uphill task that even a craftsman of today’s age would find very difficult.

The craftsmen of stone-age had shown great expertise in making ornaments from such things as stones, shells and animal teeth. It required a lot of efforts, besides perseverance. Constant trial and error and persistent efforts paved the way for stone-weapons and later stone ornaments.

But, on the other hand during stone-age men did not have any other works to do. Children and adults all had but one work of making whatever was possible from stones. Hunting with stones and gathering food was the main occupation. Generally men used to go for hunting and women for gathering food, fruits, vegetables and whatever worth eating they could find.

Craving to enhance their appearance was as common in women of that era as it has always been. That is why we come across ornaments made from stones and animal teeth. Use of flowers for beauty might had been made but as they were prone to decompositions they could not be found in excavations. Besides stones wide use of turquoise was made for ornamental purposes.

One of the oldest jewellery of the world consists of beads discovered in some African cave. The shell and animal bones were the core raw things from which they used to make jewellery. The stone-age people were fond of jewellery. It is found very difficult to even design such jewellery today with the help of skilled labour and new machines.

The stone-age people were aware of this and did not have much skilled labour and craftsmen. But despite all their limitations and shortcomings by sheer perseverance they succeeded in their endeavours. About 41 shells were found from an African cave. These were used as extensive jewellery wears. The experts have given an estimation of these being about 30,000 years back.

The turquoise is a very old stone and was used extensively in prehistoric times also. The basic reason was some myths and good luck elements associated with wearing turquoise. Shell is another stone that was extensively used. Certain excavations show rich turquoise jewellery. This jewellery too demanded hard labour and a lot of perseverance, primitive man had these qualities in abundance and had no other work except what was possible by using stones.

The green stones were also considered a luck element and people liked to wear it around their necks. Though, no cutting or polishing tools were available that time, the great skill of these craftsmen is reflected in their jewellery.

About the Author

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