

THEME - 1

BRICKS, BEADS AND BONES

THE HARAPPAN CIVILISATION

INTRODUCTION

Harappan seal :

- Distinctive **artefact** of Harappan civilisation.
- Stone - **Steatite**
- Contains - **Animal motifs** and **signs** from a script (**undeciphered**)

Sources :

- **Archeological evidence** - their houses, pots, ornaments, tools, seals, beads, weights, baked bricks, etc.

TERMS, PLACES, TIMES

Terms :

- Indus Valley Civilisation - **Harappan culture**
- **Culture** : group of objects - distinctive in style - found in specific geographical area - period of time.
- **Harappan culture** objects : seals, beads, weights, stone blades and baked bricks.

Place :

- **Found** : Afghanistan, Jammu, Baluchistan (Pakistan) and Gujarat.

Time :

- Early Harappan Phase - **3300 - 2600 BCE**
- Mature Harappan Phase - **2600 - 1900 BCE**
- Late Harappan Phase - **1900 - 1300 BCE**

1. BEGINNINGS

Early Harappan Culture Features :

- Early Harappan phase - 3300 - 2600 BCE
- **Evidence** - Pottery, Agriculture, Pastoralism, Crafts.
- **Settlements** : small, no large buildings

2. SUBSISTENCE STRATEGIES

Food Habits



2.1 Agricultural Technologies

- **Seals** and **terracotta sculpture** - Bull used for ploughing.
- Terracotta models of **plough** - in Cholistan and Banawali
- Evidence of **ploughed field** - Kalibangan (Rajasthan)
- Traces of **canals** - Shortughai (Afghanistan)
- **Water reservoirs** - Dholavira (Gujarat)

3. MOHENJODARO : A PLANNED URBAN CENTRE

- **Mohenjodaro** - well known site
- **Hadappa** - first site to be discovered

Settlements

Citedal

- Smaller but **higher position**
- **Walled** - separated from lower town
- Evidence of structure - **special public purposes**
 - i) **Warehouse** - massive structure
 - ii) **Great bath** : large rectangular tank
 - surrounded by corridor - two flight of steps - watertight - using bricks and motar of gypsum - **special ritual bath**

Lower Town

- Much larger but **lower position**
- **Walled**
- Evidence - **residential buildings**
- **Features** : courtyard - no windows - bathrooms - drains - remains of staircases - Wells

Features : Evidence of Planning

- **Bricks** :
 - baked bricks - **standardised ratio**
 - length - four times the height
 - breadth - twice the height
- **Drainage system** :
 - **street drains** - grid pattern
 - House drains connected to the street drains

4. TRACKING SOCIAL DIFFERENCE

4.1 Burials

- **Harappan grave** - pottery and ornaments
- Burials of men and women - **Jewellery**
- **Cemetery** in Harappa - an ornaments, three shell rings, jasper bead and micro beads
- **Copper mirrors**

4.2 Looking for " Luxuries "

Harappan artefacts

Utilitarian

- objects of **daily use**
- **ordinary materials** - stone, clay
- Easily
- Example - Pottery, needles, querns, etc.

Luxuries

- objects that are **rare**
- **Costly** and **non local materials**
- **Complicated** technologies
- Example - little pot of **faience**
- Distribution - **large settlements**
- Mohenjodaro and Harappa.

5. Finding Out About Craft Production

Craft Production

- Craft production - **Chanhudaro** (tiny settlement)
- Include - bead making, shell cutting, metal working, seal making, weight cutting

Materials

- **Stones** - carnelian, jasper, crystal, quartz and steatite
- **Metals** - copper, bronze, gold
- Shell
- Faience
- Terracotta or burnt clay

Shapes

- Disc shaped
- cylindrical shaped
- barrel shaped
- segmented

6. Strategies For Procuring Materials

- i) **Established settlements** - areas where materials are available
 - Nageshwar and Balakot - **shell**
 - Shortughai - **Lapis lazuli**
 - Lothal - **carnelian**
 - Rajasthan - **metal**
- ii) **Send expeditions**
 - Rajasthan - for **copper**
 - South India - for **gold**

7. SEALS, SCRIPT, WEIGHTS

Seals and Sealings

- **Seals** - long distance communication
- **Sealing** - identity of the sender

Script

- Contains - line of **writing**, **animal motifs**
- **Script** - undeciphered
- not alphabetical
- written from **right to left**
- Found - seals, copper tools, ancient signboard

Weights

- Weights - **cubical**, no marking
- Stone - **chert**
- lower denomination - **binary system**
- higher denomination - **decimal system**

8. ANCIENT AUTHORITY

- **Large building** - Palace
- Stone statue - **priest king**
- i) **No rulers**
- ii) No single ruler but **several**
- iii) **Single ruler**

9. THE END OF THE CIVILISATION

Possible causes for the end of Harappan Civilization

- Climatic change
- Deforestation
- Excessive floods
- Earthquakes
- The shifting of rivers
- The Drying up of rivers
- Invasion of Aryans

10. DISCOVERING THE HARAPPAN CIVILISATION

- **Cunningham** - first Director-General of ASI
- Archeological excavation - **mid nineteenth century**
- Cunningham fail to release the importance of **harappan artefacts**
- **Daya Ram Sahni** - discovered seal at **Harappa**
- **Rakhal Daa Banerji** - discovered seal at **Mohenjodaro**
- **John Marshall** (Director-General of ASI) - announced
- discovery of **Indus Valley Civilisation**

11. PROBLEMS OF PIECING TOGETHER THE PAST

- i) Terracotta figurines of women - **Mother Goddesses**
- ii) Rare stone statue - **Priest- king**
- iii) **Great Bath** and **Fire Altars**
- iv) Seal - **Plant Motifs** - nature worship
- v) **Unicorn** - depicted on seals
- vi) Seal - figure seated in yogic posture - **Proto - Shiva**
- vii) conical stone objects - **lingas**