

DON BOSCO SCHOOL, KOKAR, RANCHI

Subject- HISTORY

Class – 9 ABC

Chapter-1

The Harappan Civilisation

Course Content :-

Sources: - Great Bath, Citadel, Seals, Bearded Man, Dancing Girl, Dockyard, Script

Origin, extent, urban planning, trade, art & craft, decline of Harappan Civilisation

Introduction

- ✓ Discovery of Harappan Civilisation around 1920
- ✓ Alexander Cunningham (a British officer in India) initiated excavation for the first time in 1872-1873 during Harappa.
- ✓ Cunningham reported a pictographic (symbolic form of writing) form unicorn (an imagery horse like animal) seal in 1875.
- ✓ Indian Archeologists :- R.D. Bannerjee & R.B.D.R.Sahni. excavated in Larkana & Montgomery districts.
- ✓ Sahni discovered the ruins of Harappa in 1921 & Bannerjee city of Mohanjodaro in 1922.
- ✓ Historians prefer to call it Harappan Culture or Civilisation for it flourished much beyond the region of the Indus Valley.

Great bath

- ✓ the bathing pool, 12 metres long, 8.5 metres wide & 2.5 metres deep was at the centre of quadrangle.
- ✓ pool was filled (from well) & emptied at regular intervals also periodic cleaning.
- ✓ wall was made of burnt bricks
- ✓ the entire construction reflected the engineering skill of those ancient days.

Citadel

- ✓ The elevated areas of the cities are called citadel.
- ✓ Important public buildings:- Great Bath, Granary, Assembly Hall etc. are found at citadel.
- ✓ residences of the ruling classes are here.
- ✓ the demarcation shows the division between the rich & poor classes on the bases of social & economic status.
- ✓ citadel carefully planned & emphasised as an urban planning.

Seals

- ✓ more than 2000 seals of soapstone, terracotta & copper were discovered.
- ✓ they are figures of animals, of mythical animals & some human figures. they are rectangular, circular or cylindrical in shape.
- ✓ seals were used by different associations of merchants for stamping their goods also used by people to put on their neck & arm.

- ✓ Seals indicate to the people:-

1) Dress, ornaments, & hairstyle.

2) Skill of artists & sculptors

3) Trade and commercial relations

4) Religious beliefs

1. The Pashupati Seal:- Lord Shiva being worshiped as the lord of animals
 2. The Unicorn Seal:- a mythological animal, believed that they produced imaginative creations of bird, animals etc.
 3. The Bull Seal:- humped bull of great vigour, artistic skill of animal anatomy (scientific study of structure of humans or animals).
- ✓ Bearded Man:- the stone sculpture of the bearded man was found at Mohenjo-daro
 - ✓ variously interpreted; 1) a priest-king (because of combed bearded, half-closed eyes & the way shawl is worn over.
 - ✓ found at the Assembly Hall near Great Bath.

Dancing Girl:-

- ✓ the statue of bronze of a dancing girl found at Mohenjo-daro
- ✓ excellent metal-casting skills of Harappans.

Dockyard:- It is rectangular in shape & surrounded by a brick wall.

- ✓ it had been situated at Lothal & connected with the Bhogavo river through a channel.
- ✓ it was then connected to the Gulf of Cambay.
- ✓ it was believed to be an important site for trading & centre for overseas trade.

The Art of Writing and Script:-

- ✓ it was to be believed that they had the knowledge of the art of writing,
- ✓ Documents on stone & baked clay tables were found.
- ✓ Seals of inscribed animals & humans give the idea of their script & their own language.
- ✓ seals are similar to that of Egypt, Sumer & other countries of Western Asia.

- ✓ script is pictograph & nearly 400 signs
- ✓ generally written from left to right but in some cases the opposite.
- ✓ phonetic script evolved to alphabetic pattern however they continued to be puzzle.

Period of the Civilisation:-

- ✓ sir John Marshall (archaeologist) thought H.civilisation belonged between 3200 BCE & 2750 BCE but it was not.
- ✓ H. Civilisation belonged to the period between 2500 BCE to 1800 BCE.
- ✓ between 3200 BCE & 2750 BCE Egyptian, Babylonian, & Mesopotamian civilisation flourished.
- ✓ the civilisation not confined to Harappan & Mohenjo-daro alone but rather Punjab, Sind, Baluchistan, Rajasthan, UP, Gujarat etc.
- ✓ believed to be extended 1600 km from west to east & 1100 km from north to south.
- ✓ but recent research shows more than that of 11,300,000 square km.

Important Sites:-

- 1) Mohenjo-Daro- a Sindhi term meaning '*Mound of the dead*', located in Larkana district of Sind (now in Pakistan), a big city was found buried.
- 2) Harappa:- situated on the bank of river Ravi in Montgomery district of west Punjab (now in Pakistan), features the similar as Mohenjo-Daro.
- 3) Other Important Sites:- Chanhu-daro (Sind), Lothal (Gujarat), Kalibangan (Rajasthan), Alamgirpur (UP), Ropar (Punjab),

Features of the Harappan civilization

The Drainage system:

- ✓ it was very advanced.
- ✓ covered with slabs.
- ✓ water flowed from houses into drains,
- ✓ manholes at regular intervals for maintenance.
- ✓ used pits for heavier parts of rubbish.
- ✓ every house had a well-constructed sink(deep hole in the ground) that water flowed through to sewers into the street.
- ✓ this elaborate drainage system shows the fully aware with the principles of health & sanitation.

Houses

- ✓ houses different in size, varying from tall building to two small rooms.
- ✓ every houses had a well, a bathroom & a covered drain.

- ✓ used burnt bricks (preserved even today).
- ✓ roofs were flat & made of wood.
- ✓ special feature was- rooms were built around an open courtyard.
- ✓ some houses were double-storeyed & stairs.

Great granary

- ✓ it was about 45mtrs long & 15mtrs wide.
- ✓ It was meant to store food grains, had smaller halls & corridors.
- ✓ to facilitate to meet food requirements of its population.

The Assembly Hall

- ✓ it had a pillared hall with five rows with four pillars.
- ✓ Kiln-baked bricks were used.
- ✓ It was used for public assemblies

Arts & Crafts

Ornaments:- men & women used.

- ✓ gold, silver, copper & other metals.
- ✓ men- necklaces, finger rings & armlets.
- ✓ Women- headdresses, earrings, bangles, bracelets & anklets.
- ✓ rich- used gold whereas poor shell, bone or copper.

Furniture & Utensils:-

- ✓ shows high degree of civilisation.
- ✓ painted pottery, kitchen vessels, chair & beds made of wood, toys, marbles, balls, dice etc.

Cosmetics

- ✓ objects made of ivory.
- ✓ use of face paint & *collyrium*, oval bronze mirrors, ivory combs dressing tables, hairpins of ivory.

Toy Carts:- terracotta toys

Crafts:- discovery of spindles- spinning & weaving was done

- ✓ jewellery, seals, weapons, tools, knives, spears, saws & axes.

Sculpture:- bearded man, dancing girl, mother goddess.

- ✓ bronze figures of buffalo & humped bull.

Pottery and painting

- ✓ found in large quantities with potter's wheel.
- ✓ designs were painted on the pots like figures of birds, animals, men etc.

Economic activity

Agriculture:- main occupation.

- ✓ crops- wheat, barley, peas & bananas.
- ✓ with wooden plough was drawn men & oxen.

Domestication of Animals:- animals like oxen, buffaloes, pigs, goats & sheep.

- ✓ camels & asses for transportation.
- ✓ dogs & cats as pets.
- ✓ humped bull for farming community.

Trade:- trade activity was done inside & outside the country like Egypt, Babylon & Afghanistan.

- ✓ Harappa seals found in Mesopotamia.

Decline of the Harappan Civilisation

The civilisation declined sometimes around 1800 B.C. some of the likely causes for the decline:-

1. Overuse of natural resources or deforestations
2. Floods & earthquakes
3. Attacks by the Aryans

Conclusion:-

- ✓ Harappan civilisation showed the world its earliest cities, town planning, architecture, concern for health & sanitation, scientific drainage system.
- ✓ There is not much difference even today's culture art etc.