
Chapter-01

Bricks, Beads and Bones

Period (I): Early Harappa culture - Before 2600 BCE

Period (II): Mature Harappa culture-2600BCE to 1900 BCE (III) Late Harappa culture - After 1900 BCE Extent of

Harappan Civilisation: -

- Northern boundary - Manda Southern Boundary-Daimabad
- Eastern boundary- Alamgirpur Western boundary-Sutkagendor Characteristics of the Harappan

Civilisation: -

Two Sections:

(I) The Citadel

(II) The Lower Town

- Carefully planned drainage system.
- At burials in Harappan sites the dead were generally laid in pits.
- Seals and sealings were used to facilitate long distance communication.
- Exchanges were regulated by a precise system of weights, usually made of a stone called Chert and generally cubical, with no markings.
- Some archaeologists are of the opinion that Harappan society had no rulers, whereas other archaeologist feels that there was no single ruler but several rulers.
- Several explanations for the decline of Harappan civilisation are Climatic changes, deforestation, excessive floods, the shifting and/or drying up of rivers. Metals known: - Gold, Silver, Copper, Bronze.

Scripts: The Harappan scripts are undeciphered. There are 375-400 signs. The script was written from right to left.

Craft: The place Chanhudaro was totally involved for craft production. There were experts in bead makings, shell cutting, seal making, weight making. Lothal was also one of the important places for craft production.

Modes of Transportation: Bullock carts and Boats.

Seals and Sealing's:

- Seals and sealings were used to facilitate long distance communication. Imagine a bag of goods being sent from one place to another.
- Its mouth was tied with rope and on the knot was affixed some wet clay on which one or more seals were pressed, leaving an impression.
- If the bag reached with its sealing intact, it meant that it had not been tampered with.



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- The sealing also conveyed the identity of the sender.

Script used by the harappans:

- Harappan seals usually have a line of writing, probably containing the name and title of the owner.
- Scholars have also suggested that the motif conveyed a meaning to those who could not read.
- Most inscriptions are short, the longest containing about 26 signs.
- Although the script remains undeciphered to date, it was evidently not alphabetical stands for a vowel as it has just too many signs –somewhere between 375 and 400.
- The script was written from right to left.
- Some seals show a wider spacing on the right and cramping on the left, as if the engraver began working from the right and then ran out of space
- Variety of objects on which writing has been found: seals, copper tools, rims of jars, copper and terracotta tablets, jewellery, bone rods, even an ancient signboard

Weight system used by the Harappans:

- Exchanges were regulated by a precise system of weights, usually made of a stone called chert and generally cubical with no markings.
- Lower denominations of weights were binary (1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, etc. up to 12,800), while the Higher denominations followed the decimal system.
- The smaller weights were probably used for weighing jewellery and beads. Metal scale -pans have also been found.

Causes of the end of the civilization:

- Climatic change, deforestation, excessive floods, the shifting and/or drying up of rivers, to overuse of the landscape.
- Some of these “causes” may hold for certain settlements, but they do not explain the collapse of the entire civilisation.
- It appears that a strong unifying element, perhaps the Harappan state, came to an end.
- This is evidenced by the disappearance of seals, the script, distinctive beads and pottery

Domestic Architecture of Harappans:

- The Lower Town at Mohenjodaro provides examples of residential buildings. Many were centered on a courtyard, with rooms on all sides.
- The courtyard was probably the centre of activities such as cooking and weaving, particularly during hot and dry weather view of the interior or the courtyard.
- Every house had its own bathroom paved with bricks, with drains connected through the wall to the street drains.
- Some houses have remains of staircases to reach a second storey or the roof. Many houses had wells, often in a room that could be reached from the outside and perhaps used by passers-by.

