

Topic: "Early Cities"

Exercises:

Alexander Cunningham

Panawali

~~Dholavira~~ Lothal

Shortugai

Lothal

Timber gold

Mehrgarh

People settled

because the Indus river valley was

favourable for settlement. Land was

not heavily forested, rainfall was

sufficient, and the river deposited

fertile soil every year. Indus river

was also a source of fish and

a means of transport.

The civilisation was spread over

an area of about 1600 kilometers

from Baluchistan in the west to

River Yamuna in the east,

and 1100 kilometers from Jammu in

the north to River Gomada in

the south.

Until the early twentieth century,

historians were unaware of the

Bronze Age cities of the Indus

valley. After these cities were

abandoned by people, mud

settled on them over hundreds of

years, forming mounds. In the 1920s,

archaeologists began to excavate the

2)

Mesopotamia

4)

Pashupati

2)

Saharanpur

4)

Lothal

6)

Turquoise

3)

Kalibangan

mounds of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro. Many more sites were excavated later. Among these are Rupar, Banawali, Kalibangan, Lothal and Dholavira. Since the remains found at all these sites are very similar to each other, they are believed to belong to one single civilisation - the Indus Valley Civilisation or Harappan Civilisation.

4). We can infer that all the cities belong to the same civilization and probably there was a central authority that planned the cities.

5). The Great Bath in Mohenjo-daro was a public bath, located in Citadel. The bath is a marvellous example to show how good the Indus people were at engineering and planning. The inner walls were treated to prevent seepage. Stairs descending into the bath were used for cleaning it. There were also changing rooms around the bath.

6). Seals found have motifs of animals and human figures. They were made of stone or steatite or even silver and calcite, showing these materials were used. The seals have inscriptions showing

the existence of some script. The seals found in Mesopotamia are indicative of the fact that trade was carried on between the two civilisations. Some seals bring to light the religious practices e.g. a seal showing a horned figure in a yogic posture ~~so~~ surrounded by animals. The people of the Indus Valley civilisation were skilled craftsmen. Several artefacts have been found which indicate the existence of many arts and crafts. Pots were made with fine clay and then glazed and decorated. Making terracotta (burnt clay) toys, statuettes, figures of animals, etc., was a major industry. A large number of playthings, like miniature carts, dice, marbles, maze, and squirrels have been ~~excavated~~ excavated. Woven cloth, spindles, etc. are evidences that the people were skilled in the art of ~~spinning~~ spinning thread and weaving cloth. The Indus people produced tools and weapons of copper and bronze. The jewellers made a variety of ornaments using materials such as copper, gold, silver, clay, and precious and semi-precious stones.

2) The flourishing Indus Valley Civilisation declined around 1800 - 1700 BCE. Historians give different reasons for its decline. Excavations have revealed that the city of Mohenjo-daro was destroyed and rebuilt over again, and was rebuilt at the same site nine times. The climate may have been due to climate change. It became drier and warmer. There was severe shortage of water to support the people. Some died while others moved to cooler places with more rainfall. Another theory says that excessive deforestation led to ecological changes. However, the exact causes of the decline of this great civilisation are not known. It is suggested that the cities might have been destroyed by earthquakes, floods or a change in the course of the Indus.

3) 1) The cities of the civilisation exhibit excellent planning. The planners kept in mind the cleanliness and convenience of the cities. Bricks of standard sizes were used. Also, the general layout of the cities seem to have been similar. They were divided into two

Down. - the Citadel and the lower

The Indus Valley people used animals, boats and carts for trade. transport. They carried on trade within their territory and with other civilisations as well. Trade was conducted according to a set of rules. The Indus cities probably had trade links with Afghanistan, Iran and Mesopotamia. Mehrgarh and Shortugai were halting places on the trade routes. Cotton, timber, copper, gold, carnelian and ivory objects were exported. Imports included turquoise and lapis lazuli.

The Harappans invented a system of writing. This was required for business as well as administration. This writing is found inscribed on the seals. Most of the inscriptions are very short with an average of five signs. The longest has 26 symbols. There are about 450 basic signs and each symbol probably stood for a word or syllable. It is right from right to left. Unfortunately, the writing has not been deciphered so far. It is amongst the biggest & mysteries of this civilisation.