

The Indus Valley Civilization

Keywords

1. **Dwelling houses** are buildings, that people live in and but do not use as offices, trading places, etc.
2. **Public building:** These buildings are used by all the people and are not privately owned.
3. **Granaries** were the store houses where the people of Indus valley civilization stored their extra grain. The Great Granary was discovered at Harappa.
4. **Great Bath** was a big tank at Mohanjodaro that was probably used by the general public during religious ceremonies.
5. **Drainage system:** It is a process by which water or liquid waste is drained out from an area.
6. **Terracotta:** It is a reddish-brown clay that has been baked. Seals are the clay tablets used by Harappan merchants to stamp their goods.
7. **Mother Goddess** was the female deity worshiped by the people of the Indus Valley civilization. Many smoke- stained clay figures of the Mother Goddess have been found.

EXERCISES

A. Fill in the blanks.

1. The main river of the Harappan civilization was **Ravi**.
2. The Great Bath is located in **Mohenjodaro**.
3. The main occupation of the Harappan were **farming**.
4. The rich wore ornaments made of **gold, silver** and **ivory**.
5. The Harappan seals are made of **clay, soapstone** and **copper**.

B. Match the following:

A	B
1. Kalibangan	(a) terracotta
2. Houses	(b) Rajasthan
3. Toys	(c) bronze
4. Dancing girl	(d) dockyard
5. Lothal	(e) baked bricks

Answer:

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. Kalibangan | (b) Rajasthan |
| 2. Houses | (e) baked bricks |
| 3. Toys | (a) terracotta |
| 4. Dancing girl | (c) bronze |
| 5. Lothal | (d) dockyard |

C. Choose the correct answer:

1. The Harappan civilization belongs to the Mesolithic/ Neolithic/Bronze

Ans. The Harappan civilization belongs to the **Bronze Age**.

2. Lothal/Ropar/Harappa was the first city to be discovered in the Indus Valley region.

Ans. **Harappa** was the first city to be discovered in the Indus Valley region.

3. The Assembly Hall is in Mohanjodaro/Lothal/Harappa.

Ans: The Assembly Hall is in **Mohanjodaro**.

4. Wheat/Fish/Barley was the staple food of the Harappans.

Ans. **Wheat** was the staple food of the Harappans.

5. The neem/banyan/pipal tree was probably regarded as sacred by the Harappans.

Ans. The **pipal** tree was probably regarded as sacred by the Harappans.

D. State whether the following are true or false.

1. The Harappan cities had an elaborate drainage system.

False.

Correct: The Harappan cities had well planned system.

2. Domestication of animals was the main occupation of the Harappans.

False.

Correct: Farming was the main occupation of the Harappans.

3. The Harappans decorated their pottery with various designs.

True.

4. The Harappans built strong boats.

True.

5. Invasion by foreign tribes like the Aryans might have led to the collapse of the Indus Valley civilization.

True

E. Answer the following questions in one or two words/ sentences:

Question 1.

What discoveries proved that India had a 4,500-year old urban civilization?

Answer:

The excavations carried out at various sites prove that around 4,500 years ago highly civilized people lived in this region and gave to the world its earliest cities, its first town planning, its first architecture in stone and clay and its first example of sanitary engineering and drainage system.

Question 2.

Why is the Indus Valley Civilization also called the Harappan civilization?

Answer:

The Indus Valley civilization is also called the Harappan civilizations because the things found in all the sites were very much like the articles found at Harappa.

Question 3.

Why did the Indus Valley people build granaries close to the river bank?

Answer:

All the granaries were built close to the river bank so that the grains could be easily transported with the help of boats.

Question 4.

Give one example to prove that the Indus Valley bronze smiths were skilled craftspeople.

Answer:

The bronze smiths made tools, weapons and metal sculptures such as the famous figure of the 'dancing girl'. They were also engaged in other crafts like brick laying, boat making, stone cutting, masonry and carpentry.

Question 5.

How do we know that the Harappans had trade relations with the Mesopotamians?

Answer:

Trade relations with Mesopotamia have been proved with the discovery of Mesopotamian seals in the cities of the Indus Valley Civilization and Harappan seals in the ancient cities of Mesopotamia.

F. Answer the following questions briefly:

Question 1.

How were the Harappan cities planned? Explain briefly the main features of their dwelling houses.

Answer:

The Harappan cities were well-planned. The main streets ran parallel to each other, cut at right angles by smaller, streets, dividing the cities into rectangular blocks. The main roads were straight and very wide. The streets were often paved with baked bricks. Dwelling houses were building that people live in. They were in different sizes. They were made of baked bricks of very good quality. But they not used as office, trading place etc.

Question 2.

With reference to the engineering skills of the Indus Valley people, explain briefly the features of

1. The Great Bath and
2. The drainage system

Answer:

1. **The Great Bath:** It was important building at Mohenjodero. This building resembled a large swimming pool, It had six entrances, a central bathing pool, galleries and dressing rooms. It was probably used by the general public during religious ceremonies.
2. **The drainage system:** The people of the Indus valley had an excellent, well-planned drainage system. The Kitchens and the bathrooms had drains connected to the street drains. The street drains ran along the side of the streets and were usually covered. They had manholes at regular intervals. The drainage system proves that the Indus Valley people paid great attention to sanitation and cleanliness.

Question 3.

Give a brief account of

1. Great Granary
2. Assembly Hall.

Answer:

1. **Great Granary:**

The Great Granary at Harappa was a large building. Historians believe that it was used to store surplus food grains. There were two rows of granaries. Each row had six granaries.

2. **Assembly Hall:**

The Assembly Hall was another striking building found in Mohenjodaro. It was a pillared hall with thick walls and 20 pillars made of burnt or baked bricks. This may have been an assembly hall, a prayer hall or a palace.

Question 4.

Describe

- (1) the dress and
- (2) ornaments of the Indus Valley people.

Answer:

1. **Dress:**

People wore cotton and woollen garments. Two-piece dresses were worn by both men and women. The men wore a garment similar to the dhoti while the women wore skirts. The upper garments were a shawl worn around the shoulder.

2. **Ornaments:**

Both men and women wore ornaments. They wore necklaces, amulets and finger rings. The women also wore a headdress, earrings, bangles, girdles, bracelets and anklets. The rich wore ornaments made of gold, silver and ivory. The poor wore shell, bone and copper jewellery.

Question 5.

Describe the occupation and crafts of the Harappan people.

Answer:

The main occupation of the people of the Indus Valley was farming. Farmers grew wheat, barley, fruits and vegetables. They also cultivated cotton. The land was fertile. The second occupation of the people of the Indus Valley was domestication of animals like goat, sheep, buffaloes, elephants, bulls, dogs and cats.

The Indus Valley people were excellent potters and skilled crafts people. They made pottery of various shapes and sizes. They also made terracotta. The goldsmiths made gold and silver jewellery, copper smiths made utensils and the bronze smith made tools, weapons and metal sculptures. The people were also engaged in other crafts like brick laying, boat making, stone cutting, masonry and carpentry. Spinning and weaving were important occupations.

Question 6.

Write short notes on the following:

1. Trade
2. Seals of the Indus Valley

Answer:

1. **Trade:** The Indus Valley people carried on flourishing trade both within and outside India. They traded with countries like Mesopotamia, (Iraq), Persia (Iran) and Afghanistan. Trade was carried on both by land and sea routes. Bullock carts, boats and ships were probably used for transport. A dockyard has been discovered at Lothal.
2. **Seals of the Indus Valley:** More than 2,000 seals have been unearthed from various sites. They are generally small, flat, rectangular or square in shape and made of clay, soapstone and copper. They are skillfully carved with figures of humans and animals such as the unicorn, humped bull, goat, tiger, elephant, etc. These seals were probably used by merchants and traders to stamp goods.

Question 7.

The study of objects and artifacts found in the ruins of the Indus Valley cities help us to form an idea of Harappan religion. Explain.

Answer:

Some of the objects found in the ruins help us to form an idea of the religion of the Harappans. No temples have been found. Numerous smoke-stained clay figures of a female deity have been found. This was probably the Mother Goddess. A three-faced figure, seated in a yogic posture and surrounded by various animals is engraved on some seals. The pipal tree was probably regarded as sacred and worshiped. The discovery of a large number of amulets suggests that people probably wore them as lucky charms to ward off evil spirits.

Question 8.

How did the Harappan civilization end?

Answer:

These are some causes of the decay of the Harappan civilization

1. The Harappan might have been destroyed by natural calamities like earthquakes, floods.
2. The climate also began to change and the region became more and more dry like a desert.
3. Perhaps the Aryans attacked their cities and destroyed them.

4. An epidemic or some terrible disease might have killed the people.

G Picture study.

This picture on the right-hand side shows a well-planned ancient city located on the banks of a river.



1. Identify the civilization from the ruins in the picture.

Ans. The ruins of Mohenjodaro indicate that it was one of the largest settlements of the Indus Valley Civilization

2. When and by whom were these ruins discovered?

Ans. Rakhaldas Banerjee in 1922-23.

3. These ruins are an important source of information about the (a) town planning and (b) drainage system of this period. Explain.

Answer:

(a) Town planning— The Indus Valley cities were very well-planned. The streets were quite broad varying from a feet to 30 feet in breadth. The streets and roads were straight and they cut one another at right angles. The streets had rounded corners to enable the heavy carts to take a turn easily. Every street had a lighting system. Such a system of town-planning was not to be found at that time anywhere in the world.

(b) Drainage system— The people of the Indus valley had an excellent, well-planned drainage system. The kitchens and the bathrooms had drains connected to the street drains. The street drains ran along the side of the streets and were usually covered. They had manholes at regular intervals. The drainage system proves that the Indus Valley people paid great attention to sanitation and cleanliness.

OTHER IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

Question 1.

Name some major sites of the Indus Valley civilization?

Answer:

Some major sites of the Indus Valley civilization are following.

1. Lothal (Gujarat)
2. Ropar (Punjab)
3. Kalibangan (Rajasthan)
4. Alamgirpur (U.P)
5. Banwali (Haryana)
6. Rakhigarhi (Haryana)
7. Dholavira (Gujarat)

Question 2.

What is Mohenjodaro mean and where it is located?

Answer:

Mohenjodaro means 'mound of the dead'. It is located on the banks of the river Indus in the Larkana district of Sind, (now in Pakistan)

Question 3.

Write a short note on 'Great Bath'?

Answer:

It was important building at Mohenjodero. This building resembled a large swimming pool, It had six entrances, a central bathing pool, galleries and dressing rooms. It was probably used by the general public during religious ceremonies.

Question 4.

What were the main items of food of the Harappa people?

Answer:

They ate wheat, barley, fruits, fish meat and vegetables.

Question 5.

Describe the toys used by the Harappa children?

Answer:

Harappa children played with various toys like wheeled carts, dolls, animals with

movable heads, sliding monkeys, rattles and whistles. The toys were generally made of baked clay or terracotta.

Question 6.

How was the Indus Valley civilization discovered? Why is it also called the Harappan civilization?

Answer:

Indus valley was discovered by the finding of seals and pottery among the ruins of ancient Summerian cities.

Question 7.

What do you know about the religious beliefs and practices of the Harappans?

Answer:

The people of the Indus Valley believed in religion. They worshiped 'Mother Goddess'. She was the female deity. No temples have been found. But many smoke-stained clay figures of the Mother Goddess have been found.

The pipal tree was probably regarded as sacred and also worshiped people wore amulets as lucky charms to ward off evil spirits. People also believed of life after death. They buried the dead together with items of daily use. Sometimes they cremated the dead and kept the ashes or bones in an urn along with that items.