

NCERT SOLUTIONS

CLASS - 12th



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Subject : History

Chapter : 1

Chapter Name : The Harappan Civilisation

Q1 List the items of food available to people in Harappan cities. Identify the group who would have provided these.

Answer. A wide range of plants and animals products were available to people in Harappan cities. The food items available were grains like wheat, barley, lentil, chickpea and sesame. Harappans also ate fish. Animal bones were also found at Harappan sites which includes those of cattle, sheep, goat, buffalo and pigs. Bones of fish and fowl were also found. Studies done by zoo-archaeologists suggest that these animals were domesticated but it was not ascertained whether the Harappans hunted these animals themselves or obtained meat from other hunting communities.

Products taken from plants : Food gatherers

Animal meat and fish : Hunting communities

Food products like grains : Agricultural or farming communities.

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Q2 How do archaeologists trace socio-economic differences in Harappan society? What are the differences that they notice?

Answer. The archaeologists traced socio-economic differences in Harappan society through certain strategies like studying burials and looking for luxuries.

→ Burials : The burials in Harappan sites, suggested that the dead were laid in pits. Sometimes, there were differences in the way the burial pits was made in some instances, the hollowed-out spaces were lined up with bricks. Some graves contained pottery and ornaments, which indicates a belief that these could be used in the afterlife. Jewellery has also been found in burials of both men and women.

→ Looking for artefacts like "luxuries" : This technique is also used to identify social differences by studying the artefacts, which archaeologists broadly classified as utilitarian and luxuries. The first category includes objects of daily use made up of ordinary materials such as stone or clay. It is assumed that if the objects are made up of rare or costly, non-local material or with complicated technology then it belonged to the category of luxuries.

The differences that they notice from the distribution of artefacts are that - rare objects made of valuable materials are generally concentrated in large settlements like Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa and are rarely found in the smaller settlements.

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Q3 Would you agree that the drainage system in Harappan cities indicates town planning? Give reasons for your answer.

Answer. Yes, I do agree that the drainage system was one of the most distinctive features of the Harappan cities which showed that their town planning system was very strong.

Reasons

- The roads and streets were laid out along an approximate "grid" pattern, intersecting at right angles.
- As per the plan of the cities it seems that streets with drains were laid out first and then houses were built along them.
- Every house had its own bathroom paved with bricks which connected through the walls to street drains. If domestic wastewater had to flow into the street drains, every house needed to have at least one wall along a street.
- Every house was connected to street drains. The main channels were made of bricks set in mortar and were covered with loose bricks that could be removed for cleaning.

This clearly shows how well the cities were planned with proper drainage system and it also shows that the whole settlement was first planned and then implemented.

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Q4 List the materials used to make beads in Harappan Civilisation. Describe the process by which any one kind of bead was made.

Answer. Beads were made up of variety of materials, stones like carnelian (of a beautiful red colour), jasper, crystal, quartz, and steatite; metals like copper, bronze and gold; and shell, faience and terracotta or burnt clay. Some beads were made of two or more stones, cemented together, some of stones with gold caps. The beads had numerous shapes like disc-shaped, cylindrical, spherical, barrel-shaped, and segmented. Some were decorated by incising or painting and some had designs etched onto them.

There were different techniques for making beads depending on the type of material. For example: Steatite, a very soft stone, it was very easy to work with Steatite. Some beads were moulded with the paste of Steatite powder and many shapes of beads were also made out of it as it is a very soft stone.

The process followed to make the beads :

- The beads were given different shapes like cylindrical, spherical, barrel-shaped, disc-shaped, segmented, etc
- The beads were then coloured and painted and some even had designs.
- Then the nodules were chipped into rough shapes and then we're given their final forms.
- In the final stage the beads were grinded, polished and drilled at specialized centres like Lothal, Chanhudaro and Dholavira.

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Q5 Look at the figure 1.30 and describe what you see. How is the body placed? What are the objects placed near it? Are there any artefacts on the body? Do these indicate the sex of the skeleton?

Answer. The figure shows a Harappan burial. There is a skeleton lying in the burial.

The body is placed in the north-south direction.

There are some pots which are in different shapes and other objects placed near it which suggests that they believed in an afterlife.

Yes, there is a bangle on the body and it indicates that it is a skeleton of a female.

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Q6 Describe some of the distinctive features of Mohenjodaro.

Answer. The distinctive features of Mohenjodaro are :

Town Planning : The settlement was divided into two sections. One was smaller but was higher known as the Citadel and the other was much larger but was lower known as the Lower Town.

The Lower Town : It had residential buildings, many were centred on a courtyard, with rooms on all sides. The courtyard was the centre of activities such as cooking and weaving. There was a sense of privacy as there were no windows on walls at ground level besides the main entrance does not give the direct view of the interior or the courtyard. Every house had its own bathroom paved with bricks, with drains connected through the walls to the street drains. Many houses have remains of stairs 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 by the passers-by.

The Citadel : It was probably used for special public purposes. These include the structures like the Warehouse and the Great Bath. The Great Bath was large rectangular tank in a courtyard surrounded by corridor on all four sides. There were two flights of steps in the north and south leading into the tank, which was made watertight by setting bricks on edge and using mortar of gypsum. The structure was unique and suggested that it was meant for some special kind of ritual bath.

Drainage system : One of the most distinctive features of this civilisation was its drainage system. The pattern of construction suggests that the streets with drains were laid out first and then houses were built along them. Every house was connected to the street drains. The main channels were made of bricks set in mortar and were covered with loose bricks that could be removed for cleaning. Very long drainage channels were provided at intervals with sumps for cleaning. Drainage system was not unique to the larger cities, but we're found in smaller settlements as well.

Page : 27 , Block Name : Long Answer

Q7 List the raw materials required for craft production in the Harappan Civilisation and discuss how these might have been obtained.

Answer. The raw materials required for craft production in the Harappan Civilisation were stone nodules, whole shells, copper ore, etc.

The raw materials required for crafts were procured from various sources like :

- Some materials like clay were locally available whereas many such as stone, timber and metal had to be procured from outside the alluvial plain.
- Shells were obtained from places like Nageshwar and Balakot.
- Lapis lazuli, a blue stone was obtained from Shortughai, in far- off Afghanistan.
- Carnelian from Lothal, which was a near source.
- Steatite from south Rajasthan and north Gujarat.
- Metal from Rajasthan.
- Gold from south India and copper from Khetri region of Rajasthan have been procured by sending expeditions.

Recent archaeological findings suggest that copper was also probably brought from Oman, on the south-eastern tip of Arabian peninsula. Chemical analyses have shown that both the Omani copper and Harappan artefacts have traces of nickel, suggesting a common origin. Mesopotamian texts datable to the third millennium BCE refer to copper coming from a region called Magan, perhaps a name for Oman and enough copper found at Mesopotamian sites also contains traces of nickel.

Page : 27 , Block Name : Long Answer

Q8 Discuss how archaeologists reconstruct the past.

Answer. Archaeologists reconstruct the past in the following manner :

- Archaeologists conduct excavations in the ancient sites based on the evidence or accounts left by the people who visited the site earlier in order to locate the early settlements.
- They find out artefacts such as seals, bones, crafts, structures, ornaments, tools, toys, weights, pottery, metals, remains of plants and animals etc.
- They classify the findings in various groups like materials, tools, ornaments, etc.

- They try to segregate the artefacts based on the context in which they were found by trying to figure out the functions of the artefacts found.
- These evidences are then studied by the experts like archaeo-botanists and archaeo-zoologists to find out their existence through techniques like carbon-dating.
- Archaeologists then try to trace the cultivation and eating habits of people through the remains of grains available.
- They try to figure out the profession or working patterns of people through the kinds of tools available during that time.
- Through crafts and seals they try to observe the kind of religious beliefs and practices of the past.
- The metals used and ornaments worn by people depicts the socio-economic status of the people.
- The burials and the things recovered from burial sites suggested the belief of people in afterlife, etc.

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Q9 Discuss the functions that may have been performed by the rulers in Harappan Society.

Answer. Archaeological records provide no immediate answers about the rulers or the ruling authority during that time. A large building was found at Mohenjodaro and was labelled as a palace by archaeologists but no evidence was found associated with it. A stone statue was labelled as "priest-king" because archaeologists were familiar with Mesopotamian history and its "priest-kings" and have found parallels in the Indus region.

As we see the ritual practices of the Harappan Civilisation are not well understood and there are not even proper means to know whether those who performed them also held political power.

Some archaeologists opined that Harappan society had no rulers and everybody enjoyed equal status. Others feel that there was no single ruler but several and Mohenjodaro had separate ruler.

Few others state that there was a single state as there is a similarity in artefacts, the evidence for planned settlements, the standardised ratio of brick size, and the establishment of settlements near sources of raw materials. As of now, the last theory seems plausible, as it is unlikely that entire communities could have collectively made and implemented such complex decisions.

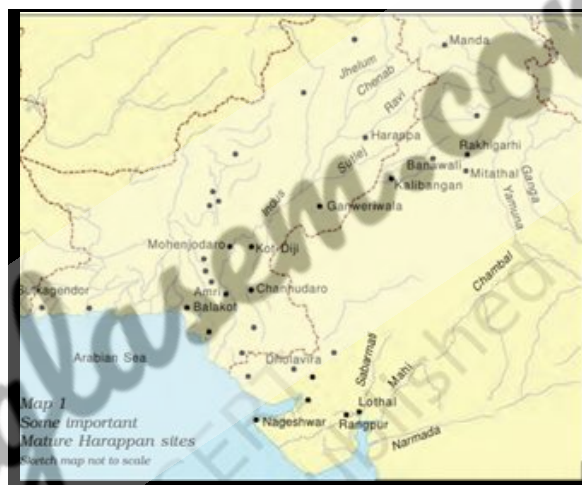
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Q10 On Map 1, use a pencil to circle the sites where evidence of agriculture has been recovered. Mark an X against sites where there is evidence of craft production and R against sites where raw materials were found.

Answer. Sites of agriculture : Harappa, Banawali, Kalibangan, Mohenjodaro, Dholavira (Gujarat).

Sites of Craft Production : Chanhudaro, Nageshwar, Balakot.

Sites of Raw materials : Nageshwar, Balakot, Khetri.



Page : 27 , Block Name : Map Based Question