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## THE HARAPPAN CIVILIZATION

In the previous chapter you learnt that the people in the prehistoric times used tools and weapons made of stone. Later man started using metals. Copper was the first metal to be used by man for making tools. Gradually several cultures developed in Indian subcontinent which were based on the use of stone and copper tools. They also used bronze, a mixture of copper and tin, for this purpose. This phase in history is known as the Chalcolithic (*chalco*-Copper; *lithic*-Stone) period. The brightest chapter in the Chalcolithic period in India is the Harappan civilization which is also referred to as the Indus Valley civilization.

Harappan civilization was discovered in 1920–22 when two of its most important sites were excavated. These were Harappa on the banks of the river Ravi and Mohenjodaro on the banks of the Indus. The first was excavated by D. R. Sahani and the second by R.D. Bannerji. On the basis of the archaeological findings the Harappan civilization has been dated between 2600 B.C–1900 BC and is one of the oldest civilizations of the world. It is also sometimes referred to as the ‘Indus Valley civilization’ because in the beginning majority of its settlements discovered were in and around the plains of the river Indus and its tributaries. But today it is termed as the Harappan civilization because Harappa was the first site, which brought to light the presence of this civilization. Besides, recent archaeological findings indicate that this civilization was spread much beyond the Indus Valley. Therefore, it is better it is called as the Harappan civilization. It is the first urban culture of India and is contemporaneous with other ancient civilizations of the world such as those of Mesopotamia and Egypt. Our knowledge of the life and culture of the Harappan people is based only on the archaeological excavations as the script of that period has not been deciphered so far.

The Harappan civilization did not appear all of a sudden. It developed gradually from earlier Neolithic village cultures. It is believed that the better technology to exploit the fertile plains of river Indus might have resulted in increased agricultural production. This led to the production of larger surplus to feed and maintain non-agricultural people such as artisans, administrators, etc. It also helped in the promotion of exchange or trading contacts with distant regions. It brought prosperity to the Harappan people and they were able to set up cities.

By around 2000 BC several regional cultures developed in different parts of the subcontinent which were also based on the use of stone and copper tools. These Chalcolithic cultures which lay outside the Harappan zone were not so rich and flourishing. These were basically rural in nature. The origin and development of these cultures is placed in the chronological span between *circa* 2000 BC–700 BC. These are found in Western and Central India and are described as non-Harappan Chalcolithic cultures.



### OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the origin and extent of the Harappan civilization;
- describe the Harappan town-planning;
- understand the Harappan social and economic life;
- discuss the Harappan religious beliefs;
- explain how and why did the civilization decline;
- identify the Chalcolithic Communities outside Harappan zone;
- explain economic condition and settlement pattern of these Chalcolithic communities.

### 3.1 ORIGIN AND EXTENT

The archaeological remains show that before the emergence of Harappan civilization the people lived in small villages. As the time passed, there was the emergence of small towns which ultimately led to full-fledged towns during the Harappan period. The whole period of Harappan civilization is in fact divided into three phases: (i) Early Harappan phase (3500 BC–2600 BC) – it was marked by some town-planning in the form of mud structures, elementary trade, arts and crafts, etc., (ii) Mature Harappan phase (2600 BC–1900 BC) – it was the period in which we notice well-developed towns with burnt brick structures, inland and foreign trade, crafts of various types, etc., and (iii) Late Harappan phase (1900 BC–1400 BC) – it was the phase of decline during which many cities were abandoned and the trade disappeared leading to the gradual decay of the significant urban traits.

Let us first have a glance over the geographical extent of the Harappan civilization.

The archaeological excavations reveal that this culture was spread over a vast area which included not only the present day states of India such as Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Western Uttar Pradesh but also Pakistan and some parts of Afghanistan. Some important sites of this civilization are: Manda in Jammu and Kashmir; Shortughai in Afghanistan; Harappa in Western Punjab (Pakistan); Mohenjodaro and Chanhudaro in Sind; Kalibangan in Rajasthan; Lothal and Dholavira in Gujarat; Banawali and Rakhigarhi in Haryana; Daimabad in Maharashtra while Sutkagendor on the Makran Coast (near Pakistan-Iran border) is the western most site of the Harappan civilization and Alamgirpur in western Uttar Pradesh marks its eastern most limit.

The location of settlements suggests that the Harappa, Kalibangan (On R Ghaggar-Hakra generally associated with the lost river Saraswati), Mohenjodaro axis was the heartland of this civilization and most of the settlements are located in this region. This area had certain uniform features in terms of the soil type, climate and subsistence pattern. The land was flat and depended on the monsoons and the Himalayan rivers for the supply of water. Due to its distinct geographical feature, agro-pastoral economy was the dominant feature in this region.

Besides the urban settlements of the Harappans, there were many sites inhabited by the primitive communities consisting of stone-age hunter-gatherers or pastoral



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*Map 3.1 Spread of Indus Valley Civilization*

nomads, which existed side by side. Some sites served as ports or trading out-posts. It may be noted that the important determinants of urbanisation are well-planned cities, specialised arts and crafts, trade, taxation, script, etc. In this respect Harappan culture fulfilled all these criteria for being called as an urban culture.



**INTEXT QUESTIONS 3.1**

1. Why is the Indus valley civilization called the Harappan civilization?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What were the different phases of Harappan culture.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Name any two important Harappan sites each in Haryana and Gujarat.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Who discovered Mohenjodaro?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Harappa is located on the banks of which river?

\_\_\_\_\_



6. What are the important features of an urban culture?

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### 3.2 TOWN PLANNING

The most interesting urban feature of Harappan civilization is its town-planning. It is marked by considerable uniformity, though one can notice some regional variations as well. The uniformity is noticed in the lay-out of the towns, streets, structures, brick size, drains etc. Almost all the major sites (Harappa, Mohenjodaro, Kalibangan and others), are divided into two parts—a citadel on higher mound on the western side and a lower town on the eastern side of the settlement. The citadel contain large structures which might have functioned as administrative or ritual centres. The residential buildings are built in the lower town. The streets intersect each other at right angles in a criss-cross pattern. It divides the city in several residential blocks. The main street is connected by narrow lanes. The doors of the houses opened in these lanes and not the main streets.

The houses of common people, however, differed in size from a single-room house in Harappa to bigger structures. The houses were largely built of burnt bricks. The bigger houses had many rooms surrounding a square courtyard. These houses were provided with private wells, kitchens and bathing plateforms. The difference in the size of the houses suggests that the rich lived in the larger houses whereas the one-room buildings or barracks might have been intended for the poorer section of the society.

The drainage system of the Harappans was elaborate and well laidout. Every house had drains, which opened into the street drains. These drains were covered with manholes bricks or stone slabs (which could be removed for cleaning) were constructed at regular intervals by the side of the streets for cleaning. This shows that the people were well acquainted with the science of sanitation.



Fig 3.1 Great Bath of Mohenjodaro

### 3.3 SOME MAJOR STRUCTURAL REMAINS OF THE HARAPPAN TOWNS

At Mohenjodaro the 'Great Bath' is the most important structure. (Fig 3.1) It is surrounded by corridors on all sides and is approached at either end by a flights of steps in north and south. A thin layer of bitumen was applied to the bed of the Bath to ensure that water did not seep in. Water was supplied by a large well in an adjacent room. There was a drain for the outlet of the water. The bath was surrounded by sets of rooms on sides for



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changing cloth. Scholars believe that the ‘Great Bath’ was used for ritual bathing. Another structure here located to the west of the ‘Great Bath’ is the granary. It consists of several rectangular blocks of brick for storing grains. A granary has also been found at Harappa. It has the rows of circular brick platforms, which were used for threshing grains. This is known from the finding of chaffs of wheat and barley from here.

At Lothal, a brick structure has been identified as a dockyard meant for berthing ships and handling cargo. (Fig 3.2) This suggests that Lothal was an important port and trading centre of the Harappan people.



*Fig 3.2 The dockyard of Lothal*



**INTEXT QUESTIONS 3.2**

1. The citadel in Harappan towns was normally located in which direction.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What kind of bricks were used for building the houses?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Where was the ‘Great Bath’ discovered?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Name the major structure found at Lothal.

\_\_\_\_\_

**3.4 ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES**

**(i) Agriculture**

The prosperity of the Harappan civilization was based on its flourishing economic activities such as agriculture, arts and crafts, and trade. The availability of fertile Indus alluvium contributed to the surplus in agricultural production. It helped the Harappan people to indulge in exchange, both internal and external, with others and also develop crafts and industries.

Agriculture alongwith pastoralism (cattle-rearing) was the base of Harappan economy. The granaries discovered at sites like Harappa, Mohenjodaro and Lothal served as



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the storehouses for grains. We do not have any clear evidence of the tools used for agriculture. However, the furrows or plough-marks have been observed in a field at Kalibangan. These indicate plough cultivation. A terracotta plough has also been reported from Banawali in Hissar district of Haryana. The irrigation was carried on a small scale by drawing water from wells or by diverting river water into channels.

The chief food crops included wheat, barley, sesasum, mustard, peas, jejupe, etc. The evidence for rice has come from Lothal and Rangpur in the form of husks embedded in pottery. Cotton was another important crop. A piece of woven cloth has been found at Mohenjodaro. Apart from cereals, fish and animal meat also formed a part of the Harappan diet.

### (ii) Industries and Crafts

The Harappan people were aware of almost all the metals except iron. They manufactured gold and silver objects. The gold objects include beads, armlets, needles and other ornaments. But the use of silver was more common than gold. A large number of silver ornaments, dishes, etc. have been discovered. A number of copper tools and weapons have also been discovered. The common tools included axe, saws, chisels, knives, spearheads and arrowheads. It is important to note that the weapons produced by the Harappans were mostly defensive in nature as there is no evidence of weapons like swords, etc. Stone tools were also commonly used. Copper was brought mainly from Khetri in Rajasthan. Gold might have been obtained from the Himalayan river-beds and South India, and silver from Mesopotamia. We also have the evidence of the use of the bronze though in limited manner. The most famous specimen in this regard is the bronze 'dancing girl' figurine discovered at Mohenjodaro. (Fig 3.3) It is a nude female figure, with right arm on the hip and left arm hanging in a dancing pose. She is wearing a large number of bangles.

Bead-making also was an important craft. Beads were made of precious and semi-precious stones such as agate and carnelian. Steatite was used for making beads. The evidence of beadmakers' shops have been found at Chanhudaro and Lothal. Gold and silver beads have also been found. Ivory carving and inlaying used in beads, bracelets and other decorations were also in practice. The Harappans thus showed their masterly skill in a variety of arts and crafts.

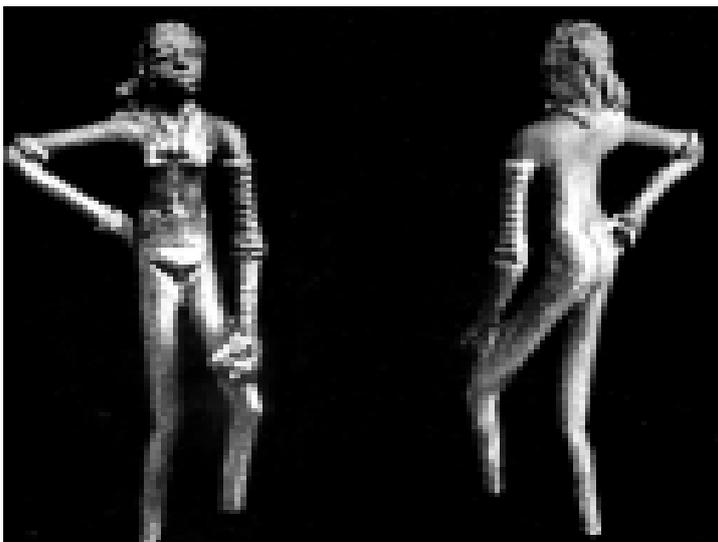


Fig. 3.3 Dancing Girl Mohenjodro



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A well-known piece of art of the Harappan period is a stone sculpture of a bearded man discovered at Mohenjodaro. (Fig 3.4) His eyes are half closed indicating a posture of meditation. Across the left shoulder is an embroidered cloak. In the opinion of some scholars it could be a bust of a priest.

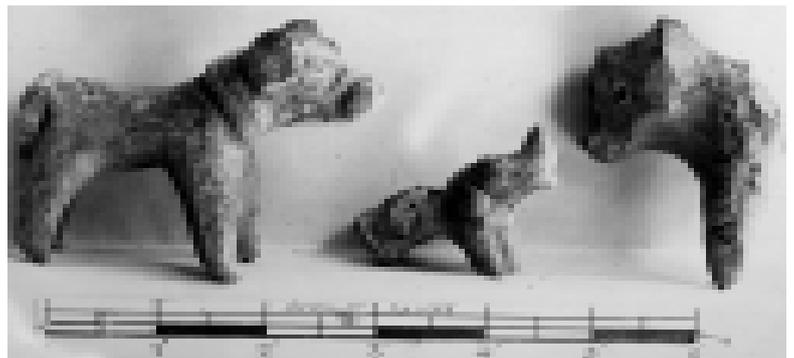
A large number of terracotta figurines of males and females have been discovered from various Harappan sites. (Fig 3.5) The female figurines outnumber those of males and are believed to represent the worship of mother goddess. Besides these, a variety of models of birds, monkeys, dogs, sheep, cattle, humped and humpless bulls are found. However, the noteworthy specimen in this regard are various models of terracotta carts.

Pottery-making was also an important industry in the Harappan period. These were chiefly wheel-made and were treated with a red coating and had decorations in black. These are found in various sizes and shapes. The painted designs consist of horizontal lines of varied thickness, leaf patterns, palm and *pipal* trees. Birds, fishes and animals are also depicted on potteries.

The Harappans manufactured seals of various kinds. More than two thousand seals have been discovered from different sites. These were generally square in shape and were made of steatite. It is noteworthy that while the seals depict a number of ani-



*Fig 3.4 Stone Sculpture of bearded man*



*Fig. 3.5 Terracota Human & Animal figurines*



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Fig. 3.6 A Terracota cart from Kalibangan

mals there is no representation of horse on these. It has led many scholars to argue that horse was not known to the Harappan people though there are others who do not accept this argument. Besides various kinds of animals, the Harappan seals contain some signs in the Harappan script which however has not been deciphered so far. The most famous of the seals is the one with a horned male deity represented on it. He has three heads and is sitting in a yogic posture surrounded by four animals viz elephant, tiger, rhinoceros and a buffalo. He has been identified by many scholars with the ancient form of the god *Pashupati* (Lord of beasts) though there are others who dispute this identification.



Fig 3.7 Seal of Pashupati



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**(iii) Trade**

Trading network, both internal (within the country) and external (foreign), was a significant feature of the urban economy of the Harappans. As the urban population had to depend on the surrounding countryside for the supply of food and many other necessary products, there emerged a village-town (rural-urban) interrelationship. Similarly, the urban craftsmen needed markets to sell their goods in other areas. It led to the contact between the towns. The traders also established contacts with foreign lands particularly Mesopotamia where these goods were in demand.

It is important to note that various kinds of metals and precious stones were needed by craftsmen to make goods, but as these were not available locally they had to be brought from outside. The presence of such raw material found at sites away from the place of its origin naturally indicates it must have reached there through an exchange activity. Thus Rajasthan region is rich in copper deposits and the Harappans acquired copper mainly from the Khetri mines located here. Kolar gold fields of Karnataka and the river-beds of the Himalayan rivers might have supplied the gold. The source of silver may have been Jwar mines of Rajasthan. It is believed that it must have also come from Mesopotamia in exchange for the Harappan goods.

Among the precious stones used for making beads, the source of lapis-lazuli was located in Badakshan mines in northeast Afghanistan. Turquoise and Jade might have been brought from Central Asia. Western India supplied agate, chalcedony and carnelian. The seashells must have come from Gujarat and neighbouring coastal areas. Timber of good quality and other forest products were perhaps obtained from the northern regions such as Jammu.

The Harappans were engaged in external trade with Mesopotamia. It was largely through Oman and Bahrain in the Persian Gulf. It is confirmed by the presence of Harappan artefacts such as beads, seals, dice etc. in these regions. Though the artefacts from those regions are rarely found at the Harappan sites, a seal of West Asian or Persian origin has been discovered at Lothal which confirms this contact. Mesopotamian cities like Susa, Ur, etc. have yielded about two dozen of Harappan seals. Besides seals, other artefacts of Harappan origin which have been discovered include potteries, etched carnelian beads and dices with Harappan features.

The inscriptional evidence from Mesopotamia also provides us with valuable information on Harappan contact with Mesopotamia. These inscriptions refer to trade with Dilmun, Magan and Meluhha. Scholars have identified Meluhha with Harappan region, Magan with the Makran coast, and Dilmun with Bahrain. They indicate that Mesopotamia imported copper, carnelian, ivory, shell, lapis-lazuli, pearls and ebony from Meluhha. The export from Mesopotamia to Harappans included items such as garments, wool, perfumes, leather products and silver. Except silver all these products are perishable. This may be one important reason why we do not find the remains of these goods at Harappan sites.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 3.3**

- Besides agriculture which economic activity was practiced by Harappan people?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Name the chief food crops consumed by the Harappans.  
\_\_\_\_\_



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3. Which are the two places from where we get evidence of rice as a food crop during the Harappan period?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Where was the bronze dancing girl found?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Name any two important crafts practised in the Harappan period.  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Which place was the chief source of copper for the Harappan people?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 3.5 SOCIAL DIFFERENTIATION

The Harappan society appears to have been matriarchal in nature. This view is based on the popularity of the mother goddess as indicated by the finding of a large number of terracotta female figurines in Punjab and Sind region. As Harappan script has not been deciphered till now, we have to satisfy ourselves with this limited information on this issue.

The Harappan Society comprised of people following diverse professions. These included the priests, the warriors, peasants, traders and artisans (masons, weavers, goldsmith, potters, etc.) The structural remains at sites such as Harappa and Lothal show that different types of buildings that were used as residence by different classes. The presence of a class of workmen is proved by workmen quarters near the granary at Harappa. Similarly, the workshops and houses meant for coppersmiths and beadmakers have been discovered at Lothal. Infact, we can say that those who lived in larger houses belonged to the rich class whereas those living in the barracks like workmen quarters were from the class of labourers.

Our limited knowledge about their dress styles comes from the terracotta figurines and stone sculptures of the period. Men are mostly shown wearing a dress wrapped round the lower half of the body with one end worn over the left shoulder and under the right arm. The other garment was a skirt like dress to cover the lower portion. They used cotton and woollen clothes. A piece of woven cloth has been found at Mohenjodaro. Spindles and needles discovered at many sites attest to the practice of spinning and weaving.

Harappan people loved to decorate themselves. Hair dressing by both, men and women, is evident from figurines found at different sites. The men as well as women arranged their hair in different styles. The people were also fond of ornaments. These mainly included necklaces, armlets, earrings, beads, bangles, etc., used by both the sexes. Rich people appear to have used the ornaments of gold, silver and semi-precious stones while the poor satisfied themselves with those of terracotta.



### INTEXT QUESTIONS 3.4

1. Harappan society is believed to be a \_\_\_\_\_ society.
2. Where were the workmen's quarters discovered?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. The Harappans used clothes made of which material?  
\_\_\_\_\_



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**3.6 RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND PRACTICES**

Our knowledge on the religious beliefs and practices of the Harappans is largely based on the Harappan seals and terracotta figurines available to us. The Harappan religion is normally termed as animism i.e., worship of trees, stones etc. (Fig 3.8) A large number of terracotta figurines discovered at the Harappan sites have been associated with the worship of mother goddess. (Fig 3.9) Many of these represent females adorned with a wide girdle, loin cloth and necklaces. They wear a fan-shaped head dress. In some cases the female is shown with an infant while there is one that shows a plant growing out of the uterus of a woman. The latter type probably symbolizes the goddess of earth. There are many scholars who refer to the worshipping of *linga* (phallus) and *yoni* (female sex organ) by the Harappans but some are doubtful about it.

Harappans' belief in a male deity is evident by the seal depicting a deity with a buffalo-horned head-dress, sitting in a *yogic* posture and surrounded by animals. Many scholars identify him with god Pashupati (Lord of beasts) or 'Proto-Shiva' though some dispute it. In another instance, a deity is shown with horns and flowing hair standing nude between the branches of a *Pipal* tree and a worshipper is kneeling in front. It may represent tree worship. Animal worship also appears to be popular among the Harappans.

The evidence of fire worship has also been found at some sites such as Kalibangan and Lothal. At Kalibangan, a series of raised brick platforms with pits containing ash and animal bones have been discovered. These are identified by many scholars as fire altars.

This also shows that the Harappans living in different areas followed different religious practices as there is no evidence of fire-pits at Harappa or Mohanjodaro.

The burial practices and the rituals related with them have been a very important aspect of religion in any culture. However, in this context Harappan sites have not yielded any monument such as the Pyramids of Egypt or the Royal cemetery at Ur in Mesopotamia. Dead bodies were generally rested in north-south direction with their head



Fig 3.9 Mother Goddess from Mohenjodero



Fig 3.8 Symbolic Pipal Tree from Mohenjodero



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towards north and the feet towards south. The dead were buried with a varying number of earthen pots. In some graves the dead were buried along with goods such as bangles, beads, copper mirrors. This may indicate that the Harappans believed in life after death. At Lothal three joint or double burials with male and female bodies together were discovered. Kalibangan has yielded evidence of a symbolic burial along



Fig. 3.10 Humped bull seals from Mohenjodero

i.e., a burial which contains pots but no bones or skeleton. These different practices in different regions of Harappan civilization may reflect diversity in religious beliefs.



### INTEXT QUESTIONS 3.5

1. From where has the famous “Pashupati” seal been discovered?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Which tree is often represented on the Harappan seals?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Is there any evidence of fire worship? If so where has it been found?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. At which place have joint burials been found?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 3.9 THE SCRIPT

The Harappans were literate people. Harappan seals, are engraved with various signs or characters. Recent studies suggest that the Harappan script consists of about 400 signs and that it was written from right to left. However, the script has not been deciphered as yet. It is believed that they used ideograms i.e., a graphic symbol or character to convey the idea directly. We do not know the language they spoke, though scholars believe that they spoke “Brahui”, a dialect used by Baluchi people in Pakistan today. However further research alone can unveil the mystery and enable us to know more about the Harappan script.

### 3.10 DECLINE OF THE HARAPPAN CIVILIZATION

The Harappan Civilization flourished till 1900 BC. The period following this is marked by the beginning of the post-urban phase or (Late Harappan phase). This phase was

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characterised by a gradual disappearance of the major traits such as town-planning, art of writing, uniformity in weights and measures, homogeneity in pottery designs, etc. The regression covered a period from 1900 BC–1400 BC. There was also the shrinkage in the settlement area. For instance, Mohenjodaro was reduced to a small settlement of three hectares from the original eighty five hectares towards the end of the Late phase. The population appears to have shifted to other areas. It is indicated by the large number of new settlements in the outlying areas of Gujarat, east Punjab, Haryana and Upper Doab during the later Harappan period.

You may be wondering how the Harappan Civilization came to an end. Well scholars put forward many theories in this regard.

- (i) It is suggested by some scholars that natural calamities such as floods and earthquakes might have caused the decline of the civilization. It is believed that earthquakes might have raised the level of the flood plains of the lower course of Indus river. It blocked the passage of the river water to the sea and resulted in the floods which might have swallowed the city of Mohenjodaro. However, this only explains the decline of Mohenjodaro and not of the whole civilization.
- (ii) Increased aridity and drying up of the river Ghaggar-Harka on account of the changes in river courses, according to some scholars, might have contributed to the decline. This theory states that there was an increase in arid conditions by around 2000 BC. This might have affected agricultural production, and led to the decline.
- (iii) Aryan invasion theory is also put forward as a cause for the decline. According to this, the Harappan civilization was destroyed by the Aryans who came to India from north-west around 1500 BC. However, on the basis of closer and critical analysis of data, this view is completely negated today.

Thus, there is no single cause that can explain the decline of the civilization in totality. At the maximum these can explain the decay of certain sites or areas only. Hence, each theory has met with criticism. Nevertheless, the archaeological evidence indicates that the Harappan civilization did not collapse all of a sudden but declined gradually and ultimately merged with other local cultures.



**INTEXT QUESTIONS 3.6**

1. What is the approximate number of signs found in the Harappan script?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Which natural calamities are held responsible for the decline of the Harappan civilization?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How was the Harappan script written? (Right to left or left to right)  
\_\_\_\_\_

**3.11 CHALCOLITHIC COMMUNITIES OF NON-HARAPPAN INDIA**

**MAJOR CHALCOLITHIC CULTURES AND THEIR CHIEF SITES**

The important non-Harappan chalcolithic cultures lay mainly in western India and Deccan. These include Banas culture (2600BC–1900 BC) in south-east Rajasthan, with Ahar



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near Udaipur and Gilund as its key-sites; Kayatha culture (2100BC–2000 BC) with Kayatha in Chambal as its chief site in Madhya Pradesh; Malwa Culture (1700BC–1400BC) with Navdatoli in Western Madhya Pradesh as an important site, and Jorwe culture (1400BC–700BC) with Inamgaon and Chandoli near Pune in Maharashtra as its chief centres. The evidence of the chalcolithic cultures also comes from eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Bengal. (Map 3.2) It may be noted that the non-Harappan Chalcolithic cultures though flourished in different regions they were marked by basic uniformity in various aspects such as their mud structures, farming and hunting activities, use of wheel made pottery etc. The pottery of these chalcolithic cultures included ochre coloured pottery (OCP), black-and-red ware (BRW) and has been found in the shape of various kinds of bowls, basins, spouted jars with concave necks, dishes on stand, etc.

*Map 3.2 Chalcolithic sites*



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**3.12 TOOLS, IMPLEMENTS AND OTHER OBJECTS**

The chalcolithic cultures are characterised by the use of tools made of copper as well as stone. They used chalcedony, chert etc. for making stone tools. The major tools used were long parallel-sided blades, pen knives, lunates, triangles, and trapezes. Some of the blade tools were used in agriculture. Main copper objects used include flat axes, arrowheads, spearheads, chisels, fishhooks, swords, blades, bangles, rings and beads. Beads made of carnelian, jasper, chalcedony, agate, shell, etc. frequently occur in excavations. In this context, the findings from Daimabad hoard are noteworthy. The discovery includes bronze rhinoceros, elephant, two-wheeled charriot with a rider and a buffalo. These are massive and weigh over sixty kilograms. From Kayatha (Chambal valley) also copper objects with sharp cutting edges have been recovered. These reflect the skills of the craftsmen of the period.

**3.13 SUBSISTENCE ECONOMY**

The people of these settlements subsisted on agriculture and cattle rearing. However, they also practised hunting and fishing. The main crops of the period include, rice, barley, lentils, wheat, jawar, coarse gram, pea, green gram, etc. It is to be noted that the major parts of this culture flourished in the zone of black soil, useful mainly for growing cotton.

Skeletal remains from the sites suggest the presence of domesticated and wild animals in these cultures. The important domesticated animals were cattle, sheep, goat, dog, pig, horse, etc. The wild animals included black buck, antelope, nilgai, barasinga, sambar, cheetah, wild buffalo and one-horn rhino. The bones of fish, water fowl, turtle and rodents were also discovered.

**3.14 HOUSES AND HABITATIONS**

The Chalcolithic cultures were characterised by rural settlements. The people lived in rectangular and circular houses with mud walls and thatched roofs. Most of the houses were single roomed but some had two or three rooms. The floors were made of burnt clay or clay mixed with river gravels. More than 200 sites of Jorwe culture (Maharashtra) have been found. The settlements at Inamgaon (Jorwe culture) suggests that some kind of planning was adopted in laying of the settlement.



**INTEXT QUESTIONS 3.7**

1. Name one chalcolithic site each in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What material was used in the Chalcolithic period to manufacture tools?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Houses of the Chalcolithic people were made of which material?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. The chalcolithic cultures were \_\_\_\_\_ in character. (rural/urban)
5. Name any two Non-Harappan chalcolithic cultures.  
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### WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

The Harappan civilization was the first urban civilization of the Indian subcontinent. Archaeological discoveries show that this culture evolved from the earlier rural communities. Harappa, Mohenjodaro, Chanhudaro, Kalibangan, Lothal, Banawali, Rakhigarhi and Dholavira were some of the important sites of the Harappan civilization. Well-planned towns can be observed at some Harappan centres. These towns were characterised by two broad divisions—a citadel on a higher mound and the lower town. Burnt bricks were used for building houses. The towns had good drainage system. Some major buildings at the Harappan towns were the Great Bath at Mohenjodaro, a granary at Harappa, and a dockyard at Lothal. The Harappans practised agriculture along with pastoralism. Though there were skilled craftsmen who worked in copper and other metals, the stone tools were still in common use. They produced beads, terracotta figurines, potteries and seals of various kinds. The Harappans carried out trade, both internal and external. They had commercial links with Mesopotamian cities through Oman and Bahrain in the Persian Gulf. The merchants traded in various commodities of import and export. The Harappan society seems to have been matriarchal in nature. The people followed different professions such as those of priests, physicians, warriors, peasants, traders and artisans. Though the Harappans wore simple clothes made of cotton and wool, they were fond of decorating themselves with various kinds of ornaments. The Harappans worshipped the mother goddess, Pashupati (Proto-Shiva), trees and animals. They also followed different kinds of burial practices and rituals associated with them. The Harappans were literate and their script is in the form of ideograms. However, the script has not been deciphered so far. Once it is deciphered, we will be able to know more about the Harappan culture. Scholars have suggested various factors such as natural calamities, increased aridity, and the Aryan invasion for the decline of the culture. The archaeological evidence suggests that this civilization did not face a sudden collapse but had a gradual decline.

The archaeological sources reflect that the non-Harappan Chalcolithic cultures were characterized by regional variations. The use of stone and copper (Chalcolithic) tools was the distinct feature of these cultures. The distribution pattern of the sites suggests hierarchy of settlements. Some settlements were large in size with elaborate structures, indicating that these were important centres. The Chalcolithic cultures outside the orbit of the Harappan culture did not possess Harappan traits of urbanity and prosperity. These were non-urban cultures with certain elements of their own such as the housing pattern, pottery types, tool types, religious practices, etc. They still subsisted on agriculture and hunting-gathering economy combined with pastoralism.



### TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Describe the important features of the Harappan town planning.
2. Give an account of industries and crafts in the Harappan period.
3. Give a brief account of the Harappan trade with Mesopotamia.
4. Describe some important features of the Harappan religious life.
5. Account for the decline of the Harappan civilization.
6. Give an account of the life of the non-Harappan Chalcolithic people.



### Notes

**Notes****ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS****3.1**

1. The Indus Valley civilization is called the Harappan civilization because Harappa was the first site where the traces of the civilization were discovered.
2. (i) Early Harappan phase (3500 BC–2600 BC)  
(ii) Mature Harappan phase (2600 BC– 1900 BC)  
(iii) Late Harappan phase (1900 BC–1400 BC)
3. Banawali and Rakhigarhi in Haryana, and Lothal and Dholavira in Gujarat.
4. R.D. Bannerji
5. Ravi
6. The important features of an urban culture are the well-planned cities, specialized arts and crafts, trade, taxation, script, etc.

**3.2**

1. Western
2. burnt bricks
3. Mohenjodaro
4. The dockyard

**3.3**

1. pastoralism (cattle-rearing)
2. wheat, barley, sesamum, mustard, peas, jejupe etc.
3. Lothal and Rangpur
4. Mohenjodaro
5. Bead-making, Pottery-making
6. Khetri mines in Rajasthan

**3.4**

1. matriarchal
2. Harappa
3. cotton, wool

**3.5**

1. Mohenjodaro
2. Pipal
3. Yes, Kalibangan and Lothal
4. Lothal

**3.6**

1. 400

**Notes**

2. floods, earthquakes

3. right to left

**3.7**

1. Navdatoli in Madhya Pradesh and Inamgaon in Maharashtra

2. stone, copper

3. mud

4. rural

5. Kayatha culture in Madhya Pradesh, and Jorwe culture in Maharashtra

**HINTS TO TERMINAL QUESTIONS**

1. Refer to the section 3.2

2. Refer to the section 3.4(ii)

3. Refer to the section 3.4(iii)

4. Refer to the section 3.8

5. Refer to the section 3.10

6. Refer to the sections 3.13 and 3.14

**GLOSSARY**

Animism	–	worshipping of plants, stones and natural phenomena with belief that these too have life and thus have spiritual importance.
BRW	–	black-and-red ware, a kind of pottery found at the Chalcolithic sites.
Citadel	–	Citadel was the higher portion of the Harappan towns and was located on the western side.
Ideograms	–	characters or a symbol conveying ideas.
Lapislazuli	–	a bright blue rock from which lazurite used in jewellery is obtained. During the Harappan period this was found in Afghanistan region.
Mesopotamia	–	the land between two rivers Euphrates and Tigris in Iraq.
OCP	–	Ochre coloured pottery.
Pastoralism	–	dependence on domestication of cattle for subsistence.
Proto-Siva	–	a primitive or preliminary form of Siva from which other forms developed in later periods.
Steatite	–	a mineral occurring in the form of soapstone, used for making seals during Harappan period.
Surplus	–	an excess of production over the requirements.
Unicorn	–	an animal with one horn found on Harappan seals.
Urbanisation	–	town life signifying surplus agriculture, specialised arts and craft, trade, writing, big structures and stratified society.