

# The Stone Ages

## DEFINITION AND PHASES

- The Stone Age covers the earliest phase of human life.
  - It can be categorised as the **prehistoric past** during which humans evolved from primates in Central Africa and spread to other parts of the world.
  - This process began roughly 2 million years ago and is categorised by man in his primitive form, before the concept of civilisation emerged.
- Since humans had not yet invented the script, **no written records** exist.
  - Historians have to rely on archaeological evidence to study it.

On the basis of stratigraphic analysis, The Stone Age may be divided into:-

### 1. Palaeolithic Age – 2 mya-8000 BCE – Hunter-Gatherers

- a. Lower Palaeolithic Age – 2 mya-40,000 BCE
- b. Middle Palaeolithic Age – 40,000 BCE-20,000 BCE
- c. Upper Palaeolithic Age – 20,000 BCE-8,000 BCE

### 2. Mesolithic Age – 8000-5000 BCE – Animal Domestication

### 3. Neolithic Age – 5000 BCE-1000 BCE – Agriculture

### 4. Chalcolithic Age – 2000 BCE-700 BCE – Agro-Pastoral – Metal Use **PALAEOLITHIC AGE**

- It corresponded with the **Pleistocene Epoch/ The Great Ice Age**, when Earth's climate was extremely cold and fauna was dominated by large, woolly mammals.
  - Human beings started evolving and did not have the ability to dominate their environment.
  - Thus, their population was quite low.

## Human Evolution

### Lower Palaeolithic Age

- The story of human evolution begins in central Africa when primates began walking on two feet and evolved into **HOMO HABILIS**, that is the half-erect, hand-using men.
- He gradually evolved into **HOMO ERECTUS**, that is the upright man, who started migrating to different parts of the world around 5 Lakh years ago.

It is believed that they **come to India from Africa using rafts** to cross the sea, which would have been very shallow during the Ice Age.

- The first evidence of prehistoric life discovered in India was the **PALLAVARAM HAND AXE**, by **Robert Bruce Foote** in 1863.
- Earliest human fossils have been discovered from **Hathnora MP**, from the banks of Narmada. Thus, it is also called the **Narmada Man**.

### Middle Palaeolithic Age

- Homo Erectus evolved into **HOMO SAPIENS ARCHAIC**

### Upper Palaeolithic Age

- Homo Sapiens Archaic evolved into **HOMO SAPIEN SAPIENS**

## Technology

During the **Palaeolithic Age** primarily **quartz** was used to make tools.

- **LPA**- Core tools – Hand Axes, Cleavers, Choppers
- **MPA**- Flake tools – Points, Borers, Scrapers
- **UPA**- Blade tools – Blades , Burins

## Living Pattern

- During the **Palaeolithic Age** humans had to depend on hunting and gathering to sustain themselves.
  - Initially, they were gatherers before they began hunting with stone tools.

- They did not practise sedentary life and were **migratory** in nature.
- They lived in **natural dwellings** like caves and rock shelters- Bhimbetka caves.
- Human population was extremely small, and **for a large part, human existence was solitary.**
- They competed with each other for food and shelter.
- The concept of community was absent for a majority of the **Palaeolithic Age**.
- It was only during the **last part of the Upper Palaeolithic Age** that a small groups emerged and **language** developed.
  - This coincided with the **discovery of fire** which would have undoubtedly improved the chances of human survival.

### Geographical Extent

The **Palaeolithic Man** occupied the **entire subcontinent except the alluvial indo-gangetic plains** because of-

- Absence of natural shelters, such as caves
- Lack of stone to make tools
- Frequent flooding of the young rivers
- Large animals which dominated the plains thick forest.

As a result, **Palaeolithic men** prefer living on **plateaus, hills and rifts, valleys**. Some sites are-

- Sohan River Valley, Punjab, Pakistan
- Kashmir
- Belan Valley, Mirzapur, Uttar Pradesh
- Didwana, Rajasthan
- Narmada Valley
- Bhimbetka Caves

### Culture

The Palaeolithic man took an interest in **painting**, for example the Bhimbetka cave complex.

- The common themes included hunting scenes, figures of birds, animals and human beings, hand prints and fingerprints.

### Natural pigments were used for colour

- Common colours were red (hematite), white (lime), black (soot) and green (chalcedony).
- **Blue was absent** since it is not found in nature.

## MESOLITHIC AGE

### Climatic Changes

The Pleistocene Epoch ended along with the Palaeolithic Age and **Holocene Epoch** started.

- **Fast, dry winds** began blowing over the earth surface, and swamps and marshes were replaced by **grasslands**.
- As a result, the population of **grazing animals** increased.

### Changes in Living Pattern

Simultaneously due to milder conditions, the **human population also increased**.

- Hunting and gathering were no longer sufficient to sustain them.
- This led to the beginning of the **domestication of animals**, the first being goats and sheep.
- Since natural shelter was not available in grasslands, people started living in **artificial homes** known as **wattle and daub huts**.
- **Pastoral communities used to migrate** from one place to another in search of greener pastures, thus, settled life had not yet emerged.

## Technology

New kinds of stone tools called **microliths** (chipped, flaked pieces) emerged.

- These were extremely small in size of 1- 3 centimetres and were more refined. • They were mostly used as arrowheads and spearheads.

**Composite tools** emerged, such as bows and arrows and tipped spears.

- Man mastered the **projectile motion** with the use of arrows, spears, single shots, etc. which enabled him to hunt big game.

## Culture

The Mesolithic man took an active interest in **painting**.

- Most Bhimbetka paintings belong to the period.
- Along with the previous themes, **new themes** were included such as **community scenes, scenes from family life, child bearing, food preparation and abstract paintings**.
- **Gender based division of labour** was also reflected in these paintings.
  - Most hunting scenes have male hunters, while women have been shown as gathering food, preparing food and raising children.
  - Men were usually depicted as stick figures, while women had fuller forms.
- A unique style of painting called **x-ray paintings** emerged in which the internal organs of animals and humans are depicted.
- Mesolithic paintings are remarkable for their **depiction of animals** which are carefully drawn in **correct proportions**.
  - The **relationship between man and animal** is also a recurrent theme, where man is both the hunter and the hunted.

**Religious beliefs** appeared for the first time, depicted in ritualistic burials found from **Mahadaha (UP)** and **Sarai Nahar Rai (UP)**.

- These graves have been dug in a **North-South direction** and also give evidence of the emergence of **superstitious beliefs and practices and belief in life after death**.
  - The feet of some of the skeletons at Chopani Mando (UP) have been cut off below the ankle.

The **first evidence of human conflict** also comes from this period.

- Some graves at Sarai Nahar Rai have skulls with arrow wounds.

## Sites

- Langhnaj (District Mehsana, Gujarat)
- Bhimbetka (Near Bhopal, MP)
- Chopping Mando (Allahabad, Belan Valley)
- Birbhanpur (West Bengal)
- Bellary (Karnataka)
- Tuticorin (Southern Tamil Nadu)

## NEOLITHIC AGE

### Beginning of Agriculture and Settled Life

The **climate warmed up further** and conditions became more conducive for human life.

As the human population increased, **agriculture began to meet the growing food requirement**, marking the beginning of the Neolithic age.

- **Wheat and Barley** were the first crops to be cultivated.
- The first evidence of cultivation has come from **Mehrgarh** in the **Bolan Valley**, Balochistan.
- **Rice** was also cultivated, its earliest example coming from **Koldihwa** (near Allahabad) in the **Belan Valley**.
- **Millets** were the first crop cultivated in **South India**.

With the advent of agriculture, **sedentary life** emerged and human beings started living in permanently settled villages, in **mud brick dwellings**.

### Technology

**Vincent Gordon Childe** has termed the technological advancement witnessed during this age as the '**Neolithic Revolution**'.

1. Agriculture introduced the need for **storage**, leading to the emergence of **pottery**.
  - At first, these pots were handmade, and later, the **Pottery Wheel** was invented.
2. The intervention of the wheel revolutionised **transportation**.
  - Men and material could be transported over longer distances using animal power.
    - As a result, exchange networks emerged, connecting several communities.
3. The **exchange of ideas triggered technical innovation** in several fields such as agriculture, irrigation, textile, and stone technology.
4. New kind of stone tools called **Celts** emerged.
  - These were stone **tools with handles**, such as hammers and axes.
  - Neolithic tools were also **highly polished and refined**.
  - Instead of quartz, **igneous rocks** such as basalt and granite.
    - Thus, they were more precise, effective, and robust.

The remarkable technological progress **prepared the ground for the emergence of civilisation**, characterised by intensive agriculture, large cities, and extensive trade.

### Sites

- Jammu and Kashmir
  - Gufkral - Pit Dwelling
  - Burzahom - Pit Dwellings + Burial of dogs with human beings
- Bihar
  - Chirand - bone tools
- Balochistan - Mehrgarh
- UP - Koldihwa
- Assam - Daojali Hading
- Karnataka - Maski & Brahmagiri

## CHALCOLITHIC AGE

It was characterised by the emergence of **agro-pastoral communities** in different parts of the subcontinent.

### Technology

They used **stone tools with copper tools**, such as hand axes, copper angles, copper boards, knives, pins, hooks, rods, etc.

### Occupation

These people continued to **hunt, gather, domesticate** animals and **cultivate** their food.

- Domesticated animals include sheep, buffalo, goat, pig, dog etc.
- Crops grown were barley, wheat, rice, lentils, millets, grams, peas, cotton etc.

**Other important occupations** included pottery, metallurgy, weaving, bead making, shell-work etc.

- These were probably cottage industries.

### Living Pattern

They lived in **settled villages** with well established **socio-economic hierarchies**.

- Houses of different sizes made of mud bricks have been discovered.

The concept of **private property** also seems to have emerged since-

- Almost all houses had **animal enclosures** which indicates that animals were privately owned, instead of being owned by the communities as a whole.
- Further the **burial of dead with their personal belongings** also points towards the concept of private property along with the belief in afterlife.

### External Contacts

- Some chalcolithic cultures had contacts with contemporary cultures, such as the Harappan civilisation. The Harappans obtained copper from the **Khetri Mines (Rajasthan)**.
- Archaeological evidence suggests that chalcolithic pottery was also used by the Harappans, since pottery from the **Rangpur** and **Prabhas** culture has been found at several harappan sites.

### Culture

**Painted pottery** emerged during this age. The characteristic pottery of this age is **Ochre Coloured Pottery (OCP)** with designs of flowers, animals, birds and linear patterns painted on them in black.

### Important chalcolithic cultures in India-

Ahar Culture	Southern Rajasthan Banas valley	Ahar, Gilund, Balathal
Ganeshwar-Jodhpura Culture	North-eastern Rajasthan near Jaipur	Ganeshwar, Jodhpura
Kayatha Culture	Madhya Pradesh Chambal Valley	Kayatha (Ujjain)
Malwa Culture	In place of Kayatha	Navdatoli, Eran, Nagda
Jorwe Culture	Maharashtra	Daimabad, Inamgaon
Prabhas/Rangpur Culture	Gujarat-Saurashtra Region	Rangpur

## Harappan Civilisation

### DISCOVERY

- In the 1860s During the construction of Indian Railways, some artefacts such as Bricks, Pottery, Tools, and Ornaments were discovered.
- In the 1870s a few preliminary excavations were conducted by Alexander Cunningham, but no concrete discoveries were made.
- The issue captured the attention of the British in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when some excavations were planned but had to be postponed due to World War I.
- In 1921, **John Marshall and Dayaram Sahni** excavated **Harappa** in Montgomery, Punjab, Pakistan, on the banks of the Ravi.
- In 1922, **RD Banerjee** excavated **Mohenjo Daro** in the Larkana district, Sindh, Pakistan on the banks of the Indus.

### CHARACTERISTICS

- The Harappan civilisation was a **riverine** civilisation.
  - All-important sites were situated along important perennial rivers and their tributaries, the Indus and the Saraswati- present day Ghaggar-Hakra.
  - This was because the Harappans practised intensive agriculture and depended heavily on flood irrigation.
- The Harappan civilisation belongs to the **great tradition**, that is, literacy was widespread, as is evident from seals, pots, sign boards etc.

- Since the Harappan script remains undeciphered, the civilisation was **protohistoric** and not historic.
- It was a **Bronze Age Civilisation** contemporary of the Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Persian and Chinese civilisations.
- It is unique among contemporary civilisations due to its **extensive town planning**.

## ORIGIN

According to most historians, the Harappan Civilisation **emerged gradually and was built by the indigenous people of India**.

They point towards the existence of distinct **Pre-Harappan and Early-Harappan cultures** in the same region to prove the **gradual evolution of life from the Neolithic age to Bronze Age**, which took place over more than 4000 years-

- **7<sup>th</sup> Millennium BCE**- small communities of animal herders started practising **subsistence agriculture**, evidence of which are found from Nal, Zhob, Quli, Mundigak, Rana Ghundai etc.
- **6<sup>th</sup> Millennium BCE**- agriculture improved and population increased leading to emergence of large **neolithic villages** such as Mehrgarh.
- **5<sup>th</sup> Millennium BCE**- over time, people **migrated from Baluchistan to the Indus region**.
  - The evolution of **farming communities gained momentum** due to
    - Presence of fertile plains.
    - Perennial rivers
    - Gentle climate
    - Abundant mineral resources
- **4<sup>th</sup> Millennium BCE**- by the middle of the 4th millennium, agriculture improved substantially resulting in the emergence of **larger settlements and some features of town life**, for example Amri, Kot Diji.
- **2800 BCE**- A stage of **agricultural surplus** was achieved which revolutionised life by freeing productive labour to engage in secondary economic activities such as crafts production, trade, and commerce.
  - **Centres of craft production and trade** began emerging, leading to the rise of even larger settlements which were increasingly urban in character.
  - **Trade was mostly local**.
    - Eg. Kalibangan, Rakhigarhi, Mohenjo Daro, Harappa etc.
- **2300 BCE onwards**- this was the **Mature Harappan Phase** characterised by
  - Extensive inter-regional and inter-civilisational trade networks
  - High material prosperity due to the favourable trade
  - Significant population increase
  - Emergence of larger, **well planned cities** such as Harappa, Mohenjo Daro, and Dholavira etc.

Thus, the presence of antecedent cultures indicates that the Harappan civilisation was indeed an indigenous civilisation which evolved gradually over several millennia.

## GEOGRAPHICAL EXTENT

The remains of the Harappan civilisation have been unearthed from-

- Pakistan - Sindh, Balochistan, Punjab
- India - Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra
- It is believed that the Harappan civilisation was largest among all contemporary civilisations of the Bronze Age, with an area of roughly 13 lakh square kilometres.
- Northernmost site - Manda, Jammu
- Southernmost site - Daimabad, Maharashtra.

- Easternmost site - Alamgirpur, Western UP.
- Westernmost site - Sutka-gen-dor, Iran- Pakistan border, along with the Makran coast.
- The shape of the Harappan civilisation was roughly triangular.

## IMPORTANT SITES

**Mohenjo Daro** - Larkana, Sindh, Pakistan on the banks of the Indus.

1. **Great Bath** - It is made of burnt bricks, and measures  $11.08 \times 7.01 \times 2.43$  m.
  - It is believed that the Harappans were the first in the world to use burnt bricks.
  - It also gives us insights into the advancement of masonry, as they had developed the technology to make waterproof surfaces.
  - Although historians are still divided on the issue, most believed that it was used for ritualistic bathing.
2. **Great Granary** - Its existence indicates-
  - The existence of a food surplus.
  - There must have been some from a civic body which collected grains.
    - It may indicate the practice of taxation.
    - It may also point towards emergency planning.
  - The fossils of grains inform us about the crops cultivated and their agricultural practices.
  - They must have mastered the art of transportation and storage of grains.
3. **Multi pillar Assembly Hall**
4. **Dancing girl** - a bronze figurine of a dancing girl has been unearthed indicating
  - The advancement of metallurgy and alloy making.
    - This figurine has been made using **Lost wax/ Cire Perdue Technique**
    - Harappan culture and tastes.
      - The ornaments, hairstyle, clothing etc, reflect the Harappan fashion preference.
      - It also indicates that they enjoyed music and dance.
5. **Bearded Priest** - it is a stone bust of a bearded man wearing a robe with a trefoil pattern.
  - His eyes are half closed, as if in meditation.
  - His beard is well groomed and he is wearing a fillet on his forehead.
6. **Cotton cloth, spindle, whorls and needles** - Indicate the existence of a flourishing cotton textile industry.
  - They were discovered from private homes, which tells us that spinning, weaving and stitching were household **cottage industries**, performed by people of all backgrounds.
7. The **largest collection of seals** made of Steatite, a small soft riverine stone, has been found here.
  - They were usually Square/Rectangular, roughly  $2 \times 2$  inches square
  - They have intaglio carvings of both Harappan script and images of humans, animals, plants, deities, etc.
  - Eg. Mother Goddess Seal, Pashupati Seal.

The mother goddess seal depicts a female deity with a plant emerging from her womb and a man about to sacrifice a woman with a knife.

The Pashupati Seal depicts a horned deity in a seated posture/ Yogic posture believed to be **Proto- Shiva**.

He is surrounded by 4 animals - Tiger, Buffalo, Elephant and Rhinoceros. There are 2 deer under his seat.



**Harappa** - Montgomery District, Punjab, Pakistan, on the banks of the Ravi.

1. **Twelve Granaries**- Each of equal size in 2 rows of 6.
2. **Red sandstone male torso** with socket holes for the attachment of head and arms.
3. **Different burial practices** - Direct burial, Urn burial, Coffin burial, Partial burial o They indicate the presence of different faiths for example.

**Kalibangan**- Hanumangarh District, Rajasthan on the banks of the Ghaggar (dried up).

1. **Evidence of pre-Harappan culture**
2. **Fire altars** indicating some kind of ritual sacrifice
3. **Ploughed field** - But no sign of any ploughing equipment indicating that it was probably made of perishable material, such as wood.

**Lothal** - Gujarat on the banks of the Bhogwa.

1. **Dockyard** made of burnt bricks - It is the first man made dockyard in India; it indicates the existence of maritime activity.
2. **Mesopotamian seals** indicating cultural contacts between 2 civilisations
3. **Rice husk** indicating cultivation of rice
4. **Double Burial** - the practice of burying 2 people together.

**Chanhudaro** - Sindh, Pakistan on the banks of the Indus.

1. **Industrial site** - Factories of beads and bangles have been found here.
  - o Tools for polishing and grinding stone have been found along with large quantities of coral, shells, semi precious stones and semi processed bangles and beads.
2. **Single level** of settlement without citadel.
3. **Use of lipstick**.

**Dholavira** - Kutch, Gujarat on the banks of the Luni.

1. **Sign Board** - consisting of 10 large pictographic symbols
2. **Water conservation system** - consisting of tanks, reservoirs, drains and channels.
3. **Stone** was the primary building material, instead of burnt brick
4. **Three level of settlements** - unlike typical Harappan settlements it was divided into
  - o Citadel
  - o Middle town
  - o Lower town

#### **5. Stadium**

**Rakhigarhi** - Hisar, Haryana, on the banks of the Ghaggar.

1. **Largest site** of the Harappan civilisation
2. **Animal sacrifice pit**
3. **Fire altar**
4. **Terracotta bricks**
5. **DNA study** - proves independent origin of the Harappan Civilisation.

**Ropar** - Punjab, India on the banks of the Sutlej

1. First Harappan site of independent India
2. Dog buried with human in oval burial

**Surkotada** - Gujarat

1. Only site with horse remains (horse teeth have been excavated but the finding remains unsubstantiated)

## Banawali - Haryana

- 1.Toy plough
- 2.Lapis Lazuli
- 3.Oval shaped settlement - only city with radial streets instead of perpendicular.

## TOWN PLANNING

**Q. To what extent has the urban planning and culture of the Indus Valley Civilization provided inputs to the present day urbanisation? Discuss. (200 Words, CSE – 2014)**

- The Harappans planned their cities on the **grid/ chess-board pattern**.
  - The roads and streets were straight, intersecting each other at right angles.
  - This planning has certain benefits such as lower traffic congestion and self clearing mechanism.
    - Present day Delhi and Chandigarh follow a similar plan.
- Generally Harappan cities had **two levels of settlements**-
  - Citadel/ Upper Town - containing all important public buildings, was meant for the ruling class
  - Unfortified Lower Town - meant for the common classes
    - Such distinction is also present in the modern cities such as New Delhi
- Harappan cities had a **fully covered drainage system** beneath the roads, with regular manholes.
  - Harappans were the first in the world to make such drains.
  - This is a feature of all well planned cities of the modern world.
- In Harappan cities, **waste pits and baskets** were placed at regular intervals on the roadside to keep the city clean and hygienic.
- Another essential feature of the civilisation was the presence of **street lightning**. Both are present in every modern planned city.
- **Shared community spaces** such as assembly halls, stadiums and marketplaces found in Harappan cities, are common to all modern cities, meant to enrich the lives of residents.
- Different sized houses made of burnt bricks indicate **class differences, also** a feature of modern cities.
- **Rear facing doors and ventilation** can be observed in Harappan houses which did not open from the front, like many modern cities such as Chandigarh

## MATERIAL LIFE

### Agriculture

- The Harappans grew **2 seasonal crops**, summer and winter, and cultivated crops such as Wheat, Barley Rice, Millet and Mustard, Dates, Watermelon, Sesame etc.
  - However there is **no evidence of pulses**.
- From **Kalibangan** we find evidence of **tilling** of soil.
- The Harappans practised relied on **flood irrigation**.
  - Although evidence of canal irrigation has been found from Shortugahi (Afghanistan), a trading outpost, it cannot be conclusively said the canal irrigation was widely used.
  - The Harappans also did not use wells for irrigation.
- They practised **intensive agriculture** and had a large agricultural base since their entire civilisation was based on guarantee of a large **surplus**.

### Metallurgy

- The Harappans used **copper, gold, silver, lead and tin** to make tools, weapons, ornaments, toys etc.
- They also had knowledge of **alloy making** and used bronze, a copper-tin alloy.

- However, they **did not have any knowledge of iron.**

### Crafts Production

1. **Pottery** - They were expert potters and made painted, fire baked, wheel-turned pottery. Their pottery is known as **Black and Red Ware**.
2. **Terracotta figurines** - They excelled in making terracotta figures depicting humans, animals and objects.
  - Some important specimens include Terracotta figure of the Mother Goddess
    - Horned deity mask found from Harappa
    - Toy carts and whistles
  - A large quantity of **imitation jewellery** was made of terracotta.
3. **Stone sculptures** - these were made of sandstone, greystone, limestone, steatite etc.
  - Bearded priest - Mohenjo Daro
  - Male torso - Harappa
  - Male dancer/ Natraj - Harappa
4. **Metal casting**- the lost wax technique was used to produce specimens like-
  - Dancing girl - Mohenjo Daro
  - Bronze bull - Kalibangan
  - Copper bird and dog - Lothal
5. **Beads and ornaments-**
  - Some ornaments such as necklace, armlet, fillet, and finger rings were worn by both men and women.
  - Only women wore girdles, earrings and anklets.
  - Harappan beads have even been found from Mesopotamia.
6. **Seal making**- seals were made of steatite and were square or rectangular in shape, measuring roughly 2 square inches.
  - They had intaglio carvings of both Harappan script and images.

### Harappan Script

- It remains undeciphered.
- It is a pictographic script and most paleographists believe that it consisted of more than 396 symbols.
- It was written in the **BOUSTROPEDON** style beginning from right to left, then left to right, then right to left, and so on.
- It has been found from seals, pots, potsherds & sign boards indicating its wide usage and high levels of literacy.

### Trade and commerce

- The Harappans had **extensive trading contacts**, both internally and externally.
- Trade was carried out by **barter** but seals may have been used as a medium of exchange.
- **Most internal trade was riverine** in nature, carrying grains, pottery, bricks etc.
  - The Harappans also traded with nearby Catholic communities
  - Eg. They obtained **copper from Rajasthan's Khetri mines and gold from Karnataka's Kolar mines.**
- They also **traded extensively with Mesopotamia and Persia**, over the **land and sea routes**.
- Evidence of such trade comes from-
  - **Lothal**- It has an artificial **dockyard** and has revealed Mesopotamian **seals**.
  - **Shortughai**- Harappan trading outpost has been discovered.
  - **Mesopotamian records** refer to Harappa as **Meluhha** and mention that it also had trading contacts with **Dilmun** (Bahrain) and **Magan** (Oman).
- The Harappans **exported grains, pottery, beads, bangles and cotton clothes**.
- Meanwhile they **imported Gold, Silver, Tin and precious stones** from West Asia and

## Afghanistan

- For example Lapis Lazuli was imported from Badakhshan, Afghanistan. • External trade was highly favourable to the Harappans.

## HARAPPAN FAITH & RELIGION

Archaeology give us insights into the religious life of Harappans –

1. Like most other ancient people, they were **nature worshippers**.
  - Images of different animals and plants have been found from seals, the most prominent being the humped bull, unicorn and snakes.
  - The discovery of the Pashupati seal also indicates the cult of nature worship.
2. The Harappans also observed the **fertility cult**, and practised both Phallus worship and Yoni worship.
  - The most significant representative of this cult was the Mother goddess believed to have been the goddess of fertility.
3. Most historians agree that the Harappan religion was **materialistic** in nature.
  - People prayed for the fulfilment of material desires such as crops, wealth, safety and children.
  - The spiritual element with emphasis on salvation was not dominant.
4. Most historians believe that the Harappans believed in **life after death**, as is evident from the presence of **grave goods**.
5. The discovery of amulets indicates a belief in spirits, charms and spells thus, indicating the prevalence of **superstition**.
6. Despite the **discovery of idols** of gods and goddesses, there is **no conclusive evidence of idolatry**.
  - Harappan idols do not have any incense burn marks, a common trait of idol worship.
7. Although the religious element was present it did not dominate public daily life and **religion was probably a private affair**, attested to by the **absence of any dedicated place of worship** such as temples or shrines.
8. Although **fire altars and animal sacrifice pits** have been discovered there is no conclusive evidence of large scale ritual sacrifice.
  - Small personal sacrifices were offered within the houses in small votive tanks.
9. There was **no state religion** and the Harappan civilisation was **predominantly secular**.
10. Religion was not dominated by single faith and **multiple beliefs systems** flourished within the civilisation as is evident from the use of different burial practices.

## Early Vedic Age (1500-1000 BCE)

### VEDIC LITERATURE

It is consist of 4 Vedas

**Rig Veda, Sama Veda, Yajur Veda and Atharva Veda**

Each Veda consists of-

- a) **Samhita** - compilation of hymns
  - b) **Brahmana** - detailed descriptions of rituals and sacrifices.
  - c) **Aranyaka** - Forest books, consisting of philosophical explanations of sacrifices.
  - d) **Upanishad** - philosophical aspect of Vedic religion, dealing with metaphysics.
- Vedic literature is called **Shruti** literature, i.e., that which is heard.
  - The Vedas are considered to be revealed works of divine origin.
  - They were composed during Vedic period but compiled later.
  - They were orally transmitted through generations.

- Only the Rig Vedic Samhita was composed during the Early Vedic Age, while the rest of the Vedic corpus was composed during the Later Vedic Age.

## POST- VEDIC LITERATURE

Other important religious works such as **Dharmashastras, Puranas, Vedangas, Upavedas, Nibandhas and Epics** were composed after the Vedic Age ended.

They are categorised as **Smriti** literature i.e., recalled/ memorised, as they are believed to have been created by saints/ascetics from memory.

- Thus, they have human origin and lack the authority of Vedas.
- They cover various subjects such as law, ancestral history of kings and dynasties, stories about deities, treatises on Vedas, and commentaries on Dharma, Karma, and the relationships between God and man.

## RIG VEDA

- The word Aryan comes from the Sanskrit word '**Arya'** meaning noble, and the word Veda comes from the root word '**Vid'**, meaning to know.
- The Rig Veda is a good source of the socio-economic and political lives of early Aryans.
  - It is the oldest book in India composed between 1500 BCE -1000 BCE , but compiled much later.
  - It is considered to be a revealed work of divine origin belonging to the Shruti tradition.
  - The language used is Vedic Sanskrit.

The Rig Veda consists of **10 books known as Mandalas**, of which II - VII are the oldest.

- The others were added later.
- The Rig Veda consists of **1028 hymns called 'Suktas'**, which are subdivided into **10,466 'Slokas' / Verses**.
  - Originally, there were 1017 Suktas in the Rig Veda.
  - The later additions are called 'Khilatilye'.
- The Rig Vedic Samhita is thus a **collection of hymns to deities**, including the famous Gayatri Mantra (Mandala III - compiled in praise of the sun of Goddess Savitri).
- According to Mandala VII, The Aryans settled in the Indus Valley region and struggled with non- Aryans.
- It tells the story of 'Dasrajanyudha' / Battle of the 10 kings.
  - The Aryan **Bharat tribe, led by King Sudas** and assisted by sage **Vashishta**, fought against the **5 Aryan and 5 non-Aryan tribes**, assisted by sage **Vishwanitra**, on the banks of the Parushini/ Ravi.
  - The Bharatas emerged victorious.
  - The defeated tribes were relegated to a lower social status, and enslaved.
  - They were called -
    - a. Dasas - Non Aryans
    - b. Dasyus - Aryan
    - c. Panis- Cattle thieves

## GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

Most linguistic scholars studying Sanskrit, Persian, Latin and Greek, concur that the Aryans **were a group of people speaking a common language** and living in a cold place, probably **Central Asia or Eurasia**.

They **started migrating** to different parts of Europe and Asia some time in the **middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE**.

This analysis is backed by the **cultural and linguistic** similarities these different groups-

- Many words in the Indo-European family of languages have the same roots.
- There are undeniable similarities between the Rig Veda and Zend Avesta, the holy book of the Zoroastrians (Parsis).

The **Boghazkoi inscription** in modern-day Turkey mentions 4 Vedic deities –

- Indra, Varuna, Mitra and Ashwini (Nasatyas), indicating the presence of Aryan culture here during the mid 2nd millennium BCE.

The Aryans **started arriving in India via Afghanistan in small groups** and settled in the '**Sapta-Sindhava' (Punjab) region**, also called the '**Aryavarta**' in Later Vedic texts.

- a) Kubha – Kabul
- b) Sindhu – Indus
- c) Vitasta – Jhelum
- d) Askini – Chenab
- e) Parushini – Ravi
- f) Bipisa – Beas
- g) Sutudri – Sutlej
- h) Saraswati – Ghaggar

- In the Rig Veda, the rivers **Yamuna** and **Ganga** have been mentioned only **thrice** and **twice** respectively, indicating that these rivers were probably not very important.
- In contrast, the **Indus** is mentioned **75 times** and the **Saraswati**, **72 times**.

Thus, the Indus was probably the most important river for early Aryans followed by the Saraswati, which is referred to as '**Naditama**' (**mother river**), indicating that it was the most revered.

## OCCUPATION

- The early Aryans were **primarily involved in the domestication of animals**.
  - Their **chief occupation was animal husbandry**, and they **moved frequently** in search of greener pastures.
- **Cattle**, referred to as '**Gau**', was the **most important form of wealth**.
- Its importance in their daily life is reflected by the vocabulary of Vedic Sanskrit, in which '**Gau**' forms the root word for many words, such as
  - Gavishti - struggle/war(for cattle)
  - Gopat - rich man
  - Gavyuti - unit of distance
  - Duhitri - who milks me cow - used for 'daughter'
  - Goghana - an honoured guest
    - controversial interpretation - consumer of cattle meat
    - other interpretation - one who is offered ghee
- Agriculture was not very advanced.
  - The Rig Veda mentions one crop grown by early Aryans called '**Yava**' used for both wheat and barley.

## POLITICAL ORGANISATION

The early Aryans were divided into tribes '**Jana**', which were subdivided into ● **Vis** - Collection of villages headed by Vispati.

- **Gram** - Village headed by Gramini
- **Kul** - family, headed by Kulpati, the patriarch of the household. ○ The family was the Lowest unit of political organisation.

Rig Vedic polity was **tribal and democratic** in nature.

- The Gana was headed by the '**Rajan**' who was simply the **elected tribal chief**.
- His most important duty was to search for or capture cattle.
- His power was not absolute, as he was assisted by other officials and political assemblies
  - Important Officials
    - **Purohit** - chief priest
    - Senani** - commander-in-chief.

- Important assemblies
  - **Vidhata**- both genders participated - (oldest assembly of any kind in India)
  - **Sabha** - assembly of all men of the tribe - elected Rajan and other functionaries.
  - **Samiti** - assembly of village elders - both genders - advised the Rajan politically
- The Rajan collected a voluntary gift called **Bali** which later became compulsory.
  - Thus, it was the **first known tax** of any kind in India.
- Since the early Vedic society was nomadic and the concept of land as property had not emerged, **territorial kingdoms did not exist**.
  - Thus, the Rajan was not the ruler of territory but only a tribal chief.

## RELIGIOUS LIFE

Early Aryans were **nature worshippers**

- Rig Vedic Aryans prayed to overcome **fear** of nature due to ignorance.
- **Desire** was another motivating factor.
  - They prayed for 'Praja' (Children) and 'Pashu' (cattle).
- Thus, the Early Vedic religion was **materialistic** in nature.
  - The high philosophy of metaphysics was absent.
- The Rig Vedic Aryans performed **Yajnas** (sacrifice) along with the chanting of **hymns** (mantras).
  - These yajnas were **simple, inexpensive and personal**, with most being performed within the household by the **householder**.
- Some yajnas performed with the assistance of different classes of priests. ○ The Rig Veda mentions 16 priestly classes, such as –
  - Hotra made sacrifice.
  - Udgatra - sent out invitations
  - Brahmin – supervisor
  - Later, Brahmin became the most prominent, and others vanished.

The names of **33 deities** have been mentioned in the Rig Veda but none was supreme.

- They were probably **adjectives or different aspects of the same Supreme God**.
- Therefore, the element of **monotheism** was also present.

**The most important gods were-**

- **Indra** - God of rain and thunder, also worshipped as 'Purandhar' (breaker of forts) - 250 hymns in Rig Veda have been dedicated to him.
- **Agni** - God of fire, also the intermediary between God and man - 200 hymns have been dedicated to him.
- **Varuna** - God of Rta (moral cosmic order), also worshipped as god cosmos and heavenly bodies - 175 hymns
- **Soma** - God of drink, which was derived from a plant - Mandala IX is entirely dedicated to Soma.
- **Vishnu** - Sun God
- **Aditi** - Mother Goddess (mother of all Gods)
- **Usha**- Goddess of Dawn
- **Prithvi** - Goddess of the Earth

## SOCIAL LIFE

- The Early Vedic society was **largely egalitarian**.
  - Since the **concept of private property had not fully developed** and cattle wealth was owned by the tribe, sharp class differences were absent.

- The **position of women**, though not equal to men, was quite good.
  - They enjoyed the right to **education**, participation in **social and political activities**, and the right to **marry and divorce freely**.
  - **Polygamy**, both polygyny and polyandry was the norm.
  - Some learned women called '**Brahmavadinis**' composed Rig Vedic hymns.
    - Lopamudra
    - Vishwvara
    - Sikta
    - Ghosha
    - Maitreyi
- **Four-fold varna system** had emerged but was **not hereditary**.
  - It depended on merit.
  - It was flexible and allowed complete social and varna mobility.
  - There was no untouchability.
- However, certain classes such as Dasas, Dasyus and Panis, were treated as slaves .
  - Purusha Sukta hymn in Mandala X describes the 'Purushamedha' sacrifice
    - 'Prajapati' /the primordial man sacrificed himself and the 4 varnas emerged
      - Brahmins - from the mouth
      - Kshatriyas - from the arms
      - Vaishyas - from the thighs
      - Shudras - from the feet
    - This is believed to be the first written evidence of the Varna system

## Later Vedic Age (1000- 600 BCE)

### SOURCES

#### Archaeological

1. **Pottery - Painted Grey ware (PGW)** is the characteristic pottery of the Later Vedic Age.
2. **Iron implements** - Iron weapons have been found.
  - This was the first time that iron was used in India.
  - Such artefacts have been found from several sites in the Ganga - Yamuna doab.

#### Literary

##### 1. Samhitas

###### Sama Veda

- It consists of **musical** hymns divided into verses set to a metre.
  - Most verses are derived from Rig Veda.
- Its Upaveda is called '**Gandharvaveda**', on which Bharatamuni based his '**Natyashastra**'.

###### Yajur Veda

- It is a collection of hymns dedicated to **Yajnas/ sacrificial rituals**.
- It has 2 forms-
  - Shukla Paksha (white Yajurveda)- written in poetry form
  - Shyama Paksha (black Yajurveda) – written in prose

###### Atharva Veda

- It is known as the **non-Aryan veda**.
  - It deals with **magic, charms, and spells**.
  - It was composed in the '**Brahmavarta**' (gangetic plains), outside the traditional Aryan cultural zone that is '**Aryavarta**' (Sapta-Sindhava).

## 2. Brahmanas

- These are **commentaries on the Vedic samhitas**, written in prose.
- They are detailed **descriptions of yajnas**, and lay emphasis on correct **procedures and pronunciation** of mantras.
  - e.g. Satapatha Brahmana
    - The lengthiest and most famous of all Brahmanas.
    - Attached to the Yajur Veda.
    - Speaks of the clearing of forests by Prince Videha Mahadeva with the use of 'Ayas' (iron) and 'Agni' (fire) to expand eastward.

## 3. Aranyakas

- 'Forest books', written by sanyasis (renunciants).
- They offer **philosophical interpretations of the vedic sacrifices**.
- They oppose meaningless rituals and form the link between Brahmanas and Upanishads.

## 4. Upanishads/ Vedanta

- The literal meaning of Upanishad is to '**sit down near someone**' (**guru**).
- Their motto is '**knowledge for salvation**'.
- There are 108 Upanishads composed in classical Sanskrit, and they act as **philosophical treatises on the vedas**.
- They deal with **metaphysics** and explore the nature of the universe, reality, God, soul, the meaning of existence, and the ideas of Dharma, Karma, life after death and salvation.

### Important Upanishads

#### Aitareya Upanishad

- Associated with the Rig Veda.
- '**Prajnaram Brahma**' - consciousness is Brahma.

#### Brihadaranyaka Upanishad

- Contained within the Satapatha Brahmana
- '**Asto ma Sadgamaya**' - From ignorance, lead me to truth
- '**Aham Brahmasmi**' - I am Brahma

#### Taittiriya Upanishad

- Associated with Yajur Veda
- It describes happiness.

#### Chandogya Upanishad

- Associated with Sama Veda
- '**Tat twam asi**' - 'thou art that'
- It also talks about various **types of marriages**.

#### Ken Upanishad

- Also called Talavakara Upanishad, it belongs to Sama Veda

#### Isa Upanishad

One of the latest, dating approximately to Mauryan times

#### Katha Upanishad

- Its central story is immortality and the **encounter of Nachiket with Yama**.
- It was translated into German by Max Muller in 1879.

#### Mundaka Upanishad

- Source of the phrase '**Satyameva Jayate**'

### Mandukya Upanishad

- It is the shortest upanishad, containing 12 verses expounding the mystic syllable 'Om'.
- '**Ayam Atma Brahma'** - This self/ Atma is Brahma.
- It also talks about the 3 psychological states of waking, sleeping and dreaming and the transcendental 4th state of illumination.

### Jabala Upanishad

- Talks about the Ashram System.

## 5. Upavedas/ Vedangas

- They are treatises on science and art, as a means to understand the Vedas. Thus, they were known as 'limbs of Vedas'.
- They are also called Sutra literature.
- There are 6 Vedangas -
  - Shiksha- phonetics
  - Kalpa - rituals and ceremonies
  - Vyakarana - grammar
  - Nirukta - etymology
  - Chhanda - metrics and rules of poetic composition
  - Jyotisha - astronomy

### GEOGRAPHICAL EXTENT

There was a **migration** of Aryans from the Aryavarta (Indus valley) to the Brahmaputra (Gangetic valley) sometime during the Later Vedic Age.

Archaeological evidences of this migration have been found from sites such as

1. Hastinapur (Meerut)
2. Ahichchhatra (Bareilly)
3. Atranjikhera (Etah)
4. Noh (Bharatpur)

The Satapatha Brahmana also talks about eastward migration.

### OCCUPATIONAL CHANGES

- Pastoralism and domestication of animals was still important, **but by the end of the Later Vedic Age (7th - 6th century BCE), agriculture came to dominate** the economy.
- Later Vedic sources mention crops such as Yava - wheat and barley
  - Vrihi - Nice
  - Gaudhuma - wheat
- As an **agricultural surplus** emerged, **secondary economic activities** such as crafts production and trade started developing. Some important industries included
  - Pottery
  - Chariot making
  - Carpentry
  - Basket weaving
  - Metallurgy/ blacksmithing
  - Cloth weaving
  - Tanning/ leather work
- As industry, trade and commerce flourished, **cities emerged**.
- Trade guilds/ merchant guilds called '**Ganas/Sernis**' also emerged.
  - They were headed by senior traders and master craftsmen called '**Shreshthi**'.
  - They performed-
    - Regulation of standards
    - Maintenance of discipline

- Training
- Setting of prices
- They also had the authority to punish their members, including expulsion from the guild.

## POLITICAL ORGANISATION

- Initially, no change was visible in the tribal character of the polity, but gradually the **concept of territory emerged**.
  - As **agriculture** gained importance, settled life began and **land became a valuable economic resource**.
  - The **Rajan** became responsible for **protecting the land** of his subjects.
  - Towards the end of the 7th century BCE, territorial kingdoms, called **Janapadas** emerged.
  - By the end of the 6th century BCE, they became large territorial kingdoms, called **Mahajanapadas** (16, according to Jain and Buddhist sources).
    - Most were in the Gangetic valley, but a few were in the Indus Valley and Narmada valley regions.
- The Rajan's position became more powerful, and the concept of **absolute monarchy** emerged.
- Elements of democratic polity, such as **Sabha and Samiti became obsolete**.
- The institution of **hereditary monarchy** also emerged, and the Rajan was no longer an elected official.
- The **importance of armed forces increased** due to **frequent territorial wars**.
  - This was aided by the development of trade and commerce, which allowed kingdoms to raise large armies.
- Due to the compulsion of raising armies, a **regular taxation system** developed-
  - '**Bali**' **became compulsory**, and an officer called '**Sanghitri/ Bali Sadhak**' was appointed to collect it.
  - '**Bhaga**' was the land revenue, which became the most important source of state income. It represented the State's share of the total produce.
  - '**Bhoga**' was offerings of flowers and fruits made by the subject to the king.
  - '**Shulka**' was a tax collected on secondary economic activities, such as crafts, trade and commerce.
- During the Later Vedic Age, kings performed **elaborate sacrifices** such as-
  - **Ashwamedha** - to gain territory
  - **Rajasuya** - at the coronation ceremony, to increase the king's power
  - **Vajapeya** - shortly after coronation, a chariot race was held between the king and his kin to legitimise his power.
    - During these sacrifices, large numbers of cattle were also sacrificed.

## RELIGIOUS LIFE

- **Nature worship continued**, but the simple, personal and inexpensive faith of Early Vedic Religion gave way to **rigid ritualism, priestly domination and mysticism**.
  - There was an overemphasis on **yajnas and correct pronunciation of mantras**, which could now be performed only with the help of priests.
- The simple, materialistic Early Vedic faith was replaced by the **high-minded philosophy** of Upanishads.
  - **Spiritualism** became extremely important, and religion became increasingly concerned with **salvation and the afterlife**.
- Along with this, a number of **philosophical and social constructs** were codified, such as :
  - **Dharma** - duties and obligations of each individual.

- **Rta** - moral and cosmic order governing the universe.
- **Varna** - fourfold division of society became **rigid**, extremely **hierarchical** and determined by **birth** - Varna **endogamy**.
- **Ashrams** - With Dharma and Varna, it framed the Varnashrama Dharma system. The ashrams were
  - Brahmacharya
  - Grihastha
  - Vanaprastha
  - Sanyas
- **Gotra** - Kinship group - exogamy
- Later Vedic religious life was characterised by rigid ritualism.
  - As many as 16 Samskaras (major vedic rituals) were conceived and had to be performed by an individual from the cradle to the grave –
    - Garbhdharan
    - Namkaran
    - Annaprashana
    - Chudaparana
    - Upanayana/ Yagyopaveet - sacred thread ceremony, considered to be the second birth. Those who received the sacred thread were called 'Dwija' (Twice Born)
  - It was given to Brahmins at the age of 8, Kshatriyas at the age of 11, and Vaishyas at age of 12.
  - Shudras and women were excluded.
    - Vivaah
    - Antyeshti
  - The importance of Agni and Indra declined.
    - Prajapati/ Brahma (creator) became the most important god.
    - Vishnu was now worshipped as the sustainer.
    - However, the concept of Holy Trinity had not yet emerged.

## SOCIAL CHANGES

The social life of the Later Vedic Age also changed dramatically in response to the major economic, political and religious changes which had occurred.

- As the concepts of private property and land ownership emerged, **class differences** started becoming visible.
  - They became more pronounced with the development of trade and commerce.
  - Thus, by the end of the Later Vedic Age, the society no longer resembled its classless, tribal Early Vedic form.
- The **position of women began deteriorating but was relatively good due to the absence of social evils** such as sati, child marriage and purdah.
  - However, **restrictions** were placed on their **education**.
    - They could not perform the Upanayana ceremony.
  - Their **political participation** was **restricted** since political assemblies had become irrelevant.
  - They were **not allowed to offer sacrifices**.
  - **Marriage became sacrosanct** and could not be dissolved.
    - The ideas of **varna endogamy and gotra exogamy** restricted their choices of marriage.
    - Polygamy continued but **polygyny** increased.
  - The **birth of a girl child was considered burdensome**. ○ **Widow remarriage was allowed but discouraged**.

- The four-fold varna system emerged fully and a rigid, hereditary varna hierarchy was established.
  - Untouchability was absent, but shudras were excluded from education.

### **QUESTION 1**

Q. Which one of the following animals was not represented on the seals and terracotta art of the Harappan culture? [2001]

- a) Cow
- b) Elephant
- c) Rhinoceros
- d) Tiger

### **QUESTION 2**

Q. Regarding the Indus Valley Civilization, consider the following statements: [2011]

- 1. It was predominantly a secular civilization and the religious element, though present, did not dominate the scene
- 2. During this period, cotton was used for manufacturing textiles in India

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

### **QUESTION 3**

Q. Which of the following characterises the people of Indus Civilization? [2013]

- 1. They possessed great palaces and temples
- 2. They worshipped both male and female deities
- 3. They employed horse-drawn chariots in warfare

Select the correct statement/ statements using the codes given below:

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 only
- c) 1, 2 and 3
- d) None of the statements given above is correct

### **Question 4**

Q. Match List I with List II and select the correct answer using the codes given below the lists: [2002]

List 1(Ancient site)	List 2 (Archaeological finding)
A. Lothal	1. Ploughed Field
B. Kalibangan	2. Dockyard
C. Dholavira	3. Terracotta replica of a plough
D. Banawali	4. An inscription comprising ten large sized signs.

A-B-C-D

- a) 1-2-3-4
- b) 2-1-4-3
- c) 1-2-4-3
- d) 2-1-3-4

## **Practice Questions**

Q1. Consider the following statements in context of ancient Indian History:

1. The Paleolithic Age was spread in all parts of the Indian Subcontinent.
2. Palaeolithic Man used tools made of a hard rock called quartzite.

Which of the above given statement/s is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

## **QUESTION 2**

Q. The term 'Aryan' denotes [1999]

- a) an ethnic group
- b) a nomadic people
- c) a speech groups
- d) a superior race

Q21. Match List I with List II and select the correct answer using the codes given below the lists:

List 1(Phase of Stone Age)      List 2 (Characteristics of Tools)

- |                       |                |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| A. Upper Paleolithic  | 1. Blade Tools |
| B. Middle Paleolithic | 2. Core Tools  |
| C. Lower Paleolithic  | 3. Flake tools |

Microliths Codes:

ABC

- a) 231
- b) 132
- c) 421
- d) 124

**List 1(Culture)**

- A. Pre Harappan
- B. Early Harappan
- C. Mature Harappan
- D. Late Harappan

**List 2 (Characteristic)**

1. Elaborate Town Planning & Urban Features
2. Decline of a Civilization
3. Nomadic People began to have a settled life
4. Transition from Rural to Urban Life

ABCD

- a) 1234
- b) 3412
- c) 3142
- d) 2341

**List 1(Ancient site)**

- A. Mohenjodaro
- B. Kalibangan
- C. Lothal
- D. Harappa

**List 2 (River)**

1. Ghaggar
2. Ravi
3. Indus
4. Bhogwa

ABCD

- a) 1234
- b) 3412
- c) 3142
- d) 2341

**QUESTION 1**

Q. The river most mentioned in early Vedic literature is [1996]

- a) Sindhu
- b) Sutudri
- c) Saraswati
- d) Ganga

**QUESTION 3**

Q. Which one of the following four Vedas contains an account of magical charms and spells? [2004]

- a) Rig-veda
- b) Yajur-veda
- c) Atharva-veda
- d) Sama-veda

**QUESTION 4**

Q. The 'dharma' and 'rita' depict a central idea of ancient Vedic civilization of India. In this context, consider the following statements: [2011]

1. Dharma was a conception of obligations and of the discharge of one's duties to oneself and to others.
2. Rita was the fundamental moral law governing the functioning of the universe and all it contained.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

**QUESTION 5**

Q. The famous dialogue between Nachiketa and Yama is mentioned in the [1997]

- a) Chhandogyopanishad
- b) Mundakopanishad
- c) Kathopanishad
- d) Kenopanishad

**QUESTION 6**

Q. Who among the following was a Brahmavadini who composed some hymns of the Vedas? [1995]

- a) Lopamudra
- b) Gargi
- c) Leelavati
- d) Savitri

**QUESTION 7**

Q. The religion of early Vedic Aryans was primarily of [2012]

- a) Bhakti
- b) Image worship and Yajnas
- c) Worship of nature and Yajnas
- d) Worship of nature and Bhakti

## QUESTION 8

Q. With reference to the difference between the culture of Rigvedic Aryans and Indus Valley people, which of the following statements is/are correct? [2017]

1. Rigvedic Aryans used the coat of mail and helmet in warfare whereas the people of Indus Valley Civilization did not leave any evidence of using them.
2. Rigvedic Aryans knew gold, silver and copper whereas Indus Valley people knew only copper and iron. Rigvedic Aryans had domesticated the horse whereas there is no evidence of Indus Valley people having been aware of this animal.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

### Practice Questions

Q1. Which of the following Veda is considered a non-Aryan work?

- a) Rigveda
- b) Samaveda
- c) Yajurveda
- d) Atharvaveda

Q2. Match the following pairs:

List I: Upanishad	List II: Important Contents
A. Chandogya Upanishad	1. Satyamevjayate
B. Kathopanishad	2. The four Ashrams
C. Mundakopanishad	3. Types of Marriages
D. Jabala	4. Story of Immortality

Select the correct answer using codes given below:

- a) A-1; B-4; C-3; D-2
- b) A-3; B-4; C-1; D-2
- c) A-2; B-4; C-1; D-3
- d) A-2; B-4; C-3; D-1

Q3. With reference to the comparison between the culture of Rigvedic Aryans and Indus Valley people, which of the following statements is/are INCORRECT?

1. Both the Rig Vedic and the Harappan Cultures were rural in nature.
2. Religion was a very important aspect of life of Rig Vedic Aryans but people of Indus Valley did not practise religion and were secular.
3. Rig Vedic Aryans had domesticated the horse whereas there is no evidence of Indus Valley people having been aware of this animal.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 2 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Q4. In context of religion in Rigvedic society, consider the following statements:

Assertion (A): The Religion of the Rig Vedic Aryans was materialistic in nature.

Reason (R): There were no temples or idols in the Rig Vedic period Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) Both assertion and reason are true and reason is correctly justifies assertion

- b) Both assertion and reason are true but reason does not correctly justify assertion
- c) Assertion is true, but reason is false
- d) Assertion is false, but reason is true

Q5. Consider the following statements about the religious practices of Later Vedic culture and identify the correct one/s:

- 1. Indra and Agni which were smaller deities in the Rig Vedic society became extremely important.
- 2. People did not believe in idolatry.
- 3. People worshipped Gods in the forms of trees and animals.
- 4. Some of the important yajnas of this time were – ashvamedha, vajapeya, rajasuya,etc.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1, 3 and 4 only
- b) 2 and 4 only
- c) 3 and 4 only
- d) 2, 3 and 4 only

Q6. Consider the following statements:

- 1. Painted grey ware became the most important form of pottery in the later vedic period.
- 2. Similar to Rigvedic period, taxes in the later Vedic period was also mandatory.

Which of the statement/s given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2