

Chapter – 3: In the Earliest Cities

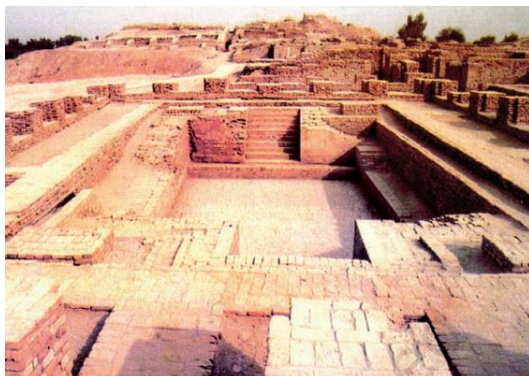
- Two friends – playing cricket – noticed – people – admiring – old building – haunted house
- People discussing – writing to minister – save the architecture
- Children wondering – why save old building

The Story of Harappa

- Old buildings – story to tell
- 150 years ago – railway lines – laid down for first time in Punjab
- Engineers found – site of Harappa in present-day Pakistan
- For them – site of ready-made, high quality bricks – carried off 1000s of bricks for railway lines – many buildings destroyed
- 80 years ago – archeologists found the site – realized – one of the oldest cities in subcontinent
- This was first site – all other sites – similar building – considered Harappan – developed 4700 years ago

What was special about these cities?

- Cities – divided into 2 or more parts
- West part – smaller BUT higher – *citadel*
- East part – larger BUT lower – lower town
- Very often – walls – baked bricks – around both parts
- Bricks – best quality – lasted so many years – interlocking pattern – walls stronger
- Some cities – special building – constructed in citadel
- Mohenjo-Daro – special tank – Great Bath – bricks, plaster and natural tar – water tight
- Step on two sides – rooms on all sides – believed to be changing rooms
- Water – brought in from wells – drained after use – perhaps – imp. people bathed here
- Other cities – Kalibangan and Lothal – fire altars – sacrifices – may be performed
- Some other cities – elaborate storehouses



Houses, drains, and streets

- Houses – 1 or 2 storeys (floors) – rooms around a courtyard
- Most houses – separate bathing areas – some – wells to supply water
- Many cities – covered drains (right figure above) – straight lines – carefully laid down

- Each drain – gentle (little) slope – water flow through it
- Drains in houses – connected to smaller city drains – connected to bigger city drains
- Drain – covered – inspection holes at intervals – to clean drains
- All three – houses, drains, and streets – probably planned and built together

Life in the city

- Harappan city – very busy place
- People – planned construction – special buildings in the city – probably *rulers*
- Rulers – sent people to other places – get materials – metal, precious stones and other things
- Kept valuables like ornaments of gold and silver or beautiful beads for themselves
- There were *scribes* – knew how to write – helped prepare the seals – perhaps wrote on other materials
- Men and women – *craftspersons* – making all kinds of things – in their home or workshops
- People – travelling to other lands or returning from there – raw material and stories
- Many terracotta toys – found – children may have played with



New crafts in the city

- Some objects – made and found in Harappan cities
- Most of these – made of stone, shell and metal – copper, bronze, gold and silver
- Copper, bronze – tools, weapons, ornaments and vessels
- Gold, Silver – ornaments and vessels
- Most amazing – beads, weights and blades
- Harappans – made seals of stone – mostly rectangular and animal carved out on them
- Harappans – pots – beautiful black design
- Cotton – probably grown – Mehrgarh – from 7000 years ago – actual cloth found – attached to lid of silver vase and copper objects – Mohenjo-Daro
- Also found spindle parts – made of terracotta and faience – artificially produced by shaping sand or powdered quartz with gum
- Many things – work of *specialist* – trained to do a single work – cutting stone, polishing beads, or carving seals
- Not everybody – specialist – we do not know – only men or only women or some men and some women

In search of raw materials

- Raw materials – EITHER found naturally – wood, ores of metals – OR produced by farmers
- Processed – make finished goods

- Cotton – raw material – processed to make cloth
- Some – available locally – others – copper, tin, gold, silver and precious stones – brought from different places
- Copper – present-day Rajasthan and Oman in West Asia
- Tin – mixed with copper – make bronze – present-day Afghanistan and Iran
- Gold – present-day Karnataka
- Precious stones – present-day Gujarat, Afghanistan and Iran

Food for people in the cities

- Many people – lived in cities – people in countryside (villages) – grew crops and reared animals
- Farmers and herders – supplied food to people in cities
- Remains of plants – Harappans grew – wheat, barley, pulses, rice, peas, sesame, linseed, mustard
- New tool – *plough* – dig the earth – prepare soil
- Real ploughs – made of wood – may not survive – toy ploughs found
- This region – no heavy rainfall – some form of *irrigation* used – water – stored and supplied to fields
- Harappans – reared cattle, sheep, goat and buffalo – water and pasture – available near settlements
- Summer months – animals – taken to different lands – search of water and grass
- Also collected fruits – *ber* – caught fish and hunted wild animals - antelope

A closer look – Harappan towns in Gujarat

- City of Dholavira – situated on Khadir Beyt – Rann of Kutch – fresh water and fertile soil
- Other Harappan cities – 2 parts – Dholavira – 3 parts
- Each part – massive stone walls – entry through gateways
- Large open area – public ceremony
- Other finds – large letters – Harappan script – carved out of white stone
- Unique find – Harappan writing – small objects – seal
- City of Lothal – banks of tributary of Sabarmati, Gujarat – close to Gulf of Khambat
- Situated near areas – semi-precious stones – easily available
- Imp. centre – making objects out of stone, shell and metal
- Also a storehouse – many seals found
- Building – found here – workshop – making beads – pieces of stones, half made beads, tools for bead making, finished beads – found here

The mystery of the end

- 3900 years ago – beginning of major change
- People – stopped living in cities
- Writings, seals, weights – no longer used
- Raw materials – became rare
- Mohenjo-Daro – garbage piled up – drainage failed – new, less impressive houses built
- Why did this happen – not sure

- Some scholars suggest – rivers dried up – some say – deforestation – fuel required for making bricks and smelting (melting) copper ores
- Grazing by large herds – cattle, sheep, goat – destroyed green cover
- Some areas – floods
- None of the reasons – explain – end of *all* cities
- Flooding or river drying up – effect in some areas
- Maybe – rulers lost control
- Sites in Sind and west Punjab (present-day Pakistan) – abandoned – many people moved to new, smaller settlements – in the east and the south
- New cities – emerged (came up) – 1400 years later