

History ch1: Bricks, Beads and Bones.

[हुँट, मनके और अस्तियों] [2600-1900 BCE]

Harappan seal (Features)

- Made of steatite
- Contain animal motif and signs.
- Remain undeciphered

★ There was a break between the Early Harappan and Harappan civilisation, evident from large scale burning at some sites, as well as the abandonment of certain settlements.

Subsistence Strategies

• What they ate :- Plant and Animal products including fish.

→ Archaeologists able to reconstruct dietary practices from charred grains and seeds.

Grains →

(studied by
archaeo-botanist)

- wheat
- Barley
- Lentil
- Chickpea
- sesame
- millets (Gujarat)
- Rice (rare)

Animal bones →

(studied by
zoo-archaeologist)

- cattle
 - Sheep
 - Goat
 - Buffalo
 - Pig
 - Boar
 - Gharial
 - Deer
 - Bones of fish and fowl
- Domesticated
- Wild species

Archaeological technologies :

- Terracotta and sculptures and seals indicate bull was known, oxen were used for ploughing.

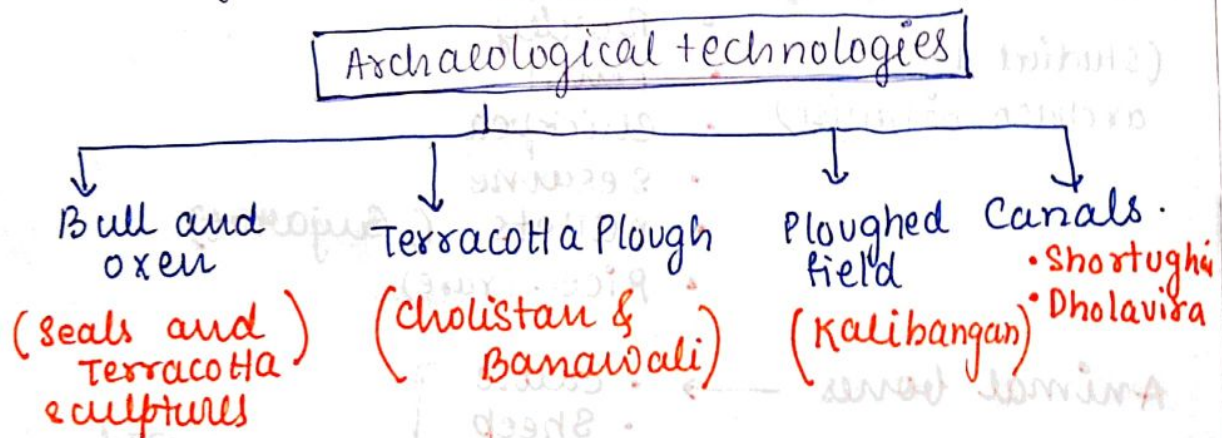
- Terracotta models of plough → Cholistan and Banawali [Haryana]

Ploughed field → Kalibangan [Rajasthan]

↓
It has two sets of furrows.

↓
two different crops were grown together.

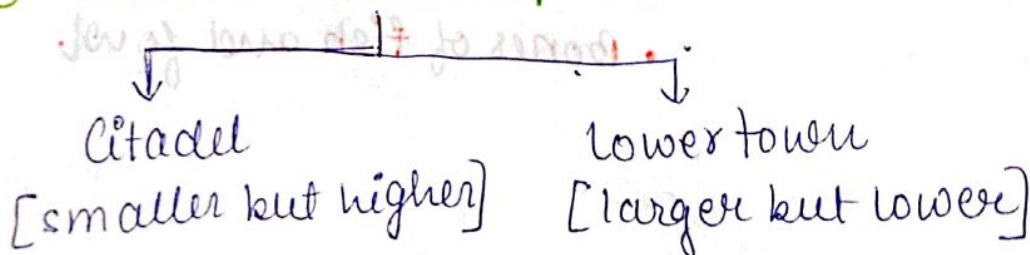
- Canals (Irrigation) → Shortughai (Afghanistan).
Dholavira (Gujarat).



MOHENJODARO [मूर्तों का डैम
Heap of dead bodies]

A Planned Urban Centre.

① Planned Settlement.



* Citadel :- Citadel was constructed on mud brick platforms.

► It was walled, which meant that it was physically separated from lower town.

* Lower Town :- Lower town was walled.

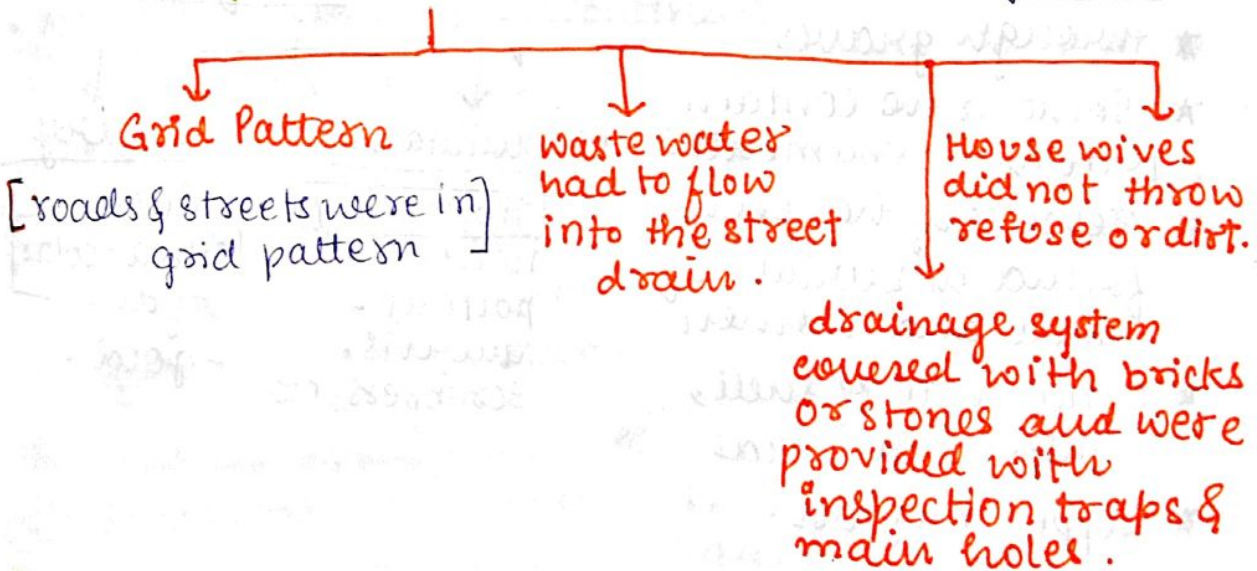
► Buildings were built on platforms
↓
foundation

Other Sign of Planning

- Sun dried or baked bricks
- Bricks were of a standardised ratio.

↓
length (four times), Breadth (twice)
↓
Height

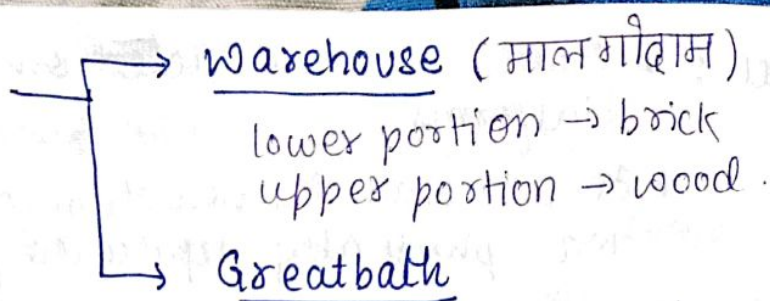
② Laying out Drains (a planned drainage system)



③ Domestic Architecture

- Residential buildings
- Centered on courtyard with rooms on all side
- Courtyard centre for → household activities
- Privacy → no windows in ground level.
 - main entrance didn't give direct view.
- Every house has its own bathroom & wells.

CITADEL



Warehouse (मालगोदाम)

lower portion → brick
upper portion → wood.

Greatbath

- rectangular tank
- surrounded by corridors on four sides.
- two flight of steps in north and south.
- Rooms on three sides.
- water from tank flowed into a huge drain.

* Scholars suggest it was meant for some kind of a special ritual bath.

TRACKING SOCIAL DIFFERENCES

Burials

- * through graves.
- * Some grave contain pottery, ornaments.
- * Jewellery has been found in burials of men and women.
- * Ornaments of shell, jasper and beads.
- * Copper mirrors.

Artefacts

- *

<u>utilitarian</u>	<u>luxury</u>
stone, clay	- silica
needles, pottery, quills, scrubbers, etc.	[silica + color + gum]
	- gold.

CRAFT PRODUCTION

Places :- Chanhudaro, Lothal.

large urban centers.

Dageshwar, Balakot,

shell objects
specialisation

Dholavira → specialised drills

Materials :- carnelian, jasper, crystal, quartz, steatite, gold, bronze, copper, shell, faience, terracotta.

Shapes :- Disc shaped, cylindrical, spherical, barrel shaped, segmented.

Techniques :-

► Some beads are moulded out of a paste made with steatite powder. This permitted making of variety of shapes.

► Carnelian was obtained by firing the yellowish raw material and beads at various stage of production.

Grinding, polishing and drilling completed the process

Identifying centre $\begin{cases} \text{raw material} \\ \text{unfinished product.} \end{cases}$

Strategies for Procuring Materials.

• Materials from the subcontinent.

Dageshwar, Balakot :- Shell was available.

Shortughai :- Lapis lazuli (a blue stone highly valuable)

Lothal :- Source of carnelian.

S. Rajasthan :- Steatite.

Rajasthan :- Metal.

* Sending expedition was another strategy for procuring raw materials.

Khetri Region (Rajasthan) - Copper.

• Contact with distant lands.

* Copper was probably brought from Oman.

* Omani Copper and Harappan artefacts have traces of nickel, suggesting common origin.

* A distinctive type of vessel, a large Harappan jar coated with a thick layer of black clay

has been found in omani sites.

- * Mesopotamian text refer to copper coming from a region called Magan.
- * copper found at Mesopotamian sites also contains traces of nickel.

- * Harappan seals, weights, dice and beads

↓
long distance contact.

- * Mesopotamian texts mention contact with region named Dilmun, Magan and Meluhha.

- * Mesopotamian texts refer to Meluhha as a land of seafarers. Depiction of boat on seal was also found.

SEALS, SCRIPTS, WEIGHTS.

↓
seals and Sealings used to provide long distance communication

↓
• Enigmatic script (२६२५४२)

• Inscriptions are short and longest containing 26 signs.

• Undeciphered.

• too many signs between 375-400.

• Right to Left (written)

↓
• made of stone called chest

• cubical with no marking

• lower denomination of weight were binary.

• Higher denomination follow decimal system

Ancient Authority

- * Large building found at Mohenjodaro was labelled as a palace by archaeologists but no spectacular finds were associated.

- * "Priest King" → a stone structure familiar with Mesopotamian history.

Archaeologist Opinion :-

- ★ Harappan society had no rulers.
- ★ No single but several rulers.
- ★ There was a single state.
- ★ Unlikely that entire communities could have collectively made and implemented such complex decision.

End of Civilisation

- ★ c. 1800 BCE most of the Mature Harappan sites in region such as Cholistan had been abandoned.

REASONS

- ① After 1900 BCE, transformation of material culture
- ② climate change
- ③ Deforestation → led to draught.
- ④ Aryan Invasion [by R.E.M. Wheeler]
- ⑤ Flood [said by D.R. Sahni]
- ⑥ change in course of river.

Discovering Harappan Civilisation

1. Cunningham's confusion

- ★ Cunningham → 1st Director General of ASI.
- ★ He used accounts left by Chinese Buddhist pilgrims to locate early settlements.
- ★ He also collected, documented and translated inscription found during his survey.
- ★ A Harappan seal was given to Cunningham by an Englishman. He unsuccessfully tried to place it within the time frame with which he was familiar.
- ★ Harappan artefacts were found fairly often 19th century and some of these reached Cunningham but he didn't realise.

A new Old Civilisation

- * Seals were discovered at Harappa by archaeologists such as Daya Ram Sahni in the early decades of the 20th century.
- * Rakhal Das Banerjee found similar seals at Mohenjodaro, leading to the conjecture that these sites were part of a single archaeological culture.
- * In 1924, John Marshall, Director General of ASI, announced the discovery of a new civilisation in the Indus Valley to the world. John Marshall's stint as Director General of the ASI marked a major change in Indian archaeology.
- * John Marshall → First professional archaeologist to work in India and brought his experience of working in Greece and Crete.
- * Marshall tended to excavate along regular horizontal units, measured uniformly throughout the mound, ignoring the stratigraphy.

New Techniques and questions

- * It was R. E. M. Wheeler, after he took over as Director general of the ASI in 1944, who rectified this problem.
- * Wheeler recognised that it was important to follow the stratigraphy of the mound rather than dig mechanically along uniform horizontal lines.
- * An extensive survey in Kutch was revealed a number of Harappan settlements and explorations in Punjab and Haryana have added to the list of Harappan sites. While Kalibangan, Lothal, Rakhi Garhi and most recently Dholavira has been discovered.

Problem of Piecing together the Past

1. classifying finds

[in terms of material]
[stone, ivory, bone, etc.]

[in terms of function]

an artefact is a tool or ornament, or something for ritual purpose.

2. Problem of Interpretation

- (i) Early archaeologists thought that certain objects which seemed unusual or unfamiliar may have had a religious significance.
- (ii) These included terracotta figurines of women, heavily jewelled, head dresses. They were regarded as mother goddess.
- (iii) Rare stone statuary of men in an almost standardised posture, seated with one hand on the knee such as 'priest-king' was also classified.
- (iv) In other instances, structures have been assigned ritual significance. These includes the Great Bath and five altars found at Kalibangan and Lothal.
- (v) Others, with plant motifs, are thought to indicate nature worship. Some animal such as one-horned animal, often called the 'unicorn' depicted on seals seems to be mythical.
- (vi) In some seals, a figure shown seated cross legged in a 'yogic' posture, sometimes surrounded by animals, has been regarded as a depiction of 'proto-shiva'.
- (vii) Besides, conical stone objects have been classified as linga.
- (viii) The earliest religious text, the Rigveda, mentions a god named Rudra, which is a name used for Shiva in later Puranic tradition.