

**CHAPTER 1**  
**BRICKS, BEADS AND BONES**  
**(The Harappan Civilisations)**

Q1. How can you say that the Harappan culture was an urban one.

Ans. The following examples show that the Harappan culture was an urban one:

- a) The cities were well planned and thickly populated.
- b) The roads were straight and wide.
- c) The houses were made of burnt bricks and contained more than one storey.
- d) Every house had a well and a bathroom.
- e) The drainage system was excellent with house drains emptying into street drains.
- f) The citadel of Harappa had public buildings.
- g) Lothal had a dockyard and was an important trading centre.
- h) After the decline of the Harappan culture, town planning was forgotten and there was absence of city life for about a thousand years.

Q2. “Our knowledge about the Indus Valley Civilization is poorer than that of the other Civilizations”. Explain it by your arguments?

Ans. i) The major reason behind our poorer knowledge about the Indus Valley Civilization than that of the other Civilizations is that the script of that age has hitherto not been deciphered. Hence, we have only known about the period and development of this Civilization on the basis of more speculation.

ii) The easy method behind seeking knowledge about other Civilizations such as that of Egypt, Mesopotamia, China etc. was the deciphering of their scripts. Script is that sole basis through which we can gather knowledge about the art, literature, customs, dresses, function and religion etc. of any Civilizations

Q3. Discuss the functions that may have been performed by rulers in Harappan society

Ans. Some archaeologists are of the opinion that Harappan society had no rulers and that everybody enjoyed equal status. Others feel there was no single ruler but several that Mohenjodaro had a separate ruler, Harappa another and so forth yet others argue that there was a single state given the similarity in artefacts, the evidence for planned settlements the standardized ratio of brick size and the establishments of settlements near sources of raw material. As of now, the last theory seems the most plausible as it is unlikely that entire communities could have collectively made and implemented such complex decisions.

- i) There are indications of complex decisions being taken and implemented in Harappan society. Take for instance the extraordinary uniformity of Harappan artefacts as evident in pottery seals weights and bricks.
- ii) Notably bricks though obviously not produced in any single centre, were of a uniform ratio throughout the region, from Jammu to Gujarat. We have also seen that settlements were strategically set up in specific locations for various reasons.
- iii) Besides, labour was mobilised for making bricks and for the construction of massive walls and platforms.

Who organized these activities ? I think the rulers might have performed all these works.

Under the guidance and supervision of the rulers plans and layouts of the city were prepared. Big buildings palaces forts, tanks wells, canals, Granaries were constructed. Roads lanes and drains were also constructed and cleanliness was maintained under the over all supervision of the ruler.

The ruler might have taken interest in economy of the state or city states. He use to inspire the farmer to increase agricultural production. He use to

motivate the craftman to promote different handicrafts. Internal as well as external trade was promoted by the ruler. He use to issue common exceptable coins or seals, weights and measurements.

During the natural calamity such as flood earthquake, epidemic etc. the ruler use to provide grains and other eatables to the affected people. He use to play active role to defend cities or state from foreign attack.