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6. Indus-Sarasvati Civilization

EXERCISE

A. Choose and tick (✓) the correct option

1. In the Indian subcontinent, the first Civilisation developed in the valley of river:

Answer: b. Indus

2. The Great Bath is located in:

Answer: c. Mohenjodaro

3. The most remarkable and the largest building excavated at Harappa is the:

Answer: a. Great Granary

4. Which of the following civilisation was contemporary to Indus-Sarasvati Civilisation?

Answer: c. Egyptian Civilisation

5. The metals mostly used to make tools and weapons of Harappan Civilisation were:

Answer: b. Copper and bronze

6. The main sources of our knowledge about the Indus-Sarasvati Civilisation are:

Answer: b. Archaeological excavations

7. In which of the Harappan site, remains of a dockyard was found?

Answer: c. Lothal

8. People in Indus-Sarasvati Civilisation imported conch shells from:

Answer: b. Kathiawar

9. Which fibre was commonly used by the Harappan people?

Answer: b. Cotton

10. Which metal was more commonly used for jewellery in the Indus-Sarasvati Civilisation?

Answer: a. Gold

B. Fill in the blanks

1. Harappan Civilisation flourished on the banks of the rivers _____ and _____.

Answer: Indus and Sarasvati

2. _____ was the Mesopotamian name for Indus-Sarasvati Civilisation.

Answer: Meluhha

3. Horse bones have also been discovered at _____ indicating the use of animal.

Answer: Surkotada

4. The people of Harappan Civilisation likely source their gold from _____.

Answer: Karnataka (Kolar gold fields)

5. The people of the Indus-Sarasvati Civilisation were primarily _____.

Answer: traders and farmers (urban dwellers)

6. Indus-Sarasvati Civilisation began to decline around _____ BCE.

Answer: 1900

7. The seals of the Indus-Sarasvati Civilisation were made of _____ or _____.

Answer: steatite (soapstone) or terracotta

8. Female figures made of _____ have been found in various sites of the Indus-Sarasvati Civilisation.

Answer: terracotta

9. People of the Indus-Sarasvati Civilisation were the first to use _____ and _____.

Answer: silver and cotton

10. A _____ found at Lothal suggests that it was a port for overseas trade.

Answer: dockyard

C. State True or False

1. Mohenjodaro and Harappa are situated in India.

Answer: False (They are located in modern-day Pakistan)

2. The seals of the Indus-Sarasvati Civilisation were made of bronze or copper.

Answer: False (They were mostly made of soft steatite/soapstone or terracotta)

3. The people of the Indus Valley mainly lived as hunters and gatherers.

Answer: False (They lived a settled urban life as farmers, traders, and craftspersons)

4. The Harappans could not write.

Answer: False (They had a pictographic script, though undeciphered)

5. The Harappans worshipped a Mother Goddess and a three-headed male God.

Answer: True

6. Sarasvati flows through the present-day Punjab.

Answer: False (Its paleo-channel is traced through Haryana, Rajasthan, and Gujarat)

7. The Great Bath was found in the site of Lothal.

Answer: False (It was discovered at Mohenjodaro)

8. The lower part of the city was known as the citadel.

Answer: False (The raised upper citadel was separate from the lower town)

9. Cotton was grown by the people of Harappa.

Answer: True

10. The city of Dholavira was divided into three parts.

Answer: True

D. Very Short Answer Questions

1. Name any four important sites of the Indus-Sarasvati Civilisation.

Answer: Harappa, Mohenjodaro, Lothal, and Kalibangan (or Dholavira).

2. Mention some important crafts of the Harappans.

Answer: Bead-making, pottery with distinct geometric patterns, seal carving, cotton weaving, and bronze casting.

3. List some civilisations that developed around the same time as the Indus-Sarasvati Civilisation.

Answer: The Mesopotamian Civilisation (Tigris-Euphrates basin), Ancient Egyptian Civilisation (Nile river basin), and Chinese Civilisation (Yellow River).

E. Short Answer Questions

1. Where did the Indus-Sarasvati Civilisation flourish?

Answer: The Indus-Sarasvati Civilisation flourished in the north-western region of the Indian subcontinent along the fertile valleys and floodplains of the Indus River and the Sarasvati (Ghaggar-Hakra) river system and their tributaries.

2. Where did the inhabitants of the Indus-Sarasvati Civilisation store their grains?

Answer: They stored their grain surplus in large, well-ventilated granaries built on raised platforms to keep moisture and pests away. Notable examples include the Great Granary excavated at Harappa and Mohenjodaro.

3. How were seals of Harappa used?

Answer: Seals were primarily used by merchants in trade. When goods were packed into bags and tied with cord, wet clay was pressed over the knots and stamped with the seal. An unbroken seal proved that the cargo had not been opened or tampered with during transit.

4. Discuss a few reasons for the decline of the Indus-Sarasvati Civilisation.

Answer: 1. Major climate shifts leading to prolonged droughts and decreased rainfall.
2. Tectonic disturbances and earthquakes that altered river courses or caused severe flooding.
3. The drying up of the sacred Sarasvati River system, forcing inhabitants to migrate.

F. Long Answer Questions

1. Describe the Great Bath at Mohenjodaro.

Answer: • **Structure & Dimensions:** The Great Bath is a large, rectangular public water tank built in the citadel mound of Mohenjodaro.

- **Waterproof Construction:** The tank was lined with fine, tightly-fitted baked bricks, coated with mortar, and layered with natural bitumen (tar) to ensure complete watertightness.
- **Inlets and Outlets:** Wide brick steps lead into the tank from both the north and south. Fresh water was sourced from an adjacent well, while an underground culvert drained out dirty water.
- **Purpose:** Historians believe it was used for special ritual purification or ceremonial bathing by priests and leaders during religious festivals.

2. How do we know that the Harappans were agriculturists? Explain.

Answer: • **Excavated Remains of Grains:** Archaeologists have unearthed charred remains of diverse crops, including wheat, barley, pulses, mustard, sesame, and millets.

- **Agricultural Tools:** Terracotta toy models of ploughs found at Banawali and furrowed ploughed fields discovered at Kalibangan confirm active cultivation.
- **Large Granaries:** Massive storage granaries at Harappa and Mohenjodaro demonstrate that agricultural yield went well beyond local subsistence, feeding the entire urban populace.

3. What does the drainage system tell us about the Indus-Sarasvati Civilisation?

Answer: • **Advanced Civic Engineering:** Harappan cities had one of the world's earliest covered drainage systems. Waste water from individual household bathrooms drained through clay pipes into covered drains along the streets.

- **Maintenance & Sanitation:** Drains were laid on gentle slopes for smooth water flow, covered with inspection slabs or brick lids that could be lifted for periodic cleaning. This shows that Harappan society placed an immense emphasis on public hygiene, city administration, and sanitation.

4. Discuss the occupations of people in the Indus-Sarasvati Civilisation.

Answer: • **Agriculture & Pastoralism:** Farming food crops (wheat, barley, cotton) and rearing livestock (oxen, buffaloes, sheep, goats).

- **Specialized Craftsmanship:** Making terracotta toys, shaping beads from carnelian and lapis lazuli, spinning cotton cloth, and metallurgy (bronze and copper casting).
- **Commerce & Trade:** Flourishing internal barter networks and long-distance maritime trade with regions like Mesopotamia and Oman using boats and carts.

HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills)

"We can call the Harappans great architects and engineers". Elaborate.

Answer: 1. **Town Planning:** Cities followed an orderly grid pattern with wide main streets crossing at clean right angles.

2. **Standardized Materials:** Burnt bricks had uniform dimensions (ratio 4:2:1) across settlements hundreds of miles apart.

3. **Civil Engineering Feats:** They engineered covered underground sewers, high-walled granaries with

ventilation ducts, the waterproof Great Bath, and a massive tidal dockyard at Lothal equipped with sluice gates.

Case Study

Q1. What features of the Indus-Sarasvati cities make them seem advanced for their time?

Answer: Their meticulously organised town layout along a grid pattern, straight wide roads, highly efficient underground drainage systems, private wells, and dedicated domestic bathrooms.

Q2. How does understanding ancient civilisations like the Indus-Sarasvati impact our perception of history?

Answer: It shows that ancient societies were far from primitive; they possessed sophisticated civic administration, scientific sanitation, and complex international trade networks, setting benchmarks in urban planning that rival modern systems.

Life Skills

Imagine if you were a trader in the Indus-Sarasvati Civilisation, what goods would you trade, and which other ancient civilisations would you trade with?

Answer: • Goods to export: Fine cotton textiles, carnelian beads, ivory carvings, timber, and copper ornaments.

• Goods to import: Lapis lazuli from Badakhshan, gold from Karnataka, and turquoise or tin from Persia/Mesopotamia.

• Trading partners: Ancient Mesopotamia (via coastal trade through Dilmun/Bahrain and Magan/Oman) and regions across Central Asia.