

*CLASSIX*

*SUBJECT HISTORY*

*TOPIC THE HARAPPAN*

*CIVILIZATION.*

*PART-1*

*19.05.2020*



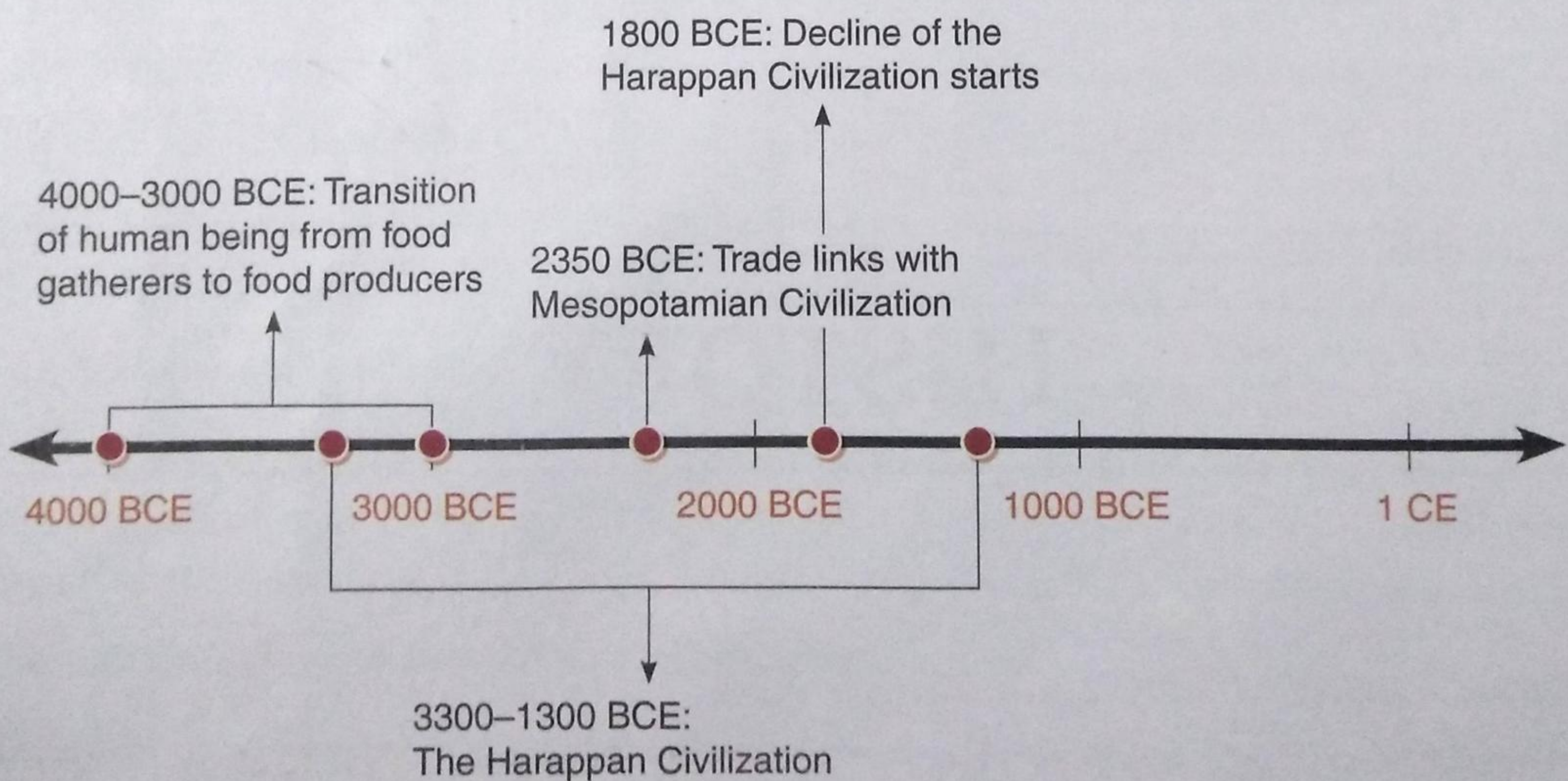
## Chapter

# 1

# The Harappan Civilization

## Scope

- Sources: Great Bath, citadel, seals, bearded man, dancing girl, cemeteries, dockyard, script
- Civilization—origin, extent, urban planning, trade, arts and crafts, religion, decline





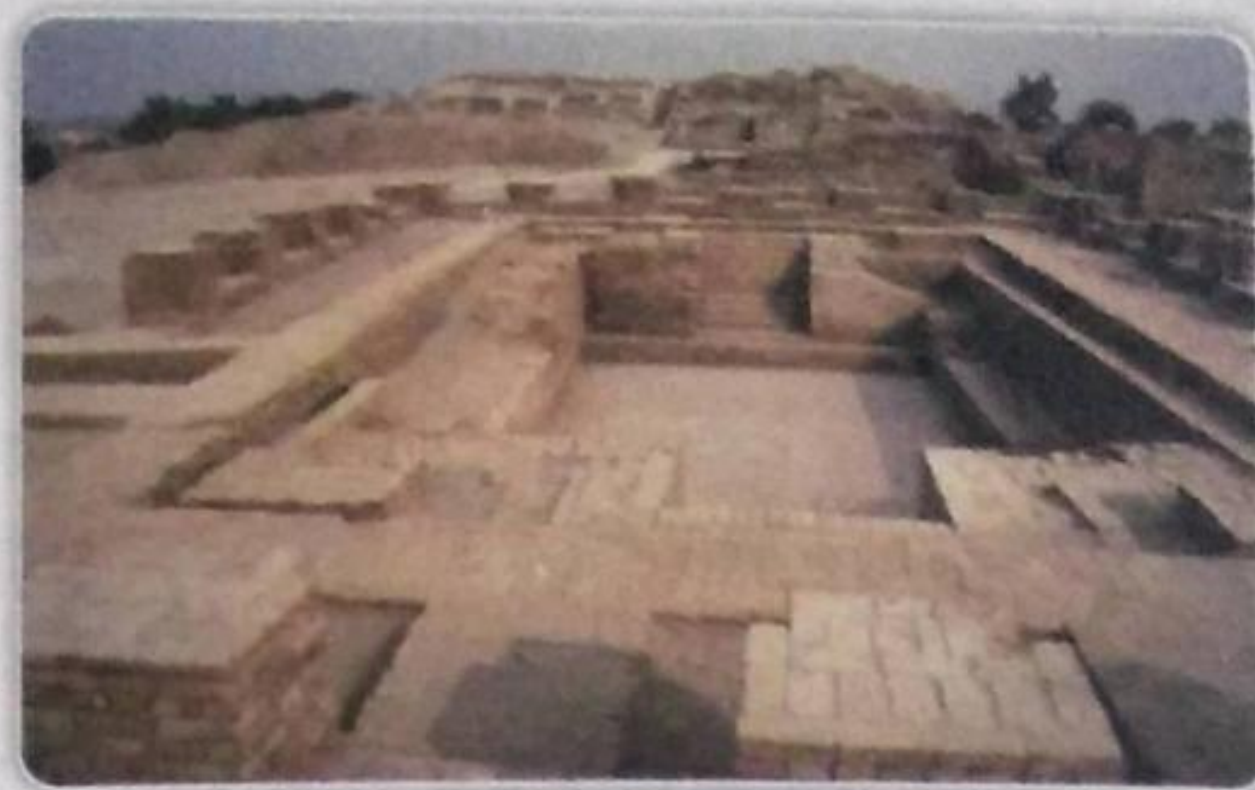
## Sources

Indus valley civilization

### Great Bath

It is one of the most remarkable structures excavated at Mohenjodaro. It is significant because:

- it reveals that **architectural style had reached a high level of perfection.**
- it implies their **collective effort and proper channeling of labour.**
- it has led many historians to speculate whether the Great Bath was used to carry out specific rituals centred on religious practices of the Harappan people.
- it hints at the existence of a ruling class who perhaps collected taxes which enabled them to construct this huge public structure.



▲ The Great Bath

### Citadel

A **citadel** was constructed on a platform to give it an elevated position. It is believed that these raised platforms housed the **aristocrats** of those days. These structures also indicated the political and social position of people in the urban civilization.

### Seals

The Harappan seals are one of the most important archeological sources that enable historians to reconstruct the past. The materials used in making the seals were mainly terracotta and steatite. The majority of these seals were rectangular, oblong or square in shape. They were excavated in vast areas within the Indus basin and have also been found in other contemporary civilizations. The primary purpose of these seals was probably to mark the ownership of property. The seals were also used for trade and commerce. They are significant because:

- they give us an idea about their trading practices, physical features, dress, ornaments and religion.
- they symbolise their trading contacts with the other civilizations. The presence of the Harappan seals in the Mesopotamian sites indicates that the Harappan people had trading relationship with the other contemporary civilizations.
- some of the seals had letters engraved on them which prove the existence of some script used by the Harappans for writing.
- engravings of unicorns and humped bulls also appear on some of the seals which not only indicate their artistic skill but also the fact that there was a practice of worshipping animals in their society. The Pashupati seal is considered to be the most important one. It shows a three-faced deity who is seated in a yogic posture with a horned head dress and is surrounded by



▲ The Unicorn Seal



animals.) It is assumed to be one of the earliest depictions of the Hindu god Shiva. The seal has been named after 'Pashupati', an epithet of Shiva.

### Human figurines

The stone sculpture of a bearded man, unearthed at Mohenjodaro, is believed to be that of a priest or a noble man. Another bronze statue of a dancing girl is a masterpiece as it revealed the usage of bronze in art and sculpture. These figurines bear testimony to great artistic skills of the Harappan people. It also enables us to learn about the kind of clothes they used to wear, jewellery they adorned themselves with and the activities that they pursued in their leisure.



▲ Bearded man

### Lothal dockyard

This dockyard was discovered at Lothal in Gujarat. It was the largest man-made dockyard during that time and was surrounded by a huge brick wall to protect the area against floods. It was connected by channels that led to the Gulf of Cambay. It gave us an idea about the navigation activities that used to take place on the coast of the Arabian Sea. Coupled with the discovery of the Harappan seals in sites of the other contemporary river valley civilizations, it throws light on the trading and commercial activities of the Harappan people.



▲ Lothal dockyard

### Review

1. Name the four Bronze Age Civilizations.
2. What does the discovery of a dockyard at Lothal tell us about the Harappan Civilization?
3. What is the significance of the Great Bath?

### Script

The Harappan script is pictographic but it has not yet been deciphered. There are about 250-400 pictographs. These signs represent animals, birds, fish and a variety of human forms. These were found mainly inscribed on seals, jars, terracotta and copper tablets, jewellery and signboards.



▲ Indus script

### Extent of the Harappan Civilization

The centre of the Harappan Civilization was in Sind and Punjab of undivided India. With them at the centre, the civilization had spread outwards in all directions. The civilization covered the following areas of the Indian subcontinent.

- In the West, South Baluchistan at Suktagendor can be called its western border.



- In the East, Alamgirpur in Uttar Pradesh (in the current district of Meerut) can be called its eastern border.
- In the North, it extended up to Manda in Jammu and Kashmir.
- In the South, it extended up to Bhagatruv in the Narmada Estuary of Gujarat.

The Harappan Civilization covered parts of present-day Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat, Rajasthan and western Uttar Pradesh in India. In Pakistan, it covered present-day Sindh and Baluchistan. Some of the important centres of the civilization were **Banawali, Kalibangan, Lothal, Rupar, Alamgirpur, Manda, Chanhudaro, Rangpur and Dholavira.**



## SOLVE THE FOLLOWING SHORT QUESTIONS.

1. Mention two sources of information of the Harappan Civilization.
2. Why was the Indus Valley Civilization called the Harappan Civilization?
3. State the extent of the Harappan Civilization.
4. State the features of the urban planning of the Harappan Civilization.