

To priests ruled in  
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To reconstruct the religious life of a people on the basis of a few surviving material remains is a risky endeavour.

A large number of seals depict the humped bull which may have been considered sacred. The impression of a God like being on a seal is now believed to be an early form of the Hindu God, Shiva. Beside, figures of a goddess have also been discovered. Many scholars tend to believe that both kin and the mother goddess were worshipped. The Great Bath in Mohenjo-Daro may have been a place of ritual bathing.

Dead bodies were buried as well as cremated. Some scholars are of the view that these people also worshipped trees. Animals were also worshipped. We have no definite idea about the political organisation of the people. Unlike Egypt and Mesopotamia no temples have been discovered. No other religious structure of any kind except the Great Bath has been found. Hence, it cannot be concluded that priests ruled in Indus civilization. It was possibly ruled by a class of merchants.

Structure of Towns: The Harappan people built well planned cities. Among them, Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa were the metropolitan centres and the other secondary important towns are Chanudaro, Kalibangan, Kot Diji, Lothal, Rangpur, Sutkagendor and Solka Koh. The town planning carried a remarkable uniformity which was probably brought by centralization of production along with its efficient administration. The metropolitan centres had their own citadel or acropolis, which were probably occupied by members of the ruling class. The arrangement of the houses in the cities followed the grid system and the cities were divided into blocks. Nowhere

was a building allowed to encroach on a public highway as in Sumer. Lamp posts at intervals indicate the existence of street lighting. The excavations of Mohenjo-Daro, Ropar and Lothal shows that the building were built on raised platforms and they fall into two main categories viz.

dwelling houses and public buildings. Even the smallest dwellings contained two rooms along with a kitchen, courtyard, bath room and possibly an upper story. Beside citadels there are also other public buildings. Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa were provided with massive granaries. They were divided into blocks with attached platforms for loading and unloading and provision for airing.

The great bath at Mohenjo-Daro formed part of a big hydropathic establishment. Reached by a flight of steps, it was supplied with fresh water taken from a nearby well. A hot air bath is also attached with the great bath. A huge public building has also been identified as dockyard at Lothal. It was meant for berthing ship and handling cargo.

The elaborate drainage system is a unique feature of Indus civilization. The immaculate maintenance of drains, both in the streets and houses testify to the elaborate knowledge of the people about town planning. The material used in construction also shows the advanced level of knowledge of masonry. Generally in building walls, pavements, bathrooms, drains, wells, etc. burnt brick was lavishly used. Sun dried was used only for foundation packing of terraces, etc. Brick kilns have been found from Mohenjo-Daro.

**Economic Activities:** The abundance of fertile soil contributed to the progress of agriculture which was the main occupation of the people. The farmers

sowed seeds in the flood plains when the flood water receded and reaped their harvest of wheat and barley after maturity. No hoe or plough has been discovered but it is generally believed that they used the wooden ploughshare. However, we do not know whether the plough was drawn by man or oxen.

These people belong to the Bronze Age. They produced not only images and utensils but also various tools and weapons such as axes, saws, knives and spears. Weavers were weaving cloth of wool and cotton. The goldsmiths made jewelry of silver, gold and precious stones; the first two may have been obtained from Afghanistan and the last from South India. The potter's wheel was also in full use and they made their own characteristic pottery. International trade of the Indus people has been a controversial subject.

While Fair service (1971) denies its existence, Rao (1973) supports it vehemently. The Harappan cities did not possess the necessary raw materials and the early texts from Mesopotamia have references that indicate some interrelation with Indus people, hence the support in favour of international trade. They had commercial links with Rajasthan, Afghanistan and Iran. The urban people of Indus region also needed and used weight and measures for trade and other transactions. Cubic weights were the most common and they were made of different types of stones. They did not use metallic money and we have no idea about their currency. Script: The Harappan seals, stamping and pots have legends in a pictographic script comprising some four hundred signs. Unlike the Egyptians and Mesopotamians, the Harappans did not write long inscriptions.

Most inscriptions were recorded on seals and contain only a few words. These seals may have been used by the propertied people to mark and identify their private property. This script has still not been properly deciphered.

Scholars generally agree that the script was written from right to left.