

3. Ancient Civilizations of India

Exercises

1 A. Question

Complete the following sentences:

The Fertile land that is near Bolan Pass _____ .

Answer

The Fertile land that is near Bolan Pass Mehrgarh.

Mehrgarh is a fertile land that leads to Iran. Crops like Barley and wheat were cultivated in this land.

1 B. Question

Complete the following sentences:

Harappa was found in the _____ Valley of Punjab.

Answer

Harappa was found in the Sindhu Valley of Punjab.

Harappa was found by the engineers when they were engaged in laying of railway lines some 150 years ago in the Sindhu valley region. The bricks found in this region was used for laying the railway lines. Later on, research conducted by the archaeologists confirmed that this is a 4600 years old ancient site.

1 C. Question

Complete the following sentences:

Harappa people depended on agriculture and _____.

Answer

Harappa people depended on agriculture and trade.

Harappan people cultivated wheat, Barley, pulses and mustard. They maintained Trade relations with Baluchistan, Saurashtra and Deccan were some of the places where business activities were carried out.

1 D. Question

Complete the following sentences:

The Oldest Veda is _____.

Answer

The Oldest Veda is **Rig Veda**.

Rig-Veda was the oldest among the four vedas. This comprises 1028 sukthas which are grouped under 10 mandalas.

1 E. Question

Complete the following sentences:

The priest who conducted yagnas was called as _____ in Rig-Veda.

Answer

The priest who conducted yagnas was called as **Hothru** in Rig-Veda.

Yagnas were of prominence in the religious practices during the Vedic period. Slokas were recited and hymns were chanted by the priest, who was called as Hothru.

2 A. Question

Write on the special features of Harappa cities.

Answer

The cities of Harappa were discovered buried under the soil across the Sindh valley region of Punjab. These cities are around 4600 years old. The special features of these Harappan civilization are:

1. The cities were mainly comprised of two or more parts.
2. These two are the western and the eastern part.
3. The western part is at an elevated level and it is narrow.
4. The eastern part, on the contrary, is wide and is at a lower level.
5. The eastern part is called the lower town.
6. People lived in the eastern part. These house were systematically designed and well -constructed.
7. Both the eastern and western part had strong walls constructed out of huge bricks.
8. Cities like Mohenjo-Daro, Kalibangan and Lothal are noteworthy.
9. Mohenjo-Daro is known for its Great Bath while Kalibangan and Lothal are famous for fire alters. Lothal had good granaries too.

The Harappan civilization is said to be an ancient civilization of India.

2 B. Question

Write a note on the great bath of Mohenjo-Daro.

Answer

Mohenjo-Daro was one of the parts of the city of Harappa. This city is one of the finest excavations of the archaeologists. The salient features of the Great Bath of Mohenjo-Daro are as follows:

1. The water tank was huge in size and it was called as the Bath tank.
2. The bath tank was constructed using bricks.
3. The usage of bricks helped to avoid penetration of water from the tank.
4. There were steps on both sides to go down to the tank.
5. There were many rooms in it.
6. The inlet of water to the tank was from a well and similarly there was provision for the outlet of used water.
7. It was understood that people belonging to the upper society took bath in the great bath.

The Great Bath of Mohenjo-Daro is a master piece of the engineering skills of the people during the Harappan civilization.

2 C. Question

How was the nature of town planning during Harappa civilization?

Answer

The town planning during the Harappan civilization was very methodical and systematic. Adequate provisions for ventilation, sanitation, and hygiene were given.

1. The houses were built systematically.
2. The people lived in one or two-storied houses.
3. The houses had huge walls and the construction was made out of bricks.
4. There was an ample number of rooms.
5. The houses had wells for the supply of water.
6. There was the main door facing the street and there were windows facing all sides other than the street.
7. There were bathrooms in almost all the houses.
8. There was an evidence of a well-planned underground sewage system.

9. There were drains which were built of bricks and these drains were covered with stone slabs.

10. The drain of each house was connected to the main drain.

11. Holes in the main drain enabled in the cleaning of the drain.

Thus, people lived in the well-planned town in the lower part of the low-lying area of the Harappan civilization.

2 D. Question

Name the Vedas.

Answer

Vedas are the compilation of the Aryans who were the early Indo-European tribe. The Vedas deal with the worship of nature, performing yoga etc., The Vedas are also called Samhithe. The text Brahmana in Samhithe explains the procedures of performing various rituals. Aranyakas and Upanishads are the two parts of Brahmanas. Aranyakas consists of instructions to the sages and hermits who mainly live in the forests. Upanishads are based on philosophy.

1. Rig-Veda, Yajur-Veda, Sama-Veda, and Atharva-Veda are the four Vedas.

2. Rig-Veda is the oldest among all Vedas. Rig-Veda has about 1028 prayer songs which are called as Sukthas.

3. Yajur-Veda is named after the priest Adhvaryu which means one who recites the yajus sutras. Yajur-Veda has two parts, Black and White. The Black part is called Krishna and the White part is called Shukla.

4. Sama-Veda is named after the priest Samaan. This Veda comprises of the slokas which are generally recited during Yagnas.

5. Atharva-Veda is named after Atharvan. The size and content of Atharva-Veda are almost equal to the Rig-veda.

The period between 1500 BCE and 700 BCE is known as the Vedic period. The first Vedic period is also known as the Rig-Veda period which is from 1500-1000 BCE. The second Vedic period is from 1000-700 BCE.

2 E. Question

What were Yajna and Yagas important during the Vedic period?

Answer

Yagas and yajnas were an integral part of the religious practices during the Vedic period.

1. Yagnas which included animal sacrifices were done to get good rainfall and to win over the enemies.

2. The yagnas were headed by a priest who was called as Hotaru. He recited slokas needed for the yagna.

3. Agni or the God of Fire was given priority in all yagnas.

4. Shlokas on Lord Indra were also recited. Lord Rudra was also given prominence. Minor gods such as God of Cultivation, God of plough were also worshipped during yagnas.

5. During the post Vedic period, different yagnas like Samaan, Adhvaryu, and Atharvan were conducted. Based on these yagnas, the names of the other three Vedas, Yajur, Sama and Atharva emerged.

6. Lord Vishnu and Lord Rudra were worshipped as prominent Gods during yajnas.

Ashwamedha Yaga was performed as a special yoga by almost all the kings. A royal horse was allowed to roam all over the territories and return to the capital.

2 F. Question

Name the professions of the post Vedic period.

Answer

The Vedic period can be broadly classified into two, namely the Rig-Veda period and the post-Rig-Veda period. The post-Rig-Veda period is called the post-Vedic period which was between 1000 BCE to 700 BCE. The professions that bloomed in the post-Vedic period are:

1. Pottery making was one of the main occupations.

2. Spinning was also practiced especially by women.

3. Women also did embroidery, dying and washing clothes.

4. There were many other professionals like rope makers, bamboo makers, firewood makers, fire makers, cowherds, fishermen, business men, doctors, astrologers, makers of bow and arrows etc.,

It can be clearly understood that the professions mentioned above flourished other than performing yagnas during the post-Vedic period.

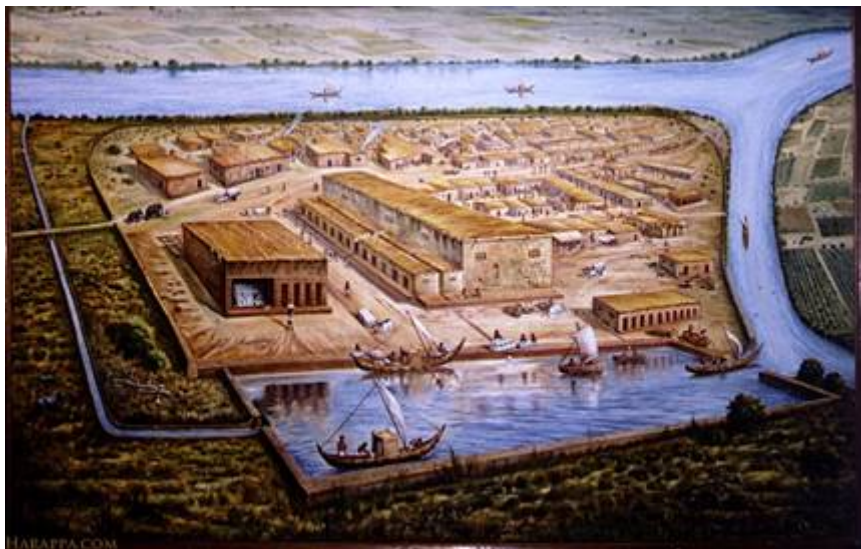
3 A. Question

Prepare a plan of Mohenjo-Daro or Harappa civilization.

Answer

Harappa civilization was an epitome of good architectural skills and systematic planning. The cities were divided into two parts, the upper or the western part and the lower or the eastern part.

People generally lived in the lower part.



Constructions were done in a systematic and proper manner. Houses were laid out systematically with walls made of strong bricks. Doors were facing the streets and the well-ventilated windows were on the other sides. Drains of all the houses were connected to the main drain which had holes for proper cleaning. All the houses had bathrooms and wells were the main sources of supply of water.

3 B. Question

Read few stories from Upanishads.

Answer

Following is a short story titled 'False pride leads to fall'.

During the war between evil forces and the Gods who lived in the heaven, the evil forces were about to win. Therefore, the Gods prayed to 'Brahman'. Brahman was considered as the creator of this universe. The prayers were answered. The Gods won. Forgetting that it was Brahman who granted them the victory, the Gods congratulated each other thinking that it was because of their bravery that they have won.

When the victory celebrations were going on, a Yaksha appeared in the middle. The ugly look of the Yaksha irritated the Gods. Since the Gods were afraid of the Yaksha, they begged before God of Fire, Agni to tell them about who it is. Agni Dev went to Yaksha. Yaksha asked Agni as to who it was. Agni proudly answered that he was the God of Fire who possessed almost everything. He also added that he has the special power to burn anything on this earth. So, Yaksha gave him a small blade of grass and asked him to burn it. Agni tried with all his might to burn it but the grass remained on the ground. He agreed that he cannot burn it.

Accepting his defeat, he went to the Gods and said that he cannot find out who that Yaksha was. Hence, the Gods approached Lord Vayu, the God of wind for help.

Vayu Dev went to the Yaksha and introduced himself and informed him that he has the power to lift everything with his breath. Yaksha placed a small

blade of grass and asked him to lift it up. Vayu tried his best but he could not succeed. He too accepted his defeat and went away.

Then, Gods decided to take the help of Lord Indra. As Lord Indra approached the Yaksha, he suddenly disappeared and Uma, the daughter of the Himalayan mountain appeared in the place of Yaksha. Indra requested Uma to tell him who the Yaksha was. Uma told him that the Yaksha was Brahman who granted them the victory against the Evils.

Indra realized his mistake. He begged Brahman to forgive them as they celebrated the victory thinking that it was the fruit of their bravery. He also requested him to forgive their false pride.

Brahman replied that he appeared in the form of Yaksha only to make them understand that false pride leads to fall.