

HISTORY OF EARLY INDIA

MODULE-1

CAUSES FOR THE DECLINE OF INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION

VALSA.M.A

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

DEPARTMENTMENT OF HISTORY

LITTLE FLOWER COLLEGE, GURUVAYOOR



- ▶ The archaeological evidences show a gradual decline in the town planing system of the cities of Mohanjodaro, Harappa and Kalibangan during the later phase of the civilization– later years of second millennium BCE.
- ▶ Cities transformed into slums
- ▶ The city of Mohanjodaro gradually shrank into a smaller area
- ▶ Harappa and Mohanjodaro were completely abandoned
- ▶ The number of settlements came to be reduced
- ▶ People of these cities either perished or moved away to other places



- ▶ New settlements were coming up simultaneously in the outlying areas of Gujarat, East Punjab and Hariyana.
- ▶ Sudden increase of population in these areas – emigration from earlier settlements
- ▶ People of these settlements followed a different life pattern from the original Indus people.
- ▶ They not used script, weights and measures, pottery, etc.
- ▶ The abandonment of Indus cities is tentatively dated to 1800 BCE



CAUSES

- ▶ 1. Abnormal floods in the river Indus and its tributaries, supplemented by earthquakes.
- ▶ Silty clay of Mohanjodaro left by flood waters
- ▶ Theory supported by Hydrologist R.L.Raikes–Indus cities were submerged due to catastrophic floods and earthquakes might have raised the level of floods
- ▶ They failed to explain the reason for the decline of the cities outside Indus aea.



- ▶ 2.H.T.Lambrick and others – Changes in the course of the river Indus
- ▶ Indus is unstable river system–shifted away by about thirty miles from Mohanjodaro and Harappa in the second half of the second millennium BCE –they starved of water and migrated to other areas where water was plenty.
- ▶ Slit found in the remains ,not by flood but by wind
- ▶ Fail to explain why other Indus cities declined



- ▶ 3. D.P. Aggarwal– increased aridity and drying up of the river Gaggar–Hakra, which represented the core region of the Indus civilization had caused the decline.
- ▶ Minor reduction in the moisture and water availability in the semi–arid regions adversely affected agricultural production–decline
- ▶ They failed to calculate when exactly the Gaggar–Hakra had dried



- ▶ 4. Mortimer Wheeler– Indus valley civilisation destroyed by the Aryan invasions from outside India
- ▶ Human skeletons discovered in the streets of Mohanjodaro support Wheeler's theory
- ▶ Scholars calculate that the Indus civilisation came to an end by 1800 BCE and the first group of Aryans came to this country not earlier than 1500BCE.
- ▶ So Indus people and Aryans might have not met each other



- ▶ 5. Scholar Fairervis—connect the Indus decline with ecological imbalances of Indus area.
- ▶ Large city like Mohanjodaro with a population of 35000, must supported by very large number of food producing villages in the nearby areas.
- ▶ The continues floods and droughts caused stress on the entire economy of civilization and forced them to move away.
- ▶ The movement was hastened by the continuous invasions.
- ▶ The enduring fertility of the soil of these areas in the subsequent period would not help one to accept this theory.



- ▶ 6. Malik and Possehi studied the gradual decline and came up of new settlements in other parts and remarked that this continuity marked the transition from urban civilization to rural culture.
- ▶ Small towns continued to exist—they had already given up some of their earlier features.
- ▶ The uniformity of weights and measures, seals, pottery and the writing system were replaced by regional styles
- ▶ Urban civilisation was gradually giving way to a different rural culture



- ▶ Some scholars noted that a remote late Indus influence could be noticed in the agricultural settlements of the upper Gangetic valley in the later period.
- ▶ Indus was the largest civilization of the ancient world, during the bronze age phase.
- ▶ It covered a vast area between Shortugai in North Afghanistan to Daimabad in South India and Sutkagen Dor on the Pakistan–Iran border to Hulas in Uttar Pradesh.
- ▶ It was more than a million sq.km.area, much larger than the contemporary West Asian and Egyptian civilizations put together.





THANK YOU

