Domestic Animals in Harappan Levels: Archaeological Evidences

Archaeology makes it possible to reconstruct many details of the daily life of individuals and communities of the past and to gain human understanding of how human societies have developed. The artifacts made by the Harappan people including painting on pottery, terracotta, metal, bone and ivory figurines and seal carvings, give a great deal of information about domestic animals, as well as shed some light on social and economic organizations of the period.

There are both archaeological as well as archaeozoological evidences of the existence of the domestic and wild animals in the Harappan civilizations. In the ambit of archaeological evidences fall indirect evidences stand for evidences like painting on the pots terracotta figurines, and depiction on the seals etc whereas the direct evidences include the bone, horn, teeth etc. Here in this chapter we shall deal with archaeological evidences only

A. Painted motifs on pottery:

The pottery of Harappan is so distinctive that it stands out clearly from those of the other historical evidences. The paintings have been found on various types of pots as vases, storage jars, offering stands, dishes, bowls, handi and medium size pots etc. The paintings generally occur in registers or zones
which normally do not reach below the waist of the vessel. The most popular designs are the peepal leaf, interesting circle, fish scale, checker pattern, comb, birds and other floral designs. Wild and domestic animal motifs are also found on the Harappan pottery. Here in this chapter the researcher has discussed only domestic/wild animal motifs on pottery from different sites and various cultural zones of Harappan civilization.

In the Harappan civilization, the animal motifs were very popular from Early to Late Harappan periods. In the Early phase the earliest representations were in the stylized form but in the mature period naturalistic representation of the animal were observed in natural surroundings. Various domestic animal motifs have been reported by several archaeologists or archaeozoologists and these are as bull (humped and without hump), cow, buffalo, goat, sheep, pig, dog, camel and elephant also. In some cases the feature of animal become so distorted that they are hardly recognizable form the pottery of the Harappan sites. Domestic animals’ motifs are found at Amri, Rehman Dheri, Kili Gul Mohammad, Mehi, Kulli, Zhob, Loralai, Periano Ghundai, Rana Ghundai, Kot Diji, Kalibangan, Harappa, Mohenjodaro, Chanhu-daro, Surkotada, Lothal, Rangpur and recently excavated site Baror also.

In this research work, the researcher has tried to identify the popular art motifs depicting animals on ceramics. These have been discussed here site wise in order to have better understanding.

In this chapter indirect evidences of domestic animals of the Harappan period have been given in details but along with this evidences from the earlier periods have also been included in order to show the beginning of domestication of particular animals in the region.
Mehrgarh:

The site Mehrgarh is located near the northern tip of the Kachi plain. The large scale scientific excavation at Mehrgarh has provided a solid base to the theory that the cultural traditions of the third and forth millennium B.C. in Baluchistan and Indus valley are deeply rooted in local traditions. It revealed a continuous sequence from earlier time (Pre-ceramics) to the beginning of the Mature-Harappan stage. Seven major period of occupation have been defined at the site\(^1\).

A number of decorative motifs have been noticed from period II (Ceramic Neolithic settlement). On pot sherd fig. 3.1(Pl. 3.1) a cattle motif is found with birds and the sun motif. The mouth is pointed and hump is drawn slightly on neck and eye is drawn in white circle with black dot.

In fig. 3.2 below the horizontal band is the representation of a beautiful goat motif in standing posture filled with the colour. The legs, horns, tail, mouth and body of goat have been drawn very carefully.

The earliest representation of the goat motif in friezes is found in Mehrgarh III (fig. 3.3&3.4) in the Indus Valley level datable at 3500 B.C. Here the goat motifs are found stylized and occur in series with other geometrical motifs\(^2\).

**Alladino:**

Alladino, is a small site about 47 miles east of Karachi. It is said to belong to the Mature-Harappan period. Here six distinct occupations were determined. This could be grouped into three occupational phases. Pottery found at Alladino is being analyzed by Shaffer\(^3\).

On a pot-sherd in fig. 3.5 goat motifs in a row are found from Alladino. The three motifs are clearly visible and in another tail and hind part is seen. All three motifs have two horns; forelegs and hind legs are drawn together; body filled with colour, and ears are clearly visible in these motifs.

---


**Loralai:**

Loralai is to the east of Quetta valley. Cattle motifs in a row with wavy horns have been noticed at Loralai in fig 3.6\(^4\).

**Nal:**

The Nal culture was first properly described by Hargreaves at Sohr Damb near the village Nal in central Jhalawan\(^5\). Fairservis\(^6\) opines that chronologically the evidence suggests that these settlement dates to a period around 2500 to 2000 B.C. Nal pottery is noted for its designs. Besides other patterns they bear animal and bird motifs too. The animals represented are *sindy* ibex, Persian gazella, fish, winged lion, tortoise and domestic animals as bull (humped) cow and goat. These animals are depicted in two ways: one in outline and second in solid black with the eye of the bull, shown in white\(^7\).

It is very interesting to note that a complete beautiful figure of humped bull is found from Nal as appearing in fig. 3.7; the whole body of the bull is drawn by potter/painter very carefully and smoothly.


In fig. 3.8 only face of cattle (most probably cow) has been drawn. Horns are filled with colour and ears are pointedly drawn. The face of animal is drawn carefully and smoothly. The ears of the cattle are on the lower side of the horns.

The Quetta-Pishin valley lies between Afghanistan, southern Baluchistan and Sind on the Bolan Pass route\(^8\). The valley is located slightly over 5000 ft. above sea level. Four sites representing all phases of late prehistoric time were selected for excavation: Q-14 (Kechi Beg), Q-13 (Karaz), Q-8 (Damb sadaat) and Q-24 (Kile Gul Mohammad).

**Kile Gul Mohammad:**

The site Kile Gul Mohammad (Q-24) located just north of Quetta city proved to be the most important. The period designations are lettered from A to J period and G to J periods are prehistoric and A to F period is historical.

The Quetta potter in general used faunal motifs as decorative units. Most striking are the humped cattle, which seem to have been the favorite subject. The treatment of the body of the bull is similar to that in geometric motifs\(^9\).

---


Fairservis suggests that possibly a dog is extraordinarily lively and is a very attractive motif in the entire design repertoire. The tail and the leg suggest that the figure represent a dog\textsuperscript{10}.

On another sherd two bull motifs are drawn together (fig. 3.9) (Pl. 3.7). The humps of bulls are shown on the head and the horns are emerging from the forehead. The leg of the bull is smaller in comparison to its longish body and has a long tail which is plump at the end. There is continuous inclined hatching on the body of the animal.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{fig39.png}
\caption{Fig. 3.9}
\end{figure}

In fig.3.10 an example of a hump bull is drawn with criss-cross humped pattern. The bull is stylized and has more resemblance to goat in appearance. It seems that the potter was first trying to draw a goat but later on he changed his idea and thus made the body of the animal as that of a bull. This is clearly visible from the front portion of the figure where the mouth is stylized as that of goat and so also the horn but rest of the body with prominent hump was later changed to that of robust bull.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{fig310.png}
\caption{Fig. 3.10}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{10}Ibid. fig. 437.
Rana Ghundai:

From the excavations at Rana Ghundai pottery remains bearing painting of a bull and dog along the rim were encountered. Here period B is called the ‘Bull Ware’ period due to dominate bull motif. Ross notes that in every case one stylized humped Indian domestic cattle have been represented. The background of the animals representing pasturage had been considerably stylized. At Rana Ghundai thus, humped cattle alongside stylized cattle without hump, and sheep with typical Moufflan type of horns are represented in period II. At site Rana Ghundai Period II the motif of the humped bull and black buck was very popular and was painted on red slipped pottery.

The cattle (bull or cow) motif of Rana Ghundai is totally different from all reported sites. The body of the cattle is extremely elongated and stylized in fig. 3.11 & fig. 3.12; the legs are long and thin. The body is small and sometime it gives an impression of a thick line only; hump is also small and tail is very long.

---

Kulli and Mehi:

Kulli in Kolwa and Mehi in Mashkai valley are known to be early Harappan settlements on the Makran coast. At Kulli and Mehi highly stylized depictions of bull and goat (Pl.3.2 to 3.5) were found. At Kuli and Mehi cattle, the typical humped bull from (*Bos indicus*) and goats very much stylized, are generally represented in the design repertoire. The figures, deemed to be of goats, may also well represent blackbuck or ibexes.

At Kulli bull has elongated body (Pl. 3.2 and Pl. 3.3). These bulls are in walking position in simple way. The humps are very big and horns are very carefully drawn.

At Mehi cattle (bull or cow) in typical humped form and goat very stylized, are generally represented in friezes look like rabbit (fig.3.13). In fig.3.14 ibex or goat motifs have been recovered from Kulli.
Pl.3.4 Goat or ibex motifs from Mehi
(after Satyawadi, 1994)

Pl.3.5 Goat or ibex motifs from Mehi
(after Satyawadi, 1994)

Pl.3.6 Horned bull motif from Mehi
(after Satyawadi, 1994)

Pl.3.7 Humped bulls from Kile Gul Mohammad
(after www.harappa.com)

Fig. 3.13

Fig. 3.14
Kot Diji:

Kot Diji is situated on the east bank of the Indus River in Khairpur division of Pakistan. It is about 50 km from Mohenjodaro. It was excavated by F.A. Khan\textsuperscript{12} of the Department of Archaeology, Govt. of Pakistan. Excavations took place in the high portions of the site (Area A) and in a lower area to the east (Area B). The lower levels (Phases 4 to 16) constitute an assemblage which Khan called Kot Dijian. 3A is transitional and phases 1 to 3 are Harappan.

\textsuperscript{12} Khan, F.A., (1965), Excavation at Kot Diji, \textit{Pakistan Archaeology No. 2}, pp.11-85.
From Kot Diji site a few animals or domestic animals motifs on pottery are noticed. In fig.3.15 and Pl. 3.8, a face motif with two big horns of a cow or water buffalo have been drawn on pot. The eyes, nose and ears are very carefully drawn but mouth is not clearly visible.

In fig.3.16, a beautiful goat motif is on sherd; its tail is stylized and mouth, horns, ear, neck, eye are carefully drawn by potter.

On another pot sherd in fig. 3.17 a goat motif is found. The four legs, tail and body part is visible but neck and mouth are missing.
Rehman Dheri:

Rehman Dheri is situated in the area known as Dera Jat. The Excavation is carried out by F. A. Durrani. Excavations have revealed three phases of occupation. Two c-14 dates show that the early period dates between 3340 B.C. and 3160 B.C., and two other reveal that the Early Indus period at the site dates from around 2600-2480 B.C.

There are remarkable increases in the number of domestic animals motifs and are reported as bull, cow, goat, pig, dog, camel and elephant also.

On one cerinated bowl there is a very interesting complete beautiful figure of pig (fig. 3.18). The legs of the pig are very carefully drawn; the tail is relatively small and thick. The eyes of the pig are drawn in the form of a black dot enclosed within a white circle, the snout is short and the ears are big.

In fig. 3.19, only face and neck of camel motif is found on Rehman Dheri pottery. Though complete figure could be identified by its neck and hump but elongated neck and open mouth is very similar to a camel. On head three zigzags are drawn between the ears, which raise doubt about the identification of this figure. The mouth of the animal is open and eye is drawn in the form of a black dot enclosed within a white circle.

---

In another fig. 3.20 a mouth of cattle is found where one horn is curved in front side and other is missing.

In fig. 3.21, mouth, eye, ears and upper portion of the pig body is very beautifully drawn by potter or painter. The legs are missing, the hair are very carefully drawn in a row. There may be another pig figure which is slightly visible.

In fig. 3.22, only faces with big horns of a buffalo have been drawn. The eyes and ears are very carefully drawn.

In fig. 3.23 and 3.28, only faces with horns and ears of buffaloes are drawn by the potter.

In fig. 3.24, a face of buffalo with her two wide horns is drawn on a pot.

In fig. 3.25, only face and neck of the goat have been found. The other parts of the body of the goat are missing; both horns are in very wavy lines, but
these horns are in stylized form similar to dear horns leading to doubt as to whether it is a goat or a dear; in fig.3.26 a dog motif is there on a sherd from Rehman Dehri.

In fig. 3.27, on a jar sherd is painted a mountain goat with a short tail, horns curved to the side and body decorated with hatched triangles.

On another sherd fig. 3.29 and fig. 3.30, beautiful dog motifs have been drawn by the potter or painter. The dog’s mouth is open, and teeth are clearly visible and eyes and ears are carefully drawn.
In fig. 3.31 and fig. 3.32, only faces with trunk of elephant have been drawn below rim portion. This is single evidence of an elephant motif on pottery from Harappan Culture.

In fig. 3.33 and fig. 3.34, a beautiful goat motif is drawn between two scorpions.

Amri:

Amri in Sind (Pakistan) is an important site because of the presence of both Harappan and pre-Harappan levels. Its importance was first brought to light by Majumdar\textsuperscript{14}. Subsequently, the site was selected for a detailed excavation by

\textsuperscript{14} Majumdar, N. G., (1934), Excavation in Sind, MOASI, No.4, pp.24-33.
Casal. In this excavation, he has divided the habitation into five periods. Period I is pre-Harappan and has been named as ‘Amri’ civilization. Period II is intermediate period where typical ‘Amri’ wares occur with the Harappan pottery with a noticeable increase of the cattle in the upper levels. Period III has been divided in four sub phases. In Period III A we get all the characteristics of the Harappan occupation. Period III B is transitional period and is closely parallel with the upper levels of ‘Mohenjodaro’ and Period III D is linked with ‘Jhukar Type’ pottery. Period IV is of ‘Jhangar’ period and this is found on mound A and, there is another mound B. Period V is of Muslim occupation.

Chart 3.1 Identified cattle motifs on Amri pottery.

In chart 3.1, the total numbers of cattle motifs found on Amri pottery are seven in number. In period I D four cattle motifs are found; in period II, the number of cattle motifs decreased so that found only two cattle motifs, and in

---

Period III C single cattle motif is found. The whole cattle motifs are painted with red colour\textsuperscript{16}.

In fig. 3.35, below the horizontal band is the representation of bull or cattle. First the outline was drawn and then it was filled with colour. Only the head and a part of the body of animal have been drawn. It has long and pointed horns, which are very roughly drawn. The hump is prominent. The ears of the animal are relatively small. This drawing thus depicts a crudely painted bull or cattle from Period I-D.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{fig335.png}
\caption{Fig.3.35}
\end{figure}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{fig336.png}
\caption{Fig.3.36}
\end{figure}

On another pot sherd, a complete figure (from period I-D) of bull is found in fig. 3.36. The horns of the animal are drawn carefully and smoothly. The hump is broad and prominent. In relation to the body the tail of the animal is small and thin. The legs are pointed at the end and the feet are not drawn. The ears of the cattle are in the side of the horns drawn by painter/potter. It seems that the painter has tried to decorate the animal by drawing curved lines on its body.

\textsuperscript{16}Chitkara, P., (1977-78), Depiction of cattle motifs on Amri pottery, \textit{Puratattava}, No. 9, pp. 92-96.
In fig. 3.37 (from Period I-D), only faces, neck and forelegs of the bull or cattle have been found. The whole figure of animal is painted with colour.

From Period II B painting of a bull, with a prominent hump, horns and a part of body is found on a sherd in fig. 3.38. The body of the bull bears strips.

In fig. 3.39 (from Period I-D), a part of the body is seen with both the forelegs of the cattle; it depicts it as running. Instead of filling the body of the animal, it shows strip.

From Period III in fig. 3.40, only the face and neck portion are to visible. The cattle’s horns are drawn in natural way, the eye of the animal is drawn in the form of black dot, and maximum body portion is not found.

The second example of Period II B (fig. 3.41), the body of cattle (may be of bull because the heavy ump) is delineated with black colour and is hatched
with lines. The bull is shown in sitting posture and only the back of the body is visible on the sherd.

In Pl.3.9, a complete goat motif is drawn by Amri potter on a pot. The horns are curved behind on body portion and whole body is filled with black colour.

![Pl.3.9 a goat motif from Amri](after Indus Civilization Exhibition, 2000)

**Rangpur:**

Rangpur is a small village in Limbdi *taluka* of district Surendranagar, Gujarat, situated on the bank of river Bhadar. The excavation was carried out by
S.R. Rao in 1953-56\textsuperscript{17}. Excavation at Rangpur yielded cultural remains of three different periods. Period I representing the microlithic culture dates to 3000 B.C. Period II has three sub phases: IIA, B and C. The period II A representing the Mature Harappan is dated to C. 2000 B.C. II B representing the Late Harappan culture is dated to C.1900-1700 B.C. and II C symbolizing the transitional phase of the Harappan culture is dated to 1700-1500 B.C and period III is dated to 1500-1300 B.C\textsuperscript{18}.

The domestic animal motifs represented on Rangpur pottery consist of cattle, dog and goat (Pl. 3.10). In fig. 3.42, only face and neck of the cattle is found on sherd. The horns of cattle are in stylized form and very small ear is drawn.

![Fig.3.42](image1)
![Fig.3.43](image2)
![Fig.3.44](image3)

In fig. 3.43, humped cattle, in fig.3.44 a face of cattle motif and in fig. 3.45, the body portion of goat is found, neck and mouth is not found.

![Fig.3.45](image4)
![Fig.3.46](image5)
![Fig.3.47](image6)

\textsuperscript{17}Rao, S. R., (1962-63), Excavation at Rangpur and other Exploration in Gujarat, \textit{Ancient India}, No. 18-19, New Delhi, pp. 5-207.

In fig. 3.46, a dog is found in standing position, neck and mouth portion are missing, the tail drawn is slightly curved on the body portion. The whole body is filled with black colour.

In fig. 3.47, another dog figure is found but forelegs, neck and mouth are missing.

Pl. 3.10 Goat and cattle motifs from Rangpur (after Rao, 1962-63).

Rojdi:

Rojdi, located in the geographical centre of Sourashtra is as an example of a Post Urban or Late Harappan traditional settlement. Excavation here, emits to the florescence of village farming communities in Gujarat. However, it appears
that settlement of Rojdi was established earlier than the original, around 2500 B.C., and lasted for 700 years\textsuperscript{19}.

In fig. 3.48, on vase below the rim portion a cattle row motif has been drawn by the potter/painter.

**Kalibangan:**

Kalibangan is located in the revenue estate of district Sri Ganganagar, Rajasthan. The site is located on the southern bank of the Ghaggar which is now dry\textsuperscript{20}. Two phases are discerned here: Pre/ Early Harappan (Period I) and Harappan (Period II). On the basis of the available C-14 dates period I and II at Kalibangan have been assigned a time range of 2400-2250 and 2200-1700 B.C.


respectively. However, the calibrated c-14 date gives them a time bracket of 2900-2700 B.C. and 2500-2200 B.C. respectively\textsuperscript{21}. Period I level has yielded pottery of distinct type. The total assemblage has been classified into six different fabrics, named in the alphabetical order from A to F. On the fabric A and B have been noticed very little domestic animal motifs with a few examples (Pl.3.20). Fabrics C to F have no evidence of domestic animal motifs on pottery.

In fig. 3.49, on a pot sherd, a part of the body comprising both thin back legs with a small tail very similar to a dog is seen.

In fig. 3.50, only face and neck of the goat have been found. The ears of goat are conspicuous as one is small and second is long on neck. The horns are long, out curved, pointed and are very carefully drawn. The eye of goat is drawn in the form of a black dot enclosed within a white circle.

\textsuperscript{21}Ibid, p.95.
On another pot sherd a complete figure of a goat is found as appearing in fig. 3.51. The horns of the goat are drawn roughly. The goat figure is showing it in standing posture, which is looking back. The forelegs are clearly seen but hind portion has not been found.

On another sherd as seen in fig. 3.52, a part of the body is seen with both hind legs and long curled tail of a dog.

**Chanhudaro:**

Chanhudaro is about 130 km south of Mohenjodaro, it was excavated by Majumdar\(^{22}\) and E.J.H. Mackay\(^{23}\) between 1931 to 1936. Chanhudaro I a to c was termed Harappa Culture, Chanhudaro II was designated Jhukar culture and III was assigned to Jhangar culture.

The animal motifs represented on Chanhudaro pottery consist of animals, both wild and domestic. In fig. 3.53 (Pl.3.11), a humpless cow figure is found on a sherd. The horns of the cow are drawn roughly and body is filled with cross-hatching and it appears to be standing in an enclosure represented by a curved line.

![Fig.3.53](image)

![Pl. 3.11 Cattle motif from Chanhudaro (after Satyawadi, 1994)](image)

---


In fig. 3.54, a row of goats or ibex motifs have been found on a pot sherd. These horns of the animals are drawn in stylized form.

![Fig. 3.54](image1.png) ![Fig. 3.55](image2.png)

**Surkotada:**

At the site Surkotada in Gujarat, a sequence of three cultural periods has been recovered. Period I A represents the Harappan with some affiliation with Early Harappan phase. In I B Harappan elements continued but with some diminishing frequency. In period I C, without any break after Period I B, there are signs of the advent of people who used white painted black and red ware akin to that of Ahar Culture.$^{24}$ The most important find at the site are the bones of *Equus caballus linn*. They have been collected between the early levels of period I A and the late levels of period I C at the site.

The black and red pottery from Surkotada bears the representation of cattle, goat and wild animal. All these examples are reported from period I A (Harappan Period)$^{25}$.

---

$^{24}$ Joshi, J. P., (1990), Excavation at Surkotada (1971-72), and Exploration in Kutch, *MOASI*, No. 87, New Delhi, pp. 393-412.

$^{25}$ Ibid, p.179.
In fig. 3.55, goat or stag found surrounded by birds, snakes and other floral motifs. The horns of the animal are very long in straight position, ears are small and tail of this animal is stylized just like in *trisul*. The body of the animal is filled in with cross-hatching. Here some other small animal is drawn under his neck.

**Lewan:**

The site Lewan represents Kot Dijian occupation (Period-III)\(^{26}\). The pottery repertoire consists of red and buff ware, with red slip and black chocolate, dull brown and white paintings. A bowl with goat and buffalo head and leaf motifs\(^{27}\) has been painted in red.

In fig. 3.56 a goat motifs have been found with floral designs from Lewan.

**Hathala:**

In fig. 3.57, face with horn motifs has been found from Hathala\(^{28}\). The horns and face is very similar to buffalo or cattle.

---


Gumla:

Gumla is an important site found in the Gomal valley of Pakistan. Dani equated stratigraphic phenomena and changes in material culture with population movement and divided it in five periods: Period I - Pre Ceramic; Period II - Chalcolithic; Period III - Kot Dijian; Period IV - Harappan; Period V - Later occupations. Period II and III belong to early Harappan phase. Gumla pottery is witness to an advanced cultural complex.

In fig 3.58 the horn motif of water buffalo in its natural form is first observed at Gumla III, as only eyes, forehead and horns have been drawn by the Gumla potter/painter. In fig. 3.59 face and horn of buffalo with leaf motif is found.

Harappa:

Harappa extends over a circuit of 6 km on the left bank of Ravi in modern Sahiwal district of Pakistan. A number of excavations were carried out at Harappa by many Archaeologists. The domestic animal motifs are represented from Early to Late Harappa phases. The domestic animal motifs noticed on Harappa pottery are humped bull, cow, goat and also dog.

In fig. 3.60 (Pl. 3.12), goat or deer, birds, floral and a lady with child motifs have been found on Harappa pot-sherds.

On a pot-sherd, a complete figure of humped bull with the *peapal* leaf rising from the humps of the bull is drawn as can be seen from fig. 3.61. The horns and legs of the bull are drawn roughly. The eyes and mouth of bull is drawn in circle with very elongated chin.

Pl. 3.12 Goat or deer motif from Harappa (after Satyawadi, 1994)
On a pot-sherd, a complete figure of bull or humpless bull with stylized horns and floral motifs are drawn by Harappan as visible in fig.3.62.

It is a solitary example on Harappan pottery depicting a cow and her calf in Pl. 3.13. The painting is depicting calf sucking mother cow’s milk while another animal is visible between cow and geometrical design.

In fig.3.63, peacock, dog and two humpless bulls with human motifs are found from Harappa.

In fig.3.64, two complete figures of cattle are found. The horns of the cattle are very stylized, humps are very small, the legs of the animals are composite.
Mohenjodaro:

Mohenjodaro site is situated on the right bank of the Indus River in Larkana district of Pakistan. The domestic animal motif, represented on Mohenjodaro pottery consists of cattle (humped and humpless bull) and goat. The domestic animal motifs in their natural form and natural surroundings are found from Mohenjodaro pottery. Animal figures are comparatively rare in comparison to other motifs on the pottery of Mohenjodaro.

In fig. 3.65 (Pl. 3.14) three cattle motifs have been drawn in a row. Forelegs and hind legs stand drawn composedly and horns curved on body.

Pl. 3.14 Goat or ibex motifs from Mohenjodaro
(after Nandgopal, 2006)

Pl. 3.15 Goat motifs from Mohenjodaro
(after Satyawadi, 1994)
In fig. 3.66 (Pl.3.15), a complete figure of a goat is found surrounded by a leaf and tree motifs. On the back of the goat, a smaller one is seen. On the goat, jackal like animal is drawn. The body of the goat is filled in with cross hatching.

On sherd fig. 3.67 (Pl.3.16) is seen a representation of the Ibex or goat with long curling horns. In front of the animal may be an endeavour to represent a hill in the animal’s natural habitat; it seems too crude in shape for a plant or bush.

In fig. 3.68, a bust of humpless bull with mouth and hind portion missing is found surrounded by leaf and snake motifs. Beneath the belly of the animal is a leaf motif and below the neck, a snake is drawn.

---

Another example in figure 3.69 shows the design consisting of a leaf shaped and semicircular figure above, below and behind the stylized cattle.

In fig.3.70 a goat motif is drawn by potter in standing posture under a tree. The hind portion of the body is missing.

**Baror:**

The site Baror is situated in the Shri Ganganagar District of Rajathan. It lies at a distance of about 100 km southwest of Kalibangan site. On the basis of ceramic industries, antiquities and other cultural materials, recovered from two field session work, three fold cultural sequence has been noticed: Period-I: Pre Harappan; Period-II: Early Harappan and Period-III: Mature Harappan\(^{31}\). Here a few pottery sherds have domestic animals painted on them. One such sherd has a beautiful goat motif (Pl.3.17) and on another a bear’s hind legs are painted (Pl. 3.18).

On the basis of countless depiction of domestic animals there is no doubt that animal motifs or domestic animal motifs played a significant role in the

---

development of Harappan art. Generally, animals were used as decorative motifs. It is difficult to dissociate animal motifs from religious import, if we trace the traditional religious beliefs of Harappan people. So the animal worship formed a part of the religious belief of the Harappan people. This is indicated by the representation of domestic animals on pottery, seal and sealing. In the Neolithic period, when man realized the usefulness of animals and began domesticating them, the potter transferred the images of the animals as decorative motifs, either in natural or in stylized forms on the ceramics, he used. The animal designs were naturalistic, geometrical or stylized.
B. Figurines:

In the following pages animal figurines made of various material are included these are mostly made of terracotta, faience, steatite, stone and precious stone and metal also.

1. Terracotta Figurines:

The terracotta is one of the important forms of art and craft because it is a medium of creative expression of craftsman through various shapes and forms. They are used as a tool for understanding the life of people because they comprise a variety of items designed for domestic use, such as ornaments, toys for children, worship and cult practice, house hold decoration, popular religious and magical practices. In this regard, varieties of terracotta objects as well as figurines of various animals were reported from different Harappan sites. Terracotta animal figurines throw valuable light on the occupations, artistic
achievements and may be religious beliefs of the Harappan people. Here in the following pages terracotta figurines depicting various animal, particularly domestic one, from various site shall be included.

**Bull:** The huge numbers of bull figurines recovered are suggestive of their importance in the daily life of the people. With the exception of one sample, which belongs to Damb Sadaat II, all the rest belong to the period Damb Sadaat III (2nd millennium B.C.). In Damb Sadaat III were uncovered fragments of cattle figurines painted with stripes, including the horns. A design of great interest because of its resemblance to ‘Yoni’, a symbol of the female organ used in Hinduism, is painted on the foreheads of some of these animals. Symbolic of the regenerative power, the relation of the yoni symbol to fertility cult is thus very ancient.

![Pl. 3.22 Early Harappan zebu figurine with incised spots from Harrappa](http://www.harappa.com)

---

The two earliest clay animals figurines, discovered at Mehrgarh, are from the Aceramic Neolithic phase\(^{33}\). The animals, however, cannot be identified. Numerous clay figurines of humped bull are known from Sur Jangal\(^{34}\), Periano Ghundai\(^{35}\) Mughal Ghundai\(^{36}\), Rana Ghundai\(^{37}\) and Damb Sadaat III\(^{38}\), Stien found sixty six figures of humped bulls in the Kulli-Mehi context. But these figurines were found all over the area: one in Mehrgarh III\(^{39}\), and four in

---


\(^{34}\) Stein, A., (1929), An Archaeological Tour in Waziristan and Northern Baluchistan, *MOASI*, No.37, Pl. XVI.

\(^{35}\) Ibid, p.39.

\(^{36}\) Ibid, p.45.


Mundigak 13-5; the number increased in Periods II-III and IV\textsuperscript{40}.

Examples of the short-horned and humped bulls came from Gumla II-III\textsuperscript{41} and later on from Sarai Khola II\textsuperscript{42}, Jalipur II\textsuperscript{43}, Kulli\textsuperscript{44}, Mehi\textsuperscript{45}, Nal\textsuperscript{46}, Balakot I\textsuperscript{47}.

\textsuperscript{40}Shaffer, J. G., (1978), The Later Prehistoric Periods, F.R. Allchin and N. Hammound (eds.), \textit{The Archaeology of Afghanistan: from earliest time to Timurid Period} p.146.
and Kot Diji. From Amri IC level, painted and elongated body of a humped bull has been reported.

In all, six terracotta figurines of bull from Surkotada have been discovered, out of which five come from Period IC and one from period IB. It is difficult to say anything regarding other animals as, so far, four bull figurines have been found besides two horns belonging to same species. Only two of the figurines are complete, out of which one has lost the front portion. Two of the heads of animals have been found, out of which one has its mouth broken. Very likely these are bull heads. An important and quite impressively modelled bull figurine of stupendous proportions has been discovered at Surkotada. It was damaged, having its hind portion intact while its front portion is lost. It is hollow.

---

42Halim, M. A., (1972), Excavation at Sarai Khola, part-II, Pakistan Archaeology, No. 8, pp. 29.
44Stein, A., (1931), An Archaeological Tour in Gedrosia, MOASI, No. 43, fig.118b.
45Piggott, S., (1950), Prehistoric India, pp. 35-42.
inside with two perforations below the legs for the axle to pass through for attaching it to model wheels. Similar majestic bull figurines of magnified proportions have not been reported from anywhere. The availability of huge wheels of 15 cm. dia and even bigger ones at Surkotada clearly indicate the use of bull-figurines of huge proportions for wheeled models. Moreover, use of the mould for production of such bull-figurines evidence the use of these toys, figurines in large numbers on a mass-scale and reveal its popularity with the children at Surkotada.

One small bull-figurine, complete in all respects, has been found at Surkotada (SKTD-831). It belongs to the normal variety of bull but seems to have been over fired. It is realistic and recalls similar figurines from Mohenjodaro (Pl.3.26), Harappa (Pl.3.22 to 3.25), Chanhudaro, Kot Diji, Baror (Pl.3.29), Bhagwanpura (fig. 3.71) and Kalibangan (Pl.3.31) etc50.

The Early Harappan levels at Kalibangan have recovered only four hands modelled terracotta bull figurines from period I (Pl.3.31). All these figurines are bulls with a characteristic feature of having joined legs in the hind part51.

Many terracotta’s models of humped and humpless bulls have been found in Mohenjodaro excavations\textsuperscript{52}.

Bhagwanpura excavation has yielded thirty five animals and birds figurines from different level of Sub-period IA and IB (Pl. 3.31). The entire figurines are hand-modelled. Analyses of the various figurines have revealed that bulls were popular in Sub-period IA and ram have been found in a large numbers in Sub-period IB. Terracotta figurine representing a small dog face has also been found\textsuperscript{53}.

Bull was the most popular animal at Lothal where seventy four terracotta figures of humped and humpless varieties have been found. Several more damaged models may also represent the bull. It is fairly evident that the *Brahmani* bull with its long horns, prominent hump and dewlap did not find favour with the Lothal folk and is not therefore represented on the seal. Only two terracotta figures of this variety have been found at Lothal\(^{54}\). A beautiful terracotta cow and a few bull figurines have also been found Lothal (fig.3.72&3.73).

Horse: The Harappans had a great fascination for animals and depicted many of them on their seals and tables, in terracotta figurines, or as pottery motifs. While it is true that the horse does not appear on Harappan seal (except if we were to accept the conjecture by S.R. Rao, 1991 and a few other scholars that the composite animal represented on thousands of seals as a unicorn actually has a horse’s head), it has been claimed that the animal is never depicted at all. A few terracotta figurines did emerge at Mohenjodaro, Lothal (fig. 3.74&3.75), Rangpur, Pirak and Nausharo also.

A terracotta horse figurine is identified from Mohenjodaro (Pl. 3.32), but its tails and ears are missing.\footnote{Mackay, E. J. H., (1938), \textit{Op. Cit.,} Pl. LXXVIII, 11, p.289.}
At the same time, it needs to be added that the Harappan levels at Nausharo have yielded doubtless terracotta figurine of a horse\textsuperscript{56}. The middle Harappan levels at Lothal have yielded a couple of terracotta figurines which have been identified as those of the horse\textsuperscript{57}.

Period III at Rangpur also reported a terracotta horse figurine\textsuperscript{58}.

In a figurine from Periano Ghundai\textsuperscript{59} crude craftsmanship only hints at the horse.

\textsuperscript{58}Ibid, p. 137, fig.50.
Lothal has yielded three terracotta models of horse\textsuperscript{60}, one of which resembles Mackay’s example. It has a long neck body and prick ears. The tail is damaged and the position of the legs suggests that the animal is running. Its mane is indicated by a slightly-raised band over the neck. A better specimen of the horse\textsuperscript{61} from Lothal comes from phase III. It has a short stumpy tail, long body and raised neck. In profile, it looks exactly like a horse (fig.3.74 & 3.75).

The third example consists of a disjointed head of a horse which must have been attached to the body. A transverse perforation behind the neck suggests that the head had to be manipulated with the string. The prick ears and snout are characteristic of the horse. This specimen is burnished and thus better treated than others.

A terracotta figure of horse found at Rangpur has a more indented line over the neck\textsuperscript{62}. Anyway, one would like to have much more evidence, to be able to say that the horse was present in Harappan Civilization and played a significant role in the Harappan economy.

**Dog:** The dog figurines have been found in various materials from few Harappan sites. Seven terracotta dog’s figurines have been found from Mohenjodaro. Two dogs have a tightly twisted tail, lop ears and a short powerful muzzles and one has a stout collar round its neck\textsuperscript{63}. Models of dogs of another type found in the lower levels\textsuperscript{64} have longer faces, upright tails and prick ears; and these closely resemble certain ancient Egyptian representations of dogs\textsuperscript{65}. In

\textsuperscript{61}Ibid, Pl. CCVID.
\textsuperscript{63}Mackey, E. J. H., (1937-38), *Op. Cit.*, Pl. LXXVII, 16 & 17
\textsuperscript{64}Ibid, Pl. LXXVII, LXXIX,4,6,11,12 & 15.
\textsuperscript{65}Ibid, p.286
all probability these mastiffs indicate that dog were kept as pets and in some cases for hunting. Some of the models of dogs are found to be wearing substantial collar. Terracotta dogs with collar figurine have been found from Harappa (Pl. 3.33&3.35). A terracotta dog figurine has been found from Sanauli (Pl.3.34).

Pl. 3.33 T.C. Dog figurine with a projecting collar from Harappa. (http://www.harappa.com)

Pl.3.34 Terracotta dog figurine from Sanauli (after Sharma, 2006)

Pl.3.35 terracotta dog figurine from Harappa(http://www.harappa.com)

Mehargarh III has yielded a terracotta dog figurine. Such figurines have also been found in Kulli-Mehi complex, Gumla II\textsuperscript{66} and Sarai Khola II\textsuperscript{67}. Lothal

has yielded a large number and variety of terracotta figurines of dog than any other Harappan site. The majority of them are crude and therefore, presumed to be the handiwork of children. A few figurines are, however, realistic. Three distinct breeds of dogs, namely, the common pariah dog\textsuperscript{68}, the mastiff\textsuperscript{69} and hound can be made out. It is not possible to identify other breeds for want of details.

The pariah dog can be made out from its short legs, erect tail, short snout and almost prick ears. The eyes and nostrils are shown by incisions and the mouth by slit\textsuperscript{70}. Similar figures of dogs with long face, upright tails and prick-ears are found at Mohenjodaro.

The mastiff shown in a running posture has a fierce look and sturdy body\textsuperscript{71}. The profuse growth of hairs over the head is indicated by pinched day. Probably mastiffs were also kept as pets and used rarely for hunting.

The hound has a long snout and is of sturdy build\textsuperscript{72}. The appliqué eyes, lop ears and deeply silt mouth are also clearly seen, but other parts are damaged\textsuperscript{73}.

**Elephant:** Only a few terracotta elephant figurine was found in the best preserved and backed clay model. Though the elephant is fairly commonly represented on seal and amulets, it seems rarely to have been modelled\textsuperscript{74} in clay during Harappan period.

\textsuperscript{69}Ibid, Pl. CCII, C.
\textsuperscript{70}Ibid, p.482, No. 11887.
\textsuperscript{71}Ibid, p.483, No. 5042.
\textsuperscript{72}Ibid, No. 8440.
\textsuperscript{73}Ibid, p.483.
A terracotta head of an elephant with a long trunk\textsuperscript{75} is an interesting find from Lothal. Although damaged, the essential part which helps to identify the animal, namely the trunk, is clear enough. The sockets of the eyes are marked by incisions and the retina by a pellet. A short trunk is appliquéd and is seen on one side of the trunk. The two terracotta elephant figurines have been recovered from Harappa (Pl. 3.36 & 3.37).

![Pl. 3.36 T.C. Elephant figurine from Harappa (http://www.harappa.com)](image1)
![Pl. 3.37 T.C. Elephant figurine head with stylized Harappa (http://www.harappa.com)](image2)

The Lothal specimens are better finished than the ones from Chanhudaro\textsuperscript{76}, the best one being a model from Mohenjodaro\textsuperscript{77}.

**Pig:** Terracotta model of pig is quite rare, but few specimens were found from few Harappan sites. Pig must have been abundant in the marshes of the Indus and Sabarmati rivers. A broken figurine have been found from Mohenjodaro\textsuperscript{78}

Two terracotta models of pig are found at Lothal\textsuperscript{79} one of them has a thick snout, a large head and a short tail. The nostrils are marked by incisions and the mouth by slit. The animal is fairly stout\textsuperscript{80}.

**Sheep:** The sheep figurines have been recorded in clay, but some time difficult to distinguish it from the goat. Some clay figurines have come from Mohenjodaro at a very low level\textsuperscript{81}.

**Buffalo:** The models of buffalo are rare in comparison to bull models, but some fine examples have been noticed in Harappan Culture. Bronze and terracotta models are found from Mohenjodaro\textsuperscript{82} and Harappa (Pl.3.28 and 3.38).

![Image of a terracotta model of a buffalo](http://www.harappa.com)

Pl. 3.38 T.C. Water buffalo figurine from Harappa

\textsuperscript{80}Ibid, p.484.
\textsuperscript{82}Ibid, Pl. LXXI, 23; Pl. LXXX, 7, p.292.
Ram: Terracotta figurines representing ram have been found from Lothal, Harappa, Sarai Khola, Mehi and Nal etc. Two terracotta figurines of ram were found at Lothal. One of them is a hollow head of a ram which must have been fixed to the body. The back-sweeping horns are typical of the animal. Another miniature model of a crouching ram with double-folded legs and back sweeping horns has also been recovered from Harappa (Pl. 3.39 & 3.40) Sarai Khola II, Mehi and Nal.

Pl. 3.39 T.C. Ram figurine with painted designs from Harappa (http://www.harappa.com)

---

Fowl: There are very few examples of the domestic fowl figurines from the Harappan level. Of this undoubted hen is the first to be found at Mohenjodaro\textsuperscript{84}. The fowl with its food dish in front of it, seen at Mohenjodaro, definitely proves that bird was domesticated at Mohenjodaro\textsuperscript{85}. The domestic fowl is thought to have originated in India and therefore, would in all probability have been domesticated in that country for longer than elsewhere.

The terracotta horns and head of animal figure were found in large numbers in damaged conditions at various Harappan sites. Most of the animal figurines found at many Harappan sites represent the domesticated variety such as the bull, cow, pig, horse, ram and elephant.

There are also a few terracotta figurines of wild animals that have also been found from several Harappan sites such as deer (Pl. 3.41), hare (Pl. 3.42)

\textsuperscript{85}Ibid, Pl.LXXX, 20, p. 296.
and others which may have been domesticated. These animals are kept in the houses even today.

Pl. 3.41 Terracotta Deer figurine from Harappa. (http://www.harappa.com)

Pl. 3.42 Terracotta Hare figurine from Harappa. (http://www.harappa.com)
2. Faience and steatite figurines:

Faience or the strong vitreous paste has also been used by the Harappan for preparing animal figurines. Some such examples have been found from various Harappan sites. Two faience animal figurines are found from Mohenjodaro (Pl. 3.44). The faience models are small and they are sometimes perforated so as to be worn as amulets\(^86\) (Pl. 3.43). In addition to these elephant tablet (Pl. 3.45) and cloven hoof (Pl. 3.46) from Harappa are quite noteworthy. The cloven hoof could be of animal, but the most common in the Harappan artistic repertoire are cattle and water buffalo.

Bhagwanpura excavations have yielded faience bull shaped pendant (head and tail broken), of mid-level of Sub period IB\(^87\),

![Pl. 3.43 A small faience ram amulet from Harappa](http://www.harappa.com)

\(^{86}\)Mackay, E. J. H., (1937-38), Pl. LXXVII; 8, 9, 13, 14, LXXX, 13, p.291.

Pl. 3.44 A ram of faience from Mohenjodaro (http://www.harappa.com)

Pl. 3.45 Elephant faience tablet from Harappa (http://www.harappa.com).
3. **Metals figurines:**

We have evidence of the use of the following metals by the Harappans: copper/bronze, gold, silver and lead. The copper/bronze specimens, which far outnumbered the rest, include a variety of tools for domestic and agriculture purpose, weapons, poles and pans and some objects in art form like animal figurines.

The copper/bronze tools includes flat axes with splayed out sharp edge which may have been employed for felling trees or cutting firewood into pieces; straight ended chisels, the longer examples of which may have been attached to a wooden ploughshare to make it more effective, sickles evidently used for harvesting crops; knives with a curved end, a feature typical of the Harappan
examples; straight as well as curved saws; plainer bits used in carpentry; drills; owls and needles. Copper/bronze was used also for producing human and animal figurines. These included elephant, dog, ram, bull, hare, swan and fowl also. One of these specimens come from Harappa. Pl. 3.47 Two bull (*Bos tarus*) gold figurines recovered from Quetta Treasury.

From Mohenjodaro excavations have been recovered in eleven numbers, all of which are probably of cast bronze. Some are very small. The best bronze figure of an animal that have been found at Mohenjodaro is that of the buffalo, 2.85 inch long. The short-horned bull is rarely depicted on copper tablets; four copper tablets have been found with short-horned bull figures from Mohenjodaro.

Fig. 3.76 Copper bull figurine from Lothal. Fig. 3.77 Copper dog figurines from Lothal.

---

90Ibid, Pl. LXXI, 23.
Fig. 3.78 Copper dog figurine from Lothal.  Fig. 3.79 Copper fowl figurine from Lothal.

Pl. 3.47 Bronze/copper elephant from Daimabad (after Lal, 1997)  Pl. 3.48 Bronze Bull from Kalibangan (after Lal, 1997)

Pl. 3.49 Copper Chariot from Daimabad (after Lal, 1997)
Goat: The bronze goat figurines are found from upper level in Mohenjodaro\textsuperscript{92}.

Bull: A copper bull figure was found from Lothal (fig. 3.76). This figure was used as an amulet is evident from the longitudinal perforation from end to end\textsuperscript{93}

Dog: Two dog figures have been found at Lothal (fig. 3.77&3.78). One of the miniature figures of dog in copper from Lothal is shown looking sideways with its head raised slightly above the body level. It has a short round body and short legs. The figure is very realistic and even minute details are brought out\textsuperscript{94}. The artist has maintained the correct proportions. Another figure is large in size and the animal is represented as looking to front and the body is of stout build\textsuperscript{95}. Both of these figurines were found from Lothal period A.

Fowl: A copper figure which appears to be of a fowl was found at Lothal (fig. 3.79). It has short pointed back, the crown over the head and the prominent plumes\textsuperscript{96}.

DAIMABAD BRONZE: Four bronze figurines found at Daimadad (District Ahmednagar, Maharashtra) from Phase–II belong to Late Harappan period. The hoard consists of four bronzes i.e. an exquisite chariot pulled by a pair of bulls,
an elephant (Pl. 3.48), a rhinoceros and buffalo (Pl. 3.50). They are all in excellent state of preservation and have not lost their pristine feature\textsuperscript{97}.

Two gold figurines of bull (Bos tarus) have been found from Quetta Treasury\textsuperscript{98}. (Pl. 3.47).

![Pl. 3.50 Two bull (Bos tarus) gold figurines from Quetta Treasury (after Indus Civilization Exhibition, 2000).](image)

**4. Stone and semiprecious stone figurines:**

Animals’ models of stone are much rarer even than those of terracotta and bronze or copper. Only three examples have been found from Mohenjodaro, one is bull roughly carved in cherty lime stone\textsuperscript{99} and another bull, roughly carved in while steatite, from a very low level.

Some attractive animal figurines are found in stone from few Harappan sites. Of these, one is particularly noteworthy. About 25cm in height (of which a part account for the pedestal), it represents a composite animal; a seated bull, with ram’s horns (the head is damaged) and an elephant’s trunk\textsuperscript{100}.

\textsuperscript{100} Ibid.
The stone figurines unearthed from the Harappan sites indicate that in comparison to other materials, those made of stone are only a few. The main causes of this was that stone was a very hard material which required much labour, higher skill and sharper but harder instruments with which the objects could be made out. Marshall describes two stone figurines of bulls discovered from Harappa\textsuperscript{101}.

5. **Shell figurines:**

Though shell was rarely used for making animal figurines but a few examples have been found in Harappan sites. Four figurines have been recovered from Mohenjodaro; three of these are bulls head; the first two from the upper levels and the third from 17.1 feet below and fourth cannot be identified.

C. **Representation animals on Seals and Sealings:**

Apart from the representation of domestic animals in terracotta, stone, metal, steatite, metal, shell etc., those are also represented in the seal and sealings, which are made of mostly steatite.

The Harappan seals/sealings are usually of steatite, though a few are made of other materials like stone, terracotta, faience and ivory. Also, these are in different shapes and sizes. The majority of images are of animals, especially the unicorn, but also there are bulls, elephants, water buffalo, goats and a number of other wild animals such as tiger, rhinoceros, antelope, mountain goat, deer etc.

Pl. 3.51 Unicorn seal from Mohehjodar (http://www.harappa.com)

**Unicorn:** The most common motif on the Harappan seals is the unicorn (Pl.3.51). Although actual bone remains of the unicorn have not been found yet, the Harappan people did conceive of this animal as a concrete being and even made small clay figurines that could be set on a pole or placed in a shrine. Unicorn figurines have been found at Chanhu-daro, Mohenjodaro and Harappa. The unicorn motif is found at almost every site where seals have been recovered. At Mohenjodaro, over 60 percent of seals carry this motif, and at Harappa the unicorn is found on around 46 percent of the seals. The predominance of the unicorn motif at the largest urban centers and its widespread distribution throughout the Harappan Culture and beyond indicates that the people belonging to this clan or trading community were not only numerous, but were present in every major settlement and were involved in long-distance trade to areas outside the Indus Valley.

---

102 Ratnagar, S., (1991), *Enquiries into the Political Organization of Harappan Society*, p. 154
The body of this beast is always male. Usually, the head is upturned with the horn arching from the back of the skull; the flaring nostrils and wide eyes present a dynamic image. The unicorn is often shown with a collar around the throat and a decorated quiet or harness in the shape of a *peepal* leaf on the shoulders. The tufted tail and male genitalia are similar to those on the humped-bull motifs, but overall the unicorn has a delicate build similar to an antelope or gazelle\(^{104}\).

**Bull or zebu:** There are two types of bulls depicted on the seals and sealings. One type is the Brahmani bull (*Bos indicus*) and other is short-horned bull (*Bos primigenius*)\(^{105}\). The Brahmanical bull or zebu, with its heavy dewlaps and wide, curving horns is perhaps the most impressive motif found on the Harappan seals (Pl.3.52and Pl.3.53). Generally carved on large seals with relatively short inscriptions, the zebu motif is found almost exclusively at Mohenjodaro and Harappa. One such seal has been recovered from the town Kalibangan.

---

\(^{104}\) Ibid.

Short-horned bull: The short-horned, humpless bull is another important second type of bull motif on the Harappan seals, but it is not clear if this figure represents a wild or a domestic animal. It is fortunately represented in pottery which is sometimes roughly made by children but sometimes exceptionally well made, presumably for votive purposes. It is remarkable that in all representations, both on seals and as pottery figures, the head is always lowered and twisted slightly to one side, as if the animal were just about to charge. The fact that the bull is always shown in angry mood suggests that this aspect of it was significant. In most cases the heavy wrinkles on the shoulder of the bull are shown with fidelity and sometimes develop also. The animal wears an ornamental collar or garland around the neck (Pl. 3.54&3.55).

Water buffalo: The domesticated water buffalo was probably present in the Mature Harappan times. Its bones have been found from several Harappan sites. The water buffalo motifs are depicted on seals / sealings. Mahadevan lists 14 stamp seals with water buffalo motifs. This animal is depicted on

---

Harappan seals such as from Mohenjodaro, Harappa, Chanhudaro and Lothal also. This animal is depicted in a very typical attitude, with nose up sniffing the air, infecting like most of the buffaloes of the modern Indian villages. It appears to be in a belligerent mood. The water buffalo usually has its head held high as if testing the air with its flared nostrils (Pl. 3.56&3.57). For both wild and domestic water buffaloes, this posture is characteristic of a defensive stance when protecting the herd or when courting females. Like the bull motif, the male water buffalo may have represented fertility and protection. The wide, spreading horns with grooves or ridges are distinctive from those of the bull, and many of the headdresses seen on human or deity figures depict the water buffalo horns\textsuperscript{109}.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{water_buffalo_seals.png}
\caption{Water buffalo seal from Mohenjodaro (after Joshi and Parpola, 1987) \hspace{1cm} Water buffalo seal from Harappa (after Joshi and Parpola, 1987)}
\end{figure}

Many scholars consider that the animals depicted on seals represent particular groups. Some see them as clan totems and argue that the unicorn was the sign of the dominant house, with other less successful clans occupying positions of lesser status. Other scholars argue that the seal images were totems associated with individual cities. The unicorn represented Mohenjodaro and its ubiquity reflected the city’s leading power in the organization of the civilization. Still others associate the different animals with individual social or occupational

groups in the society, the rare zebu seals associated with the rulers themselves, the unicorn seals representing the elite or officials, and other animals or designs standing for lesser groups. Some scholars have seen evidence in the seal images of the existence of separate socio-political entities within the Indus region rather than a unified state. The standardized nature of the seal, however, favours the interpretation of the Indus realms as a single unified polity. Separate petty states would have had its own own distinctive style of seal. Rissman, in a study of the unicorn seals, has shown that there were small stylistic variation and differences of details among representation of the unicorn in different region but general adherence to a standard iconography and execution, with all the main details, was the same\textsuperscript{110}.

**Goat:** A number of goat motifs have been found on seals / sealings from several Harappan sites. The corkscrew quality of the horns suggests the Markhor, but they are laid flat, parallel to the ground. Moreover, the face of the animal on the seal is shortened, taking on a strongly human quality and it might be that it was intended to be more (or less) than a goat. A goat on Harappan seal from Mohenjodaro\textsuperscript{111} (Pl. 3.58 &3.59), a goatee of male animal from Lothal\textsuperscript{112} and two others from Kalibangan\textsuperscript{113}, both of which stand in front of the fish sign the script. Mahadevan\textsuperscript{114} lists 37 seals with a goat or goat-antelope motif. One variety of wild goats, which has very distinctive backward-arching horns with short-knobs, is often confused with the ibex. The goat seals have been discovered at both large and small sites.

\begin{flushright}
  \textsuperscript{110}Rissman, P. C., (1989), The organization of seal production in the Harappan Civilization, J. M. Kenoyer (ed.), Old Problems and New Perspectives in the Archaeology of South Asia, pp. 159-169.
\end{flushright}
Elephant: The elephant was another important animal domesticated by the Harappans. Many elephant seals have been discovered from several Harappan sites. The elephants seals fall in the medium-size range and like the bull seals they were found primarily at the largest sites, Mohenjodaro and Harappa (Pl. 3.60&3.61) and a few examples of elephant seals were found at Kalibangan and Jhukar. The most important evidence comes from numerous clay sealing from a single elephant seal that were recovered from a burnt storehouse at the site of Lothal. These sealings were attached to goods that were being traded by a merchant or landowner who used an elephant seal, but the original seal has not been found. Mahadevan lists 55 stamp seals with an elephant motif.

---

Other wild animal motifs appearing on Harappan seals are rhinoceros, deer, tiger, *gharial* (crocodile), antelope and birds also. All of these animals would have been familiar to people living at the edge of the thick jungles and swampy grasslands of the Indus plains. They were revered as totemic animals, closely associated with important myths and legends.\(^{117}\)

The most prominent occurrence of the rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) within the context of the Harappan Civilization is a device on the standard stamp seals. According to Mahadevan there are 40 inscribed objects with a rhinoceros, including the square stamp seals copper tablets and sealings.\(^{118}\)

The one-horned Indian rhinoceros was at one time quite common in the Marshlands along the Indus river and its tributaries. Rhinoceros seals often show the animal feeding from a trough like container, with script across the top of the seal. It is unlikely that the rhinoceros was ever tamed, and most scholars interpret the feeding trough as a symbol of respect of ritual offering to the sacred animal. Similar feeding troughs are occasionally seen with the elephant motif.


and are quit common with the water buffalo and the short-horned humpless bull\textsuperscript{119}.

Tiger seals were not very common and few seals are found at Mohenjodaro, Harappa, Kalibangan and Lothal. Mahadevan records 21 tiger seals within the Indus corpus. Five of these are horned beasts\textsuperscript{121}. Some seals showing combat between human and tiger are also present\textsuperscript{122}.

Antelope or gazelle with back-arching or front arching horns are also important motifs on seals as well as on incised steatite tablets. Two varieties of crocodile are depicted on Harappan seals; the gharial has a narrow snout and the

\begin{center}
\textbf{Chart}
\end{center}

3.2 Animal motifs on seal and sealing from Lothal\textsuperscript{120}.

---


\textsuperscript{121}Mahadevan, I., (1977), \textit{Op. Cit.}, p. 793.

crocodile has a wider mouth. There is one example of a rabbit or hare used as a motif on a square stamp seal from Harappa\textsuperscript{123}.

The Harappan civilization which established the Indian sub-continent as citadel of one of the world’s oldest and most developed civilizations was mainly an urban civilization beginning with agriculture as its mainstay in which domesticated animals played a yeoman role. The discovery of granaries and the urban lifestyle of the people of the Harappan people prove that the Harappan people were undoubtedly progressive and prosperous and had great knowledge of crop-pattern and seasons. They produced wheat, barley, peas, kodon, sanwa, jowar, ragi etc. Although the Harappans practised agriculture, animals were reared on a large scale. Oxen, buffaloes, goats, sheep, domestic fowls and pigs were domesticated. The humped bulls were regarded as pets and a great asset in farming. Cats were also domesticated and signs of the feet of both dogs and cats prove their presence. They also kept asses and camels, which were possibly used as beasts of burden. Elephants were well known to the Harappan and they were also acquainted with the rhinoceros, spotted dear, sambhar deer, hog deer, wild pig etc. There are ample evidence to show pastoralism of Harappan people. Sedentary, village-based agriculture was complemented by herding, hunting and the gathering of additional plants. This served to expand and broaden the food base. Extensive analysis of animal remains reveals that the peoples of the Indus civilization were also cattle keepers on a grand scale. They also kept domesticated sheep and goats, as well as water buffalo. These animals were source of a host of products from food to traction and of valuable materials such as fiber, leather, sinew, bone, hair and horn. Milk and milk products would have been very important to the Indus peoples. It is interesting to note that the

subcontinent has never been a place where cheeses were prepared, but butter, 
ghee (clarified butter), and various forms of yogurt are widely known and may 
have their beginnings in this period. The pig seems to have stayed mostly wild, 
and it was hunted along with other animals. Pigs and elephants were the source 
of ivory for the Indus peoples. From this evidence one can say that the 
development of food production and the domestication of the plants and animals 
during the Harappan period appear to have been a local phenomenon, not one 
that came to the subcontinent by diffusion from the west.