

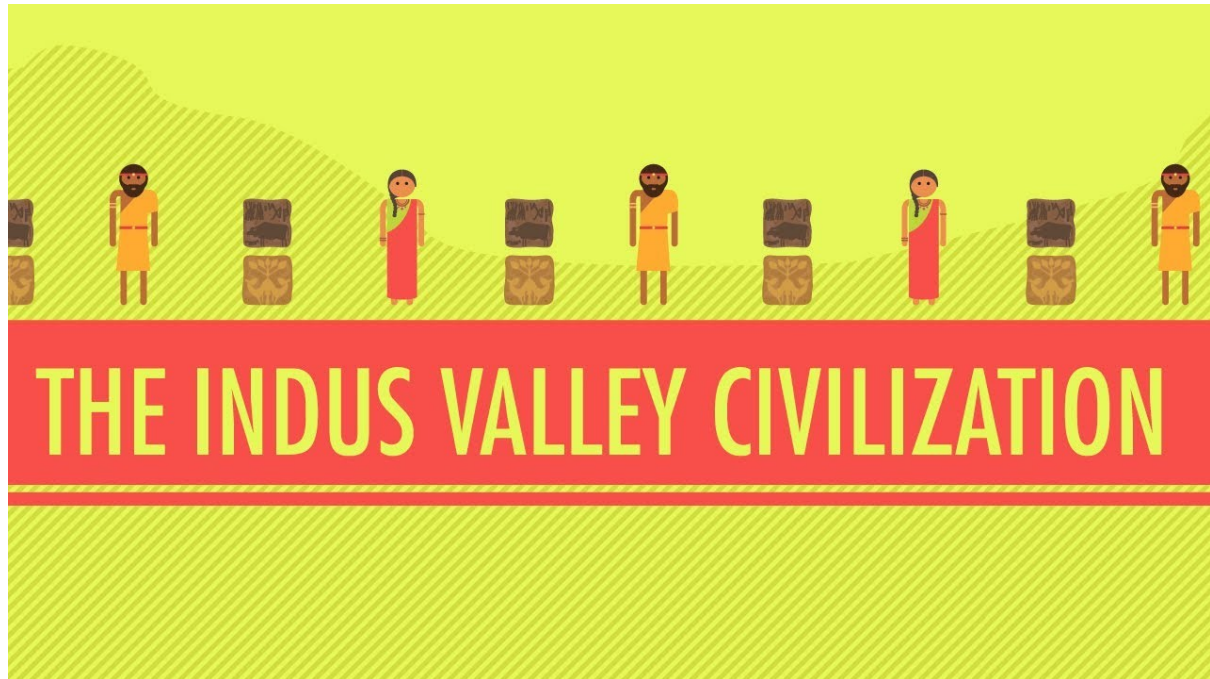
Ancient Indian History

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Indus Valley Civilization



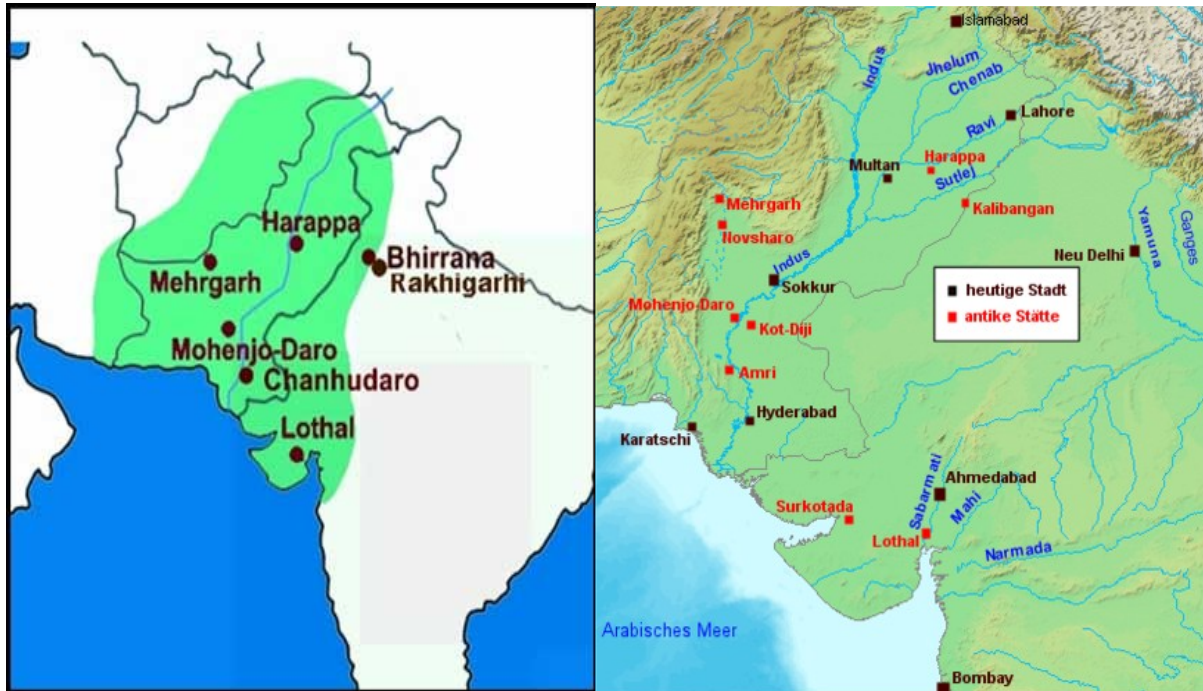
Indus Valley Civilization was the first major civilization in south Asia, which spread across a vast area of land in present day India and Pakistan (Around 12 lakh sq.km). The time period of mature Indus Valley Civilization is estimated between BC. 2500- BC.1750 as per Carbon - 14 dating. The Indus Valley Civilization was named by John Marshall. The Indus Valley Civilization belongs to Chalcolithic Age / Bronze Age.

The Indus Civilization represents the earliest manifestation of urban development in the plains of the Indus valley and its extension along the Arabian sea-coast. The four principal settlements so far excavated provide the material to reconstruct the cultural content of the civilization. Two lie in Pakistan: Harappa, is situated on the banks of the river Ravi in Sahiwal District of Punjab, and Mohenjo-daro (literally 'mound of the dead') is on the right bank of the Indus river in Larkana District of Sind. The other two sites are in western India; Lothal which is situated on the banks

of Sabarmati river at the head of the gulf of Cambay on the west coast of India, and Kalibangan (literally 'black bangles') lies some 310 km north-west of Delhi along the left bank of the now-dry Ghaggar (old Sarasvati) river in northern Rajasthan.

Archaeological Sites

The first discovered site was Harappa by Dayaram sahani in 1922. The maximum numbers of sites were explored by S R Rao in Gujarat (190 sites). At present there are over 3530 sites which have been excavated. The Largest Indus Valley site is Mohenjodaro. The smallest site is Allahdino. The largest site in India is Dholavira and Rakhigarhi. The three nuclear sites are Mohenjodaro, Harappa, Dholavira.



Archaeological Sites in India and Pakistan

List of Sites

Site	State	Country	River	Excavators
Harappa	Punjab	Pakistan	Ravi	Daya Ram Sahani
Mohenjo-daro	Sindh	Pakistan	Indus	R D Bannerji
Chanhudaro	Sindh	Pakistan	Indus	Mackay, N G Muzumdar
Lothal	Gujarat	India	Bhogava	S R Rao
Dholavira	Gujarat	India	Luni	J P Joshi

Banawali	Haryana	India	Ghaggar	R S Bist
Kalibanga	Rajastha n	India	Ghaggar	Amalanand Gosh

The archaeological excavations reveal that this culture was spread over a vast area which included not only the present day states of India such as Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Western Uttar Pradesh but also Pakistan and some parts of Afghanistan. Other important sites of this civilization are: Manda in Jammu and Kashmir, Shortughai in Afghanistan, Rakhigarhi in Haryana, while Sutkagendor on the Makran Coast (near Pakistan-Iran border) is the western most site of the Harappan civilization and Alamgirpur in western Uttar Pradesh marks its eastern most limit. The northernmost site of Harappa civilization is Manda (Chenab) in Jammu and Kashmir and southernmost site is Daimabad in Maharashtra.

Archaeological findings

Six Granaries in row, Working floor, Workmens Quarters, Stone symbols of Lingam, Painted pottery, Clay figure of Mother Goddess, Wheat and Barley in woollen mortar, Copper scale, Copper made BRONZE, Vanity Box, Dice are found in Harappa.

Great Granary, Great Bath, (Largest building of civilization) , assembly hall, Shell Strips, Pashupathi Mahadeva seal, Bronze image of woman dancer, Steatite image of bearded man Clay figure of Mother Goddess and Brick Kilns are found in Mohenjodaro(Mound of the Death).

Dockyard, Rice husk, Metal worker's, shell ornament makers, bead makers's shopes, Fire altars, Terracota figure

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of a horse, Double burial system, Iranian seal, Painted jar are found in Lothal. Lothal was an ancient port of Indus civilization.

City without a Citadel, Inkpot, Lipstick, Metal worker's, Shell ornament maker's, Imprints of dog's paw on a brick, Terracotta model of a bullock cart, Bronze toy cart are found in Chanhudaro.

A unique water harvesting system and its storm water drainage system, a large well, a stadium are found in Dholavira. The Dholavira is the only site to be divided into 3 parts.

Ploughed field surface, 7 fire altars, decorated bricks, Mesopotamian cylindrical seal are found at Kalibangan.

Grid pattern of town planning, lack of systematic drainage system, Clay figure of Mother Goddess are found at Banawali.

Bones of horse and Pot burial is found in Surkotada.

Indus Cities at a Glance - Year of Discovery

Sites	River Basin	Year of Discovery
Harappa	Ravi	1921
Mohenjodaro	Indus	1922
Sutkagendor	Dasht	1931
Rangpur	Bhadur	1931
Chanhudaro	Indus	1931
Ropar	Sutlej	1953
Lothal	Bhogava	1957
Kalibangan	Ghaggar	1959
Alamgirpur	Hindon	1974
Banawali	Ghaggar	1974

Society and Economy

The social and economic life of the people of Indus Valley Civilization (Harappan Civilization) was systematic and

organised. The Indus valley population consisted of Australoid, Mediterranean, Mongoloid and Alpine races. The cosmopolitan character of the population proves that the Indus valley was the meeting place of the people of various races. The people had good understanding of an urban civilization. The approximate population of Mohenjo-Daro was 35000.

1. Food of the people of Indus Civilization

The staple food of the people comprised wheat, barley, rice, milk and some vegetables like peas, sesamums and fruits like date palms. Mutton, pork, poultry, fish etc. were also eaten by the Indus people.



Agriculture appears to be the main occupation of the Indus people. The discovery of a granary at Harappa lends support to this.

2. Social Dress of the Harappan People

The discovery of large number of spindles proves the use of cotton for weaving social cloths. Indus people were the first to grow the cotton. Probably wool was also used.

Both men and women used two pieces of cloth. The men folk wore some lower garment like dhoti and upper garment like shawl. The upper garment wrapped the left shoulder. Female attire was the same as that of men. Arts and crafts and trade formed one of the main occupations of the people.

3. Hair-style, Ornaments of people of Indus Valley

Men wore long hair, parted in the middle and kept tidy at the back. The women of Indus valley usually wore long hair in plait with fan-shaped bow at the end. Both men and women of harappa were fond of ornaments made of gold, silver and copper. The ornaments were decorated with precious stones like jade, carnelian, agate and lapis-lazuli.



4. House-hold articles and Furniture's of Indus People

Most of the house-hold articles were made of pottery or of metals like copper and bronze. The art of pottery attained a wonderful excellence at Mohenjo-Daro. This is proved by painted and glazed wares. Most of the kitchen utensils including jars, vessels, dishes etc. were made of earth and

stone. Domestic implements like axe, knife, needles, saws etc. were made of bronze or copper. There is lack of defensive weapons like sword.

5. Amusements of Indus Valley people

Dicing was a favorite pastime game. Hunting of wild animals, bull fighting, fishing and clay modeling were general social amusements of people.

6. Animals of Indus Valley

Some of animals living in the Indus valley were domesticated while others were wild. The remains of humped bull, buffalo, sheep, elephant, pig and camel have been found. Dogs, cats were also domesticated. Formerly it was believed that the Indus people **did not tame horses** as domestic animals. But bones and skeletons of horses have been found at Kalibangan (Hanumangarh district, rajasthan) and Surkotada(Kutch district, Gujarat) in the upper layers.



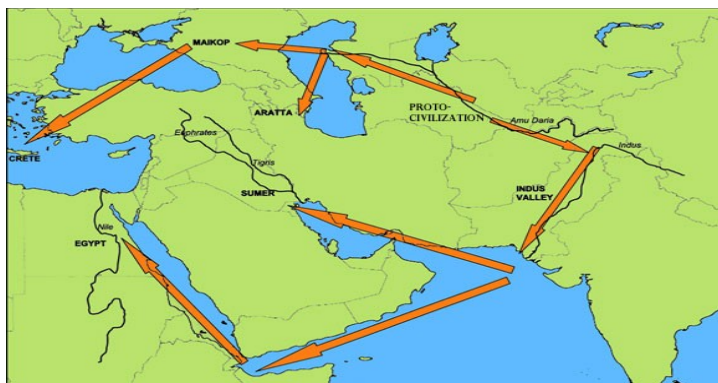
Humped Bull Seal

Perhaps at a late stage of the Indus civilization horses were domesticated. The existence of wild animals like rhinoceros, tiger, and bison in the Indus forests is confirmed

by terracotta figures of these animals. Lion was not known to Indus people.

7. Trade and Commerce and Economy of Harappa

Indus cities had a lucrative market of cotton goods in Sumeria and Western Asia. Besides ivory works, combs, pearls were exported to West Asia from the Indus cities. It is presumed that large number of merchants from the Indus cities lived in Sumeria. The Indus cities had maritime trade with Sumeria through the Persian Gulf. The skeletal remains of camels have prompted scholars to think that trade with Turkomania and West Asia was also carried by overland route.



Town	Towns associated with
Daimabad	Bronze Industry.
Lothal	Factory for stone tools.
Balakot	Pearl finished goods.
Chanhudaro	Beads and Bangles factory.

8. Religion of Indus People

The religion of the Indus people had some interesting aspects. There is a striking absence of any temple among the remains of the Indus valley. The prevalence of the worship of the Mother Goddess (Sakti) has been suggested. The worship of Siva is suggested by the discovery of figure of a deity with three faces with horned head dress seating cross-legged in a Yogic posture surrounded by animals like buffalo, rhinoceros, deer, tiger, etc. The figure has been identified by Prof. Marshall with that of Siva - Trimukha (three faced), Pasupati (lord of animals), Mahayogin.



The worship of Shiva Linga was prevalent. Animal worship is attested by seals and terracotta figurines. The discovery of a few seals bearing Swastika symbol and Wheel symbol also indicates Sun worship.

9. Funerary Custom of Indus People

The Indus people had three funeral custom viz.

1. Complete burial of the dead body.
2. Burial of the bones of the dead body after wild beasts ate of it.

3. Burial of ashes and bones after burning the dead body.

10. Town Planning

The most interesting urban feature of Harappan civilization is its town-planning. It is marked by considerable uniformity, though one can notice some regional variations as well. The uniformity is noticed in the lay-out of the towns, streets, structures, brick size, drains etc. Almost all the major sites (Harappa, Mohenjodaro, Kalibangan and others), are divided into two parts—a citadel on higher mound on the western side and a lower town on the eastern side of the settlement. The citadel contain large structures which might have functioned as administrative or ritual centres. The residential buildings are built in the lower town. The streets intersect each other at right angles in a criss-cross pattern. It divides the city in several residential blocks. The main street is connected by narrow lanes. The doors of the houses opened in these lanes and not the main streets.



Harappa Town Planning, Indus Valley Civilization

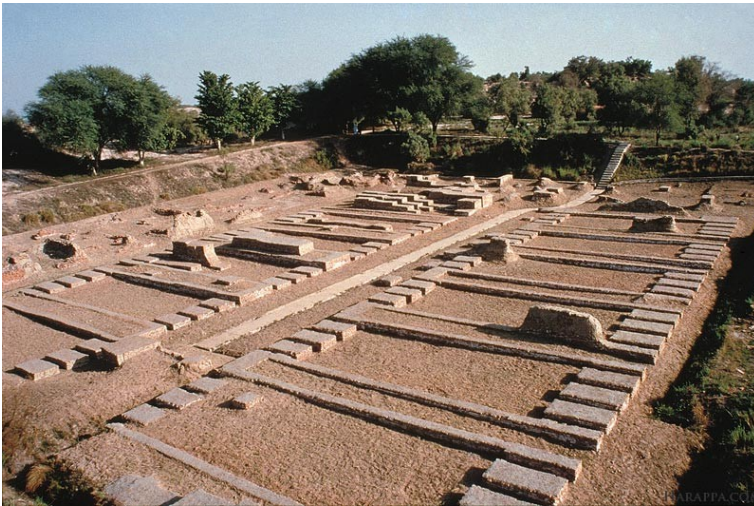
Dwelling Houses

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The houses of common people, however, differed in size from a single-room house in Harappa to bigger structures. The houses were largely built of burnt bricks.



Great Bath



Harappan Granery



Harappan Drainage

The drainage system of the Harappans was elaborate and well laid out. Every house had drains, which opened into the street drains. These drains were covered with manhole bricks or stone slabs (which could be removed for cleaning) were constructed at regular intervals by the side of the streets for cleaning.

Arts of Indus Valley Civilization

Stone Statues:

- Stone statues found in Indus valley sites are excellent examples of handling the 3D volume.
- Two major stone statues are:

1. Bearded Man (Priest Man, Priest-King)

It is found in Mohenjo-daro. Bearded man's figure made of Steatite. The figure interpreted as a priest and is draped in a shawl coming under the right arm and covering the left shoulder. The shawl is decorated with trefoil pattern. The eyes are elongated and half closed as in a meditative concentration.



2. Male Torso

It is found in Harappa (only major art element found in Harappa) which is made of Red Sandstone.

Bronze Casting:

1. Dancing Girl



Dancing Girl Statue

- Found from Mohenjo-Daro.
- Made up of Bronze.
- One of the best-known artifacts from Indus valley.
- Approximately 4-inch high figure of a dancing girl.
- This exquisite casting depicts a girl whose long hair is tied in the bun and bangles cover her left arm.
- Cowry shell necklace is seen around her neck.
- Her right hand is on her hip and her left hand is clasped in a traditional Indian dance gesture.
- She has large eyes and flat nose.

2. Bull from Mohenjo-Daro

- Bronze figure of the bull found in Mohenjo-Daro.
- The massiveness of the bull and the fury of the charge are eloquently expressed.
- The animal is shown standing with his head turned to the right.
- There is a cord around the neck.

Terracotta:

- Terracotta figures are more realistic in Gujarat sites and Kalibangan.
- In terracotta, we find a few figurines of bearded males with coiled hairs, their posture rigidly upright, legs slightly apart, and the arms parallel to the sides of the body. The repetition of this figure in exactly the same position would suggest that he was a deity.
- A terracotta mask of a horned deity has also been found.
- The most important terracotta figures are those represent Mother Goddess (Mohenjodaro).

Seals:

- Thousands of seals were discovered from the sites, usually made of steatite, and occasionally of agate, chert, copper, faience and terracotta, with beautiful figures of animals such as unicorn bull, rhinoceros, tiger, elephant, bison, goat, buffalo, etc.

Terracota Seals

- The purpose was mainly commercial.

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- Standard Harappan seal was 2 x 2 square inches.
- Every seal is engraved in a pictographic script which is yet to be deciphered.
- Some seals were also been found in Gold and Ivory.



Seal of Buffalo

Seals of Pashupati Mahadeva

- Found in Mohenjo-Daro.
- The seal depicts a human figure seated cross legged.



- An elephant and a tiger are depicted to the right side of the figure, while on the left a rhinoceros and a buffalo are seen.

Harappa Script

The Harappans were literate people. Harappan seals, are engraved with various signs or characters. Recent studies suggest that the Harappan script consists of about 400 signs and that it was written from right to left. However, the script has not been deciphered as yet. It is believed that they used ideograms i.e., a graphic symbol or character to convey the idea directly.

Overlapping of the letters show that the letters were written from right to left direction in the first line and left to right in second line. This style is called **Boustrophedon**.

Decline of Indus Valley Civilization

The succession of rise and fall is a law of nature. After 1500 years of prominence, the Harappan culture gradually declined to the point of extinction. Harappa, Mohenjo-Daro, Kalibangan and other centres of Harappan culture were no exception.

(i) It is suggested by some scholars that natural calamities such as floods and earthquakes might have caused the decline of the civilization. It is believed that earthquakes might have raised the level of the flood plains of the lower course of Indus river. It blocked the passage of the river water to the sea and resulted in the floods which might have swallowed the city of Mohenjodaro.

(ii) Increased aridity and drying up of the river Ghaggar-Harka on account of the changes in river courses, according to some scholars, might have contributed to the decline. This theory states that there was an increase in arid conditions by around 2000 BC. This might have affected agricultural production, and led to the decline.

(iii) Aryan invasion theory is also put forward as a cause for the decline. According to this, the Harappan civilization was destroyed by the Aryans who came to India from north-west around 1500 BC. However, on the basis of closer and critical analysis of data, this view is completely negated today.
