

Major Centres of Indus Valley Civilization - Study Materials

MAJOR CENTRES

The Remnants of two major cities—Mohenjodaro and Harappa—reveal remarkable engineering feats of uniform urban planning and carefully executed layouts for water supply and drainage. Excavations at these sites and later archaeological digs at approximately seventy other locations in India and Pakistan provide a composite picture of what is now generally known as Harappan culture (3000—1800 BC). In India, important sites connected with the Indus Valley Civilization are Lothal near Ahmedabad in Gujarat, Kalibangan in Rajasthan, Banwali in Hissar district of Haryana and Ropar near Chandigarh in Punjab. These sites were flourishing centres between 3000 and 2000 BC. Perhaps, there are many more significant Indus Valley sites which are still unknown. Some of those may have been lost by shifting courses of rivers. Some others may be replaced by modern towns. One thing is very clear that most of the sites were important commercial centres. They are mostly situated near rivers. A number of specialised manufacturing facilities discovered indicate that these towns were involved in trade not only with each other,

but also the regions far away.



Mohenjodaro

One of the most important centres of the Indus Civilization was Mohenjodaro, situated along the west bank of the Indus River, approximately 320 km (200 miles) north of Karachi, in Pakistan. Mohenjodaro is probably the best known Indus Valley site. It is located by the Indus in Sindh, Pakistan. Here, the Great Bath, uniform buildings and weights, hidden drains and other hallmarks of the civilization were discovered in the 1920s. Owing to the rising water table, most of the site remains unexcavated and its earliest levels have not been reached. Like most cities of the Indus Civilization, it consisted of two major areas of occupation: a high citadel to the west and a lower city of domestic dwellings to the east. Careful urban planning is evident in the neat arrangement of the major buildings contained in the citadel, including the placement of a large granary and water tank

Major Centres of Indus Valley Civilization - Study Materials

or bath at right angles to one another. The lower city, which was tightly packed with residential units, was also constructed on a grid pattern consisting of a number of blocks separated by major cross streets. Baked-brick houses faced the street, and domestic life was centred on an enclosed courtyard. Sanitation was provided through an extensive system of covered drains running the length of the main streets and connected with most residences by chutes.

The remains of Mohenjodaro are a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Mohenjodaro is also spelled 'Moenjodaro' the spelling used by the UNESCO World Heritage Organization.

Harappa

Harappa was an Indus Valley urban centre. However, in spite of its essentially urban culture, the city was supported by extensive agricultural production and commerce, which included trade with Sumer in southern Mesopotamia (modern Iraq). It is located on the old river bed of Ravi nearly 640 km towards north east of Mohenjodaro in the Punjab, Pakistan. The nearby but smaller site of Kalibangan is situated farther east, in India, along the banks of the now extinct Ghaggar-Hakra. Both, Mohenjodaro and the Harappa sites follow the familiar plan of a small, high citadel to the west and at lower city to the east, with the streets arranged in a rectilinear grid pattern. Immediately north of the heavily fortified citadel at Harappa, two sets of barrack-like dwelling for labourers were excavated

alongside enormous granaries for the city's food supply. There is a structure which was earlier considered a granary, but now it is believed that it was a palace having ventilated air ducts. At Harappa, we find the first indications of the ancient Indus Valley Civilization, also known as the Harappan Civilization. Nearly five mounds have been discovered at Harappa in the latest research. Two of these mounds have large walls around them. These walls were perhaps erected for trade regulation as defence.

Kalibangan

The height of the Indus Valley multiple regional centres could have been built as per standard plan. The Kalibangan site shows settlement underwent drastic changes as it got incorporated in to expanding Indus civilization. Along the river-bed of Ghaggar-Hakra, more cities were discovered especially towards the south-west of Kalibangan.

Dholavira

It is situated on Khadir Beit, which is an island in the Rann of Kutch in the Indian state of Gujarat. The first excavation at Dholavira started in 1990. It is as large as Mohenjodaro. The architecture found here is preserved. An obscure signboard in Indus script has also been found.

Lothal

Lothal is located on the top of the Gulf of Cambay in the Indian state of

Major Centres of Indus Valley Civilization - Study Materials

Gujarat, on the banks of the River Sabarmati near the Arabian Sea. Lothal is a very important site on the sea coast, so it is one of the most extensively researched site. Archaeologists have found a bead factory and Mesopotamian seal from this site.

Rakhigarhi

Archaeologists have very recently discovered this site in Haryana, India. It is still an unexcavated site. The city of Rakhigarhi was as large as Harappa and Mohenjodaro.

Ganeriwala

This site is located in Punjab, Pakistan, adjoining the Indian border. It was found in the 1970s. Its area is 80 hectares is almost equal to the area of Mohenjodaro. It is situated adjoining a dry bed of the Ghaggar or Sarasvati River. It lies almost at an equal distance from two important Indus towns of Harappa and Mohenjodaro. It may have been the \ urban centre of a third Indus Valley region, expanding over copper-rich Rajasthan.

Daimabad

It is located in the state of Maharashtra, near Mumbai. It was discovered in 1958. Some of the archaeologists suggest that the artefacts found here indicate its association with the Harappan Civilization, while others believe that the evidence is not enough. A unique

catche of exquisite bronze chariots and animals which may or may not belong to the Indus Valley was also discovered at this site.

Chanudarho

It lies almost 80 miles south of Mohenjodaro in Pakistan. It is suggested that it was an important manufacturing centre. Different type of tools, shell, bone and seal-making facilities were traced at this site. It seems that Chanudarho was hastily abandoned.

Sutkagendor

It is situated in Baluchistan, Pakistan near the border of Iran. It is the westernmost known Indus Valley Civilization site. It is believed that it was once situated on a navigable inlet of the Arabian Sea. The site also has the usual citadel and a town with 30 feet wide defensive walls. Sutkagendor was situated on the trade route from Lothal in Gujarat to Mesopotamia. trade route from Lothal in Gujarat to Mesopotamia.



Indus valley Civilizations

The Indus Valley Civilization flourished approximately 2500 BC in the western part of South Asia, in what today is Pakistan and Western India. It is often referred to as the Harappan Civilization after its first discovered city, Harappa. The Indus Valley was home to the largest of the four ancient urban civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, India and China. It was not discovered until the 1920s. Most of its ruins. Including

Major Centres of Indus Valley Civilization - Study Materials

major cities, remain to be excavated. Its script has not been deciphered. Basic questions about the people who created this highly complex culture remain unanswered.

The Harappans used same sized bricks and standard weights for thousand miles. There were other highly developed cultures in the area. Some are thousands of years older. Harappa was settled before the Harappans of the Indus Valley and they were replaced by other still anonymous people.

There seems to have been another large river which ran parallel and west of the Indus in the third and fourth millennium BC. This was the ancient Ghaggra Hakra River or Sarasvati of the Rig Veda. Its lost banks are slowly being laid out by, researchers. Along its bed, a whole new set of ancient towns and cities have been discovered.

According to ancient Mesopotamian texts there were two important sea faring civilizations in India's, neighbourhood in the third millennium BC. These civilizations' were **Makkan** and **Meluha**. They conducted trade with red financial sophistication in amounts involving tonnes of copper. According to the Mesopotamians, Meluha was an aquatic culture, where water and bathing played a pivotal role. Many Indus Valley objects have been discovered buried with the Mesopotamians.

Since 1986, the joint Pakistani

American Harappa Archaeological Research Project (HARP) has been carrying out the first major excavations at the site in 40 years. These excavations have shown Harappa to have been far larger than once, thought, perhaps supporting a population of 50,000 at certain periods.

The remains of the Indus Valley have been found from Mumbai in the southern part of India, to the Himalayas in the north and northern Afghanistan. In the west, it expands on the Arabian Sea coast in Baluchistan, Pakistan, up to the Iranian border. In the east, it expands up to Uttar Pradesh in India. Excavations in Gujarat show a southern coastal network expanding hundreds of miles. It seems that the civilization moved on from the west towards the east. It also appears that the settlements in the central and southern India flourished after the decline of Harappa and Mohenjodaro. The drying up of the ancient Sarasvati or Ghaggar-Hakra River may also have adversely affected the civilization. There were a number of Harappan sites along that river bed. The Rig Veda provides many accounts of the Aryan people driving the indigenous Dravidian people into South India. There is a tribe known the **Brahui tribe** in Baluchistan, to the west of the Indus. The tribe speaks Dravidian language similar to Tamil spoken in South India. It suggests that there was a migration of people to South India. It is still not clear that the ancient Harappans were Aryans or

Major Centres of Indus Valley Civilization - Study Materials

Dravidians

Many new studies are being conducted on ground in India and Pakistan. There is a possibility that in future, we shall get answers to questions about them and the drying up of river beds. The first encouraging script interpretations have been done. Radiocarbon chronologies are becoming helpful. Old trade routes are being discovered through satellite imaging.

Art and Crafts

The most wonderful but most obscure Harappan artefacts discovered till now are the steatite seals. These have been found in abundance at Mohenjodaro. We get the most clear and, accurate picture of Harappan life from these small, flat and mostly square objects with human or animal motifs. (They also have inscriptions believed to be inscribed in the Harappan script. However, it has eluded scholarly attempts at deciphering. There are debates on, if the script represents numbers or alphabets, if it is proto-Dravidian or proto-Sanskrit.

Three seals found at Mohenjodaro depict a seated horned deity. He is surrounded by wild animals. The image is believed to be the portrayal of the Hindu God Shiva or Pashupati, the Lord of Beasts. The apparent cult of the bull and the stress on washing and ablutions, prove by these remains, bring out the unanswerable question of the influence of this early pre-Aryan civilization on Hindu practices in ancient India.

Architectural Layout

Mohenjodaro was a well-fortified city. The town did not have city walls. Though, it had towers to the west of the main settlement, and defensive fortifications to the south. If we consider these fortification arrangements, we are faced with the question if Mohenjodaro was an administrative centre. The architectural layout of both Harappa and Mohenjodaro is almost same. These towns were not as heavily fortified as the other Indus Valley towns. The identical layout of the cities in the Indus Valley suggests that there was some kind of political or central administration.

GK Study Materials [PDF Download](#)

All subject Study Materials [PDF Download](#)

2018 Current Affairs Download – PDF Download

Whatsapp Group  [Click Here](#)

Telegram Channel  [Click Here](#)

Join Us on FB  **: English – Examsdaily**

Follow US on  **Twitter - Examsdaily**