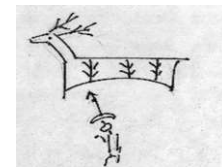


ANCIENT HISTORY OF INDIA

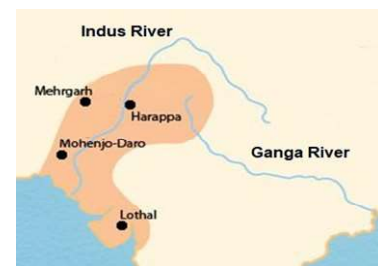
- India's history and culture are never the same, they are ever changing, peeping back into the beginning of human civilization. It embarks, beginning with a mysterious culture along the Indus River and the farming communities in the southern lands of India.
- The history of India is known for diverse cultures and for immigrants from various cultures that surround India. According to the evidences, the use of iron, copper and other metals was widely prevalent in the Indian sub-continent at a fairly early period, reflecting the advancement that this part of the world had made.
- Indian History is as old as the History of Mankind. Artefacts dating back to as much as 500,000 years reveal so much about the Indian History.
- One of the finest examples of prehistoric art is The Bhimbetka hillocks (40 kms South of Bhopal) made of sandstone. Bhimbetka remains a great witness to the growth and expansion of mankind's civilization, through its numerous weapons carved out of rocks, tools, ceramics, and bones.
- The rock paintings are the greatest assets the natives of Bhimbetka left behind. These rock paintings depict the achievements and the hardships of the native man. These paintings in Bhimbetka exemplify the dreadful hostilities among humans.
- Palaeolithic cave art in Tamil Nadu (**Alampadi, Kombaikadu, Settavarai, Padiyendhal, Kilvalvai, and Nehanurpattu**) could be 30000-10000 years old. Nilgiri Hills (**Kumittapathi, Mavadaippu and Karikkiyur**) and Andipatti Hills (Theni district) in Tamil Nadu; and, **Hiregudda** (near Badami) in Karnataka, also have many sites with cave paintings of that age.
- Odisha is loaded with many cave paintings dating from late Pleistocene onwards. Significant ones are rock shelters of **Gudahandi** (Kalahandi district) and rock paintings of **Yogimatha** (Nuapada district). Odisha rocks are enigmatic due to its many distinctive geometric patterns and shapes used in making them.
- It indicates that the pre-historic India is full of modifications and changes. However, it was towards the end of the fourth millennium BC, that India emerged as a region of highly progressive civilization.



Bhimbetka Rock

The Indus Valley Civilization

- The History of India begins with the birth of the Indus Valley Civilization, which is also known as Harappan Civilization. It flourished around 3300—1300 BC, in the western part of South Asia, which is today a part of Pakistan and Western India.
- The Indus Valley Civilization can be split into three phases: The **Early Harappan Phase** from 3300 to 2600 BCE, the **Mature Harappan Phase** from 2600 to 1900 BCE, and the **Late Harappan Phase** from 1900 to 1300 BCE.
- Due to its location beside the Indus River, there were many cities and small towns as well as farms and villages along the Indus Valley.
- Water is one of the basic needs. All these towns, villages, farms and cities were built on the banks of the Indus River as the people relied heavily on the water and food that the river offered.



Spread of Indus Valley Civilization, present-day Pakistan and parts of India.

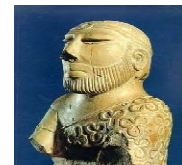
- An area of 1.25 million kilometres was covered by these towns, cities, villages and farms. The main cities in the Indus Valley were Mohenjo-Daro, Lothal and Harappa.
- Among Egypt, Mesopotamia, India and China, the Indus valley was the largest home of ancient urban civilizations. The facts about this civilization remained under the veil till 1920s. They appeared when the Archaeological Department of India carried out excavations in the Indus valley wherein the ruins of the two old cities, viz. Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa were unearthed.
- The ruins and remains of buildings and other things such as household articles, weapons of war, gold and silver ornaments, seals, pottery wares, toys etc., show that some four to five thousand years ago a highly developed Civilization prospered in this region.
- Important innovations of this civilization include standardized weights and measures, seal carving, and use of metals like copper, bronze, lead, and tin.
- Harappans are known for **seal carving**— the cutting of patterns into the bottom face of a **seal**, a small, carved object used for stamping. They used these distinctive and special seals for the identification of property and to stamp clay on trade goods. Seals—adorned with animal figures, such as tigers, elephants and water buffalos—have been one of the most commonly discovered artefacts in Indus Valley cities.
- The Indus River Valley Civilization is also known as a Bronze Age society; people of the ancient Indus River Valley developed new techniques in **metallurgy**—the science of working with metals like copper, bronze, lead and tin. Harappans also excelled in art. They had intricate handicraft products made of the semi-precious gemstone Carnelian.
- A priest-king displaying beard and patterned robe is one of the finest figures found among the various gold, terracotta and stone figurines.
- Another figurine in bronze, known as the *Dancing Girl*, is only 11 centimetres high and shows a female figure in a dancing pose that suggests the presence of some dance form enjoyed by members of the civilization.
- Animals such as cows, bears, monkeys, and dogs are included in terracotta works. In addition to figurines, the Indus River Valley people are believed to have interest in wearing ornaments, as many necklaces, bangles, and other ornaments were found during excavation.
- The Indus valley civilization was basically an urban civilization and the people lived in well-planned cities and well-built towns, which were also the centres for trade.
- The ruins of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa show that these cities were well planned, scientifically laid, and well looked after. The roads were wide and a well-developed drainage system was set up. The houses were made of baked bricks and had two or more storeys.
- By 2600 BCE, small Early Harappan communities had developed into large urban centres. These cities include Harappa, Ganeriwala, and Mohenjo-Daro in modern-day Pakistan and Dholavira, Rakhigarhi, Ropar, Kalibangan and Lothal in modern-day India. In total, more than 1,052 cities and settlements have been found, mainly in region of the Indus River and its tributaries.



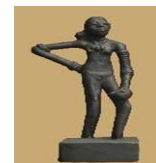
Archeological Remains with Fire-baked bricks, a hall-mark of the IVC



Indus Civilization Seals and script



Indus Priest King Statue



Statue of Dancing Girl



Terracotta Painted Bull

- **Mohenjo-Daro** is believed to be raised in the twenty-sixth century BCE; it flourished as not only the largest city of the Indus Valley Civilization but one of the world's earliest major urban centres. **Mohenjo-Daro**, located west of the Indus River in the Larkana District, was one of the most sophisticated and trendy cities of the period, with advanced engineering and town planning.
- **Harappa** was a fortified city in modern-day Pakistan that is believed to have been home to as many as 23,500 residents. The houses were sculpted with flat roofs made of red sand and clay. The city spread over 150 hectares—370 acres—and had fortified administrative and religious centres alike in Mohenjo-Daro.
- Both cities had many similarities. Similar organization and featured citadels, central areas in a city that were heavily fortified—protected with defensive military structures. Additionally, both cities were situated along the Indus River. This structure provided people with safety and allowed them to have a look down the river and see into the distance. This helped them to be secure from the outside invasions.
- The remains of the Indus Valley Civilization cities indicate a peculiar and remarkable organization; there were well-planned wastewater drainage and an organised trash collection systems and possibly even public baths and granaries, which are storehouses for keeping grain.
- Artisans and merchants were the main inhabitants of the civilization. The urban planning was superb. Hygiene or religious ritual were on the top list of the municipal government.
- The highly civilized Harappans knew the art of growing crops such as cereals, and wheat and barley constituted their staple food. They consumed vegetables and fruits grown by themselves. The people of Harappan Civilization were also Non-Vegetarian and ate mutton, pork and eggs as well.
- Evidences also show that they wore cotton as well as woollen clothes. By 1500 BC, the Harappan culture came to an end.
- The Indus script is still not deciphered, and as a result, little is known about the Indus River Valley Civilization's systems of governance.
- Little is known about Harappan religion and language. Many seals and some texts on clay and stone tablets unearthed at Harappa—which have been carbon dated 3300-3200 BCE—contain trident-shaped, plant-like markings that seems to be written from right to left.
- Many possible reasons responsible for the end of the civilization can be; due to climate change, natural disasters and migration. Various elements of the Indus Civilization are found in later cultures, suggesting the civilization could have ended suddenly due to some invasion.
- According to some historians, the changes in river patterns caused the large civilization to disperse into smaller communities called **late Harappan cultures**.
- Among various causes of the decay of Indus Valley Civilization are the recurrent floods and other natural calamities like earthquake, etc.



Urban-planning in Indus Valley Civilization

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