

The Indus Valley Civilization

3



Lesson Focus

- Origin
- Social life-family, community
- Town Planning
- Occupations
- Trade
- Art and Architecture
- Religious Beliefs
- Decline

The word 'civilization' means an organized culture of many communities or a people or of a nation. It is to raise people from a primitive state to an advanced and ordered stage of development in politics, society and culture. Civilization is commonly used to mean people who are not savages or barbarians but possess refinement and culture and have a high level of cultural and technological development. The villages of the Neolithic age grew into towns and cities around rivers between 4000 BCE and 600 BCE. This is the period when the first civilizations came into existence in the world.

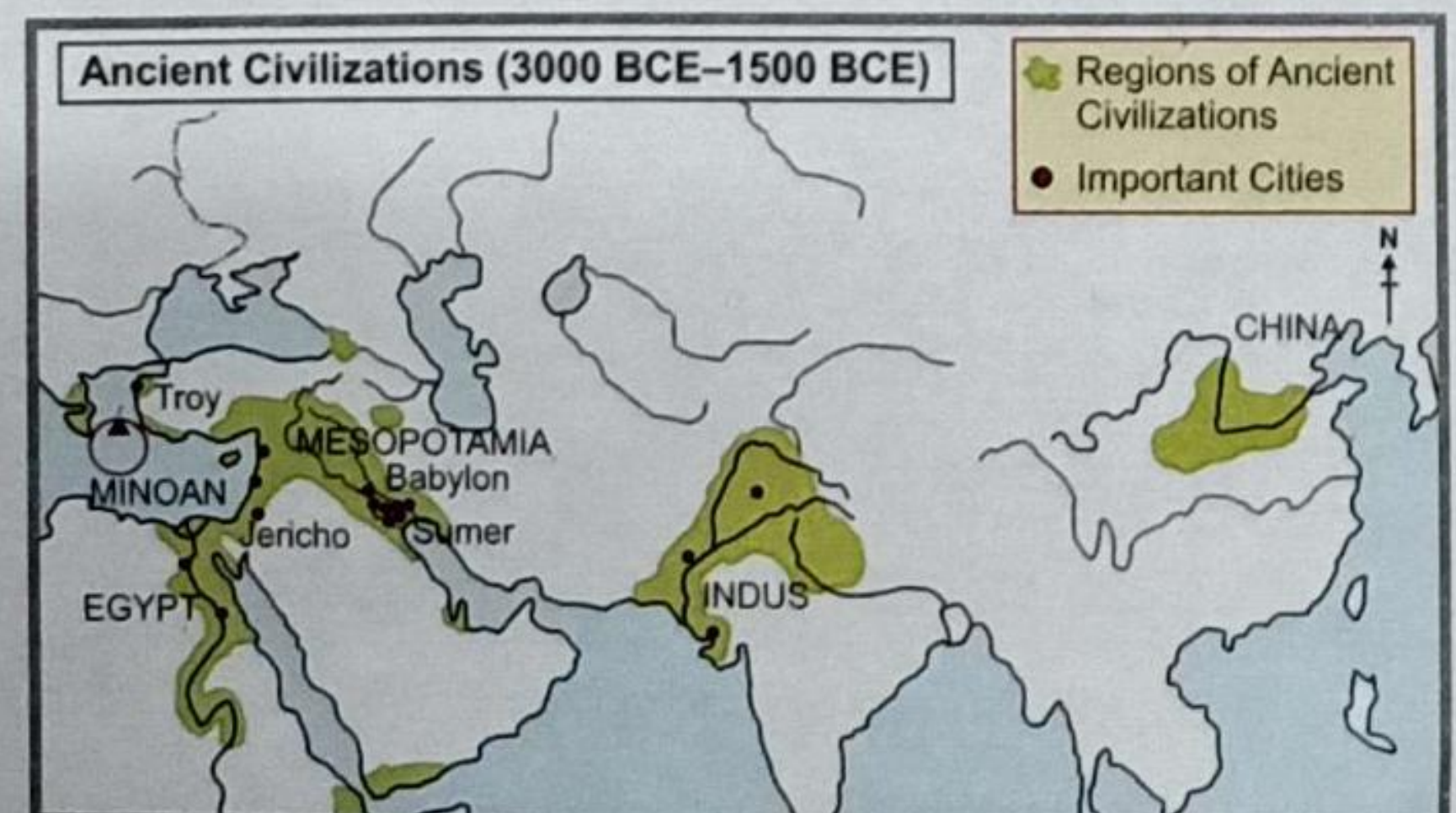
The first civilizations or ancient civilizations are called **River Valley civilizations** because they grew near river banks where it was conducive for agriculture. Rivers served as a constant source of water for agriculture and the soil on their banks was highly fertile due to recurrent floods. Besides, the rivers were an easy mode of travel by boats and rafts.

Another important feature of the River Valley civilizations was that they

invented and used bronze metal alloy for making tools and implements, hence these civilizations are also called **Bronze civilizations**.

The early River Valley civilizations were:

- The Egyptian civilization in the valley of the Nile river
- The Mesopotamian civilization in the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers
- The Indus Valley or Harappan civilization on the banks of the Indus river and its tributaries
- The Chinese civilization in the valleys of the Yangtze river and the Hwang-Ho river or the Yellow river



The regions of ancient civilizations

alloy: a substance that is a mixture of two or more metals

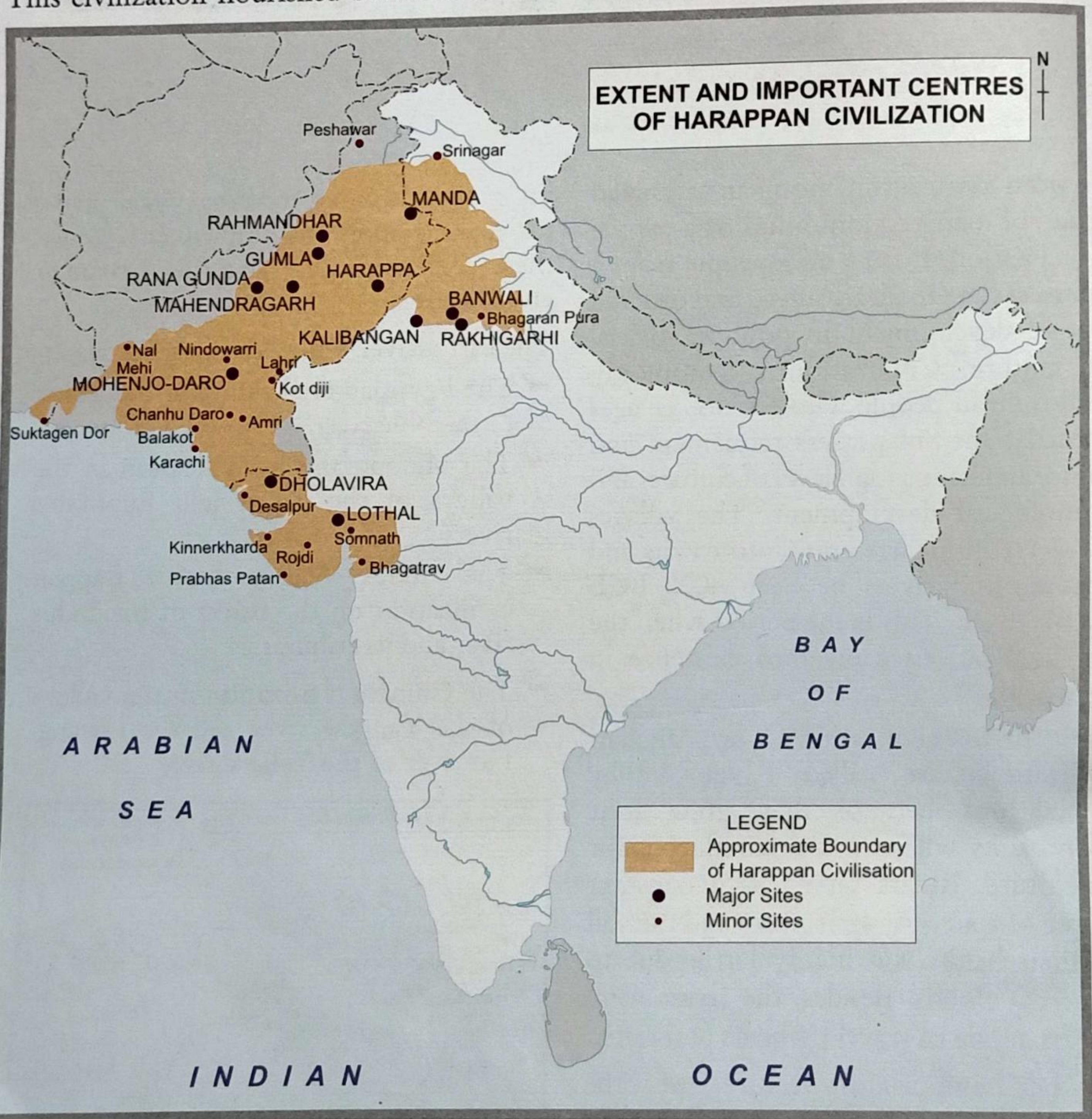
INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION

European countries are often cited as examples of social and economic development and good urban planning. But can you imagine that about 4500 years ago, people were living in well-planned cities and buildings in the **Indus Valley civilization** in the Indian subcontinent? This civilization flourished between 3300

BCE and 1800 BCE on the banks of the Indus river and its tributaries. It had advanced urban culture and its social and economic systems were well-developed.

Geographical Footprint

The Indus Valley civilization was given its name after the first discovery of its main cities on the banks of the Indus river. So far, about 250 such sites have been



Extent and important centres of Harappan civilization

discovered in present-day Pakistan and parts of northern and western India.

The Indus Valley civilization was the largest among the four ancient civilizations. Two main Indus cities—**Harappa** and **Mohenjo-daro**—were unearthed in the early 1920s in present day Pakistan. The Indus Valley civilization is also known as the **Harappan civilization** as Harappa was the first city to be unearthed.

Daya Ram Sahni and Rakhal Das Bandyopadhyay, both working with the Archaeological Survey of India in the early 1920s, played a leading role in the discovery of the two main cities. Some of the discovered Harappan sites are: Shortugai (Afghanistan), Manda (near Jammu), Ropar (Punjab), Banawali and Rakhigarhi (Haryana), Alamgirpur (Uttar Pradesh), Kalibangan (Rajasthan), and Amri, Chanhu-daro and Kot Dijian (Pakistan). Coastal settlements of the Indus Valley civilization extended from Sutkagan Dor in western Balochistan to Lothal in Gujarat.

Well-planned Cities

The advanced architecture of the Harappans is seen in their impressive dockyards, granaries, large baths, flat-roofed brick houses, warehouses and protective walls. But, no large monumental structures were found in the Indus cities.

The well-planned cities were laid out in a grid-like formation. They had broad roads and streets. The roads ran parallel to each other and cut at right angles. They were rounded at the corners for easy turning of carts. Different types of houses lined both sides of the streets.

grid-like: a design in which straight lines cross each other to form squares

citadel: fort on high ground in a city where people could go in case of an attack

Know This

The Sindhi word Mohenjo-daro means 'mound of the dead'. It is a combination of three Sindhi words—*moan* or *moen* meaning 'dead', *jo* meaning 'of' and *daro* meaning 'tomb'. The Mohenjo-daro ruins lie in Larkana district of the Sindh province of Pakistan.

Citadel: The cities were divided into two parts: the upper part in the west was a fortress-type area called the **citadel** and the lower part in the east was called the **lower city**. The lower city surrounded the citadel. The citadel was built on a raised platform of mud and bricks. Public buildings, granaries, baths and quarters for important persons were built within the citadel. A wall surrounded the citadel and contained notches from which people could look out and defend the area. In Mohenjo-daro, craft workshops have also been unearthed in both the citadel and the lower city.

The Great Bath: The citadel in Mohenjo-daro had a large rectangular tank called the **Great Bath**. The tank with six entrances resembled a large swimming pool. It had



A corridor of the citadel at Dholavira

KRISHNAGAR ACADEMY.

CLASS - VI, SUBJECT - HISTORY.

CHAPTER - THE INDUS VALLEY

DATE : 02.06.2020 CIVILIZATION.

PART-I

SHORT QUESTIONS BASED ON TEXT

- Q1. Define the word 'Civilization'
- Q2. The villages of the Neolithic age grew into towns and cities around rivers between _____ and _____.
- Q3. Why the first civilizations are also called the River valley civilizations?
- Q4. Name any two Early River valley civilizations.
- Q5. Name the two main cities of the Indus Valley civilization.
- Q6. Name two historians who played a leading role in the discovery of the two main cities of Indus Valley.
- Q7. Name some of the discovered Harappan sites.
- Q8. Write the extension of the coastal settlements of the Indus valley civilization.

In the next class that is on 06.06.2020 (SATURDAY) we shall begin from well-planned cities following the answers of the above questions of Part-I.