

Relation of Mahabharat and Indus Valley Civilisations at Glance

Satya Prakash Dikshit¹, Dinesh Mandot²

¹ (Research Scholar, Arunodaya University, Papum Pare, Arunachal Pradesh)

² (Professor, Arunodaya University, Papum Pare, Arunachal Pradesh)

Abstract:

Mahabharata, the great Indian epic attributed to Sage Ved Vyas. It is containing a vast mythological history of ancient Bharat. It is considered to contain 8,000 verses which ultimately counted as 1,00,000 now-a-days. The epic had been recited from years to years orally from generations. The great wars fought at that time, in absence of scientific evidences, history becomes Mythology. This brings challenge of reality or rather existence of any hisrocity within it. The possible period of the epic, which is the region of Hastinapur(29.09 N and 79.03 E) was predicted as 600 BC to 5600 BC according to research scholars at different time and streams.[1]However, after findings of Mohanjo-Daro mound inof Indus valley, some excavations were done by Archeological Survey of India (ASI) from 1950 to 1952, also till date and interestingly there were findings of painted Grey ware, copper arrow-heads, iron slag, Bones of pigs, Horses, Cattles. The finding of the excavations was leading towards positive direction to the surprisethe timings of this Epic (as described in the Epic)matches with the timings of Indus valleycivilization timings (Starting from Baluchistan 6500 BCE and flourished in Indus valley from 3300 BCE to 1300 BCE) for which Harappa (30.37 N and 72.52 E) and Mohenjo-Daro (27.32 N and 68.13 E) was the major cities in the range of only 517 and 986 Kilometers respectively only. These facts have to be seen in concurrence to set the real finding about the Mahabharata and Scientifically proven civilizations.

Keywords: Mahabharata, Mythology, History, Indus valley, Archeology

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I. Introduction

The Epic: Mahabharata as told by Ved Vyas:

Mahabharata as attributed to the sage Ved Vyasa, is a vast epic that narrates the story of the Kuru dynasty and the Kurukshetra War. It revolves around the conflict between two groups of cousins; Pandavas and the Kauravas, for the throne of Hastinapura. The Bhagavad Gita, also a sacred Sanatan scripture being a part of the teachings in starting of the war. Furthermore, India has regional epics that reflect the cultural diversity of the nation. These epics of India serve as repositories of history, mythology, philosophy, and moral teachings. They offer profound insights into the Indian psyche, societal values, and spiritual aspirations. The Mahabharat is considered historical and mythological narratives, blending elements of history, legend, and spirituality. Here's an overview of their historical and mythological aspects.

The Empire at Mahabharata and its neighbors(3500 BCE-2300BCE):

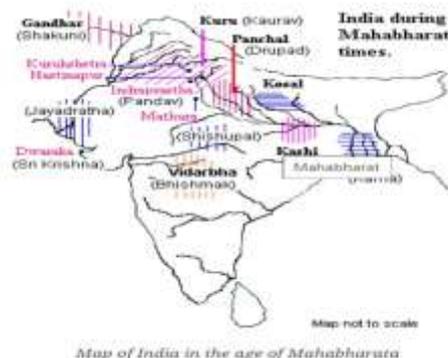


Figure1: States at Time of Mahabharat [1] Pg.-56

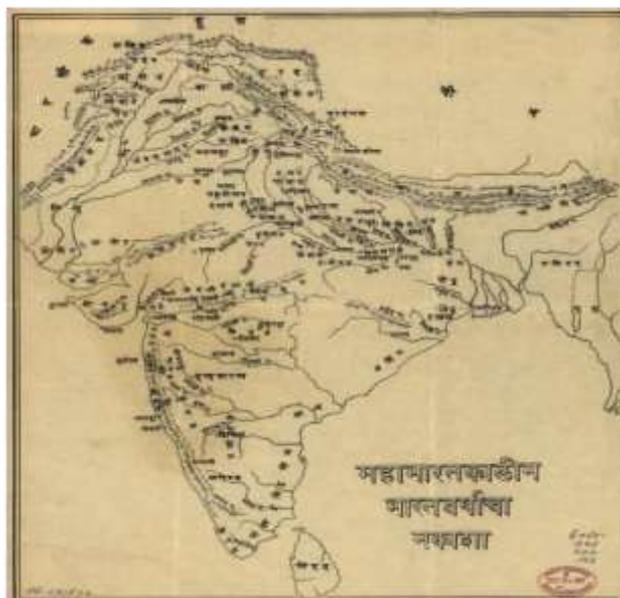


Figure 2: Map of Kuru dynasty; Source Library of Congress 2006

The Linage:

The lineage of Yadu and Kuru vansh is describe as below:

Prajapati Daksh – Aditi- Vivshwan – Manu – Ila – Pururava- Aayu- Nahush- Yayati- (wife- Devyani)-

Yadu (Yadu vansh)

Prajapati Daksh – Aditi- Vivshwan – Manu – Ila – Pururava- Aayu- Nahush- Yayati- (wife- Sharmishtha)- **Puru(Paurav Vansh)**– janamjay-Prachinwan-Sanyati-Ahampati-Sarvbhom-Jayatsen-Arachin-Mahabaom-Ayutnayi-Akrodh-Devatithi-Rrich-Rriksh-Matinaar-Tansu-Elin- Dushyanta(Shakuntala)- Bharat-Bhumanyu-Suhotra-Hasti(Named Hastinapur)- Vikunthan-Ajmeed-Sanvaran-Kuru (**Paurav** Turned **Kuru** at this Stage)-Vidurath-Arunwan-Parikshit-Bhimsen-Prayashrawa. After that the lineage falls apart in two disputed family trees as under:**Kauravas**: Shantanu-(Devvrat later Bhisma)- Vichitravirya and (Chitrangad-Died Early)-Dhrithrastra-Kauravs(Duryodhana, Dushasnaa and other 99 sons and daughter Dushalaa (married to Jaydratha).

Pandavas: Shantanu-(Devvrat later Bhisma)- Vichitravirya and (Chitrangad-Died Early)-Pandu-Pandavas (Yudhisthir, Bhim, Arjun, Nakul, Sahdev).

The Mahabharata begins with Maharaj Shantanu who accented the throne of Hastinapur. His son with first wife Ganga, Devvratplays a major role in establishing the empire and becoming Bhisma from Devvrat at the time of Shantanu second wedding with Satyawati. The legacy of Guru Drone, Guru Kripacharya, Mahatma Vidur were the interwoven characters of Mahabharat. After the demise of Pandu, Dhrithrastra became the king. The real dispute begins with five Pandavas,among which Yudhisthir, Bhim and Arjun who were sons of Pandu and Kunti (daughter of Kuntal Dynasty) and Nakul and Sahdev were sons of Madri (daughter of Madra Dynasty) and Kauravas(Duryodhan, Dushasana and others 99 Sons of Dhrithrastra and Gandhari (daughter of Gandhar Dynasty) along with a daughter Dushala, who was married to Jaidrath later. The prince of Gandhar later King Shakuni is also a major Character for being responsible for the war. While discussing Mahabharat, Lord Krishna can't be bypassed since he has a huge presence in this history from Parikshit to Kshemaka. Mahabharat possesses a number of gods, demigods, celestial weapons, divine interventions, and cosmic occurrences. It explores complex moral dilemmas, ethical choices, and the consequences of human actions. Characters like Krishna, Karn, Duryodhana, and Draupadi are revered and studied asarchetypes.

[6]Mahabharata: Adi parv-Adhyay 90-shloka 7-69

The War:

The Mahabharat war was fought at the plains of Kurukshetra in 18 days. The rules at that were followed and surprisingly the war starts at sun rise and ends at the sunset. After the sunset the warriors even go to the enemy camps. As per scriptures, 18 Akshohini(seven from Pandava side and eleven from Kaurav side) army were in fighting for the 18 days and got destroyed only leaving five Pandavas and three kaurava-side fighters namely- Guru Kripacharya, Ashwathama, and Kritverma. The son of Abhimanyu, Parikshit was saved by Shri Krishna, who was also attacked by Ashwathama in womb. After the end of war Yudhisthir became the king.

The States, who fought in the war:

Rajya supporting Pandavas: total 7 Akshohini warriors:

Satyaki, Chedi King Dhristaketu, Magadh King Jarasangh's son, Pandya King, Drupada King, Matsaya King Virat each with one Akshohini.

Rajya supporting Kauravas: total 11 Akshohini warriors:

Bhagdautt, Bhurishrava, Madra King Shalya, Kritverma, Sindhu King Jayadrath, yavan, shaka, and Kamboj, Mahismati King Neel, Avanti King Vind and Anuvind, Kekaya King

Timing for the war:

Before going to estimate a probable date of the Kurukshetra War which was believed to be happened in transition between Dwapara Yuga and Kali Yuga, it is customary to investigate the historicity of the Mahabharata.

Historical references [5] (Dixit, 1968, Part II, p. 55) calculated the period of Aryabhata to be 499 CE. So, Kali Yuga was started from 3102 BCE. This observation helped the scholars to find the date of Mahabharata war around 3000 BCE. Other dates are clustered around 2500 BCE and 800 BCE and even the relevant date was calculated by Dr. P.V. Vartak as 5561 BCE. The recent data include 1478 BCE by Iyengar (2003), 2559 BCE by Balkrishna (2003), 3067 BCE by N. Achar (2003) and 1793 BCE by A.K. Bhatnagar (2017)

Thus, the possible period of the epic, which is the region of Hastinapur (29.09 N and 79.03 E) was predicted as 600 BC to 5600 BC according to research scholars at different time and streams. [3] Gangopadhyaya Pg. 04

Magnitude of Akshohini Sena in Mahabharata:

s.n o.	Ranks	No.s in Rank	Solider	Horse	Horse Man	Rath	Rathi	Elephant	Fighter	Total
1	Patti		5	1	1	1	2	1	4	12
2	Sena Mukh	3	15	3	3	3	6	3	12	36
3	Gulm	3	45	9	9	9	18	9	36	108
4	Gan	3	135	27	27	27	54	27	108	324
5	Vahini	3	405	81	81	81	162	81	324	972
6	Prutna	3	1215	243	243	243	486	243	972	2,916
7	Chamu	3	3645	729	729	729	1458	729	2916	8,748
8	Anikani	3	10935	2187	2187	2187	4374	2187	8748	26,244
9	Akshauhini	10	109350	21870	21870	21870	43740	21870	87480	2,62,440
10	Total	18		393660		393660		393660		
								Solider		109350
								Horse Rider		21870
								Rathi fighter		43740
								Elephant Fighter		87480
								One Akshauhini		2,62,440
							18	Akshauhini warriors		47,23,920

Table 1: The calculation for the warriors of 18 Akshohini Sena. [6] Adi Parv-Adhyay 2-shloka 15-23

The conclusion of war and Empire after Pandavas:

The war ended on eighteen days after the demise of Duryodhana ran and hide in a lake. Finally, Pandava won the battle. Ruling certain years Pandavas handed over to Parikshit and went to Himalayas.

II. The Indus valley Civilization

Start of Excavations of Indus valley - Harappa and Mohanjo-daro-ASI

The large urban centres of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa very likely grew to containing between 30,000 and 60,000 individuals, and during the civilization's florescence, the population of the subcontinent grew to between 4–6 million people. During this period the death rate increased as well, for close living conditions of humans and domesticated animals led to an increase in contagious diseases. According to one estimate, the population of the Indus civilization at its peak may have been between one and five million. The Indus Valley Civilisation (IVC) extended from Pakistan's Baluchistan in the west to India's western Uttar Pradesh in the east, from northeastern Afghanistan in the north to India's Gujarat state in the south. The largest number of sites are in Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir states in India, and Sindh, Punjab,

and Baluchistan provinces in Pakistan. Coastal settlements extended from Sustagen Dorin Western Baluchistan to Lothalin Gujarat. An Indus Valley site has been found on the Oxus River at Shortugai in northern Afghanistan, in the Gomol River valley in Name Extent Alexander Cunningham, the first director general of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), interpreted a Harappan stamp seal in 1875. R. D. Banerji, an officer of the ASI, visited Mohenjo-Daro in 1919–1920, and again in 1922–1923, postulating the site's far-off antiquity northwestern Pakistan, at Manda, Jammu on the Beas River near Jammu, India, and at Alamgirpur on the Hindon River, only 28 km (17 mi) from Delhi. The southern most site of the Indus valley civilisation is Daimabad in Maharashtra. Indus Valley sites have been found most often on rivers, but also on the ancient sea coast, for example, Balakot, and on islands, for example, Dhola Vir.

Finding of IVC Excavations:

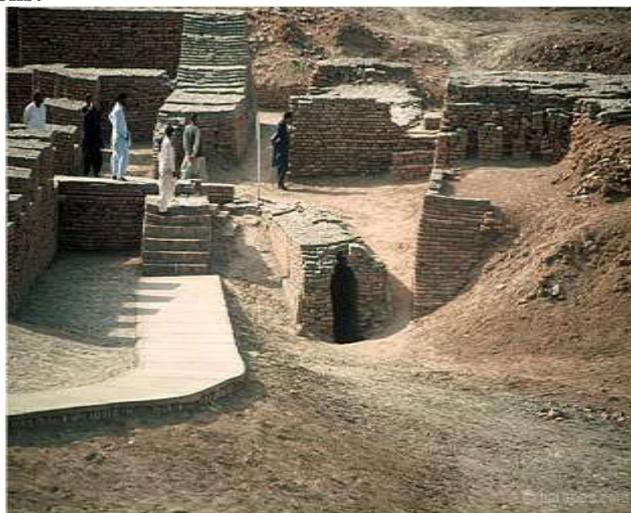


Figure 3: Site at Harappa Great Bath Drain Excavations, Harappa.com [4]

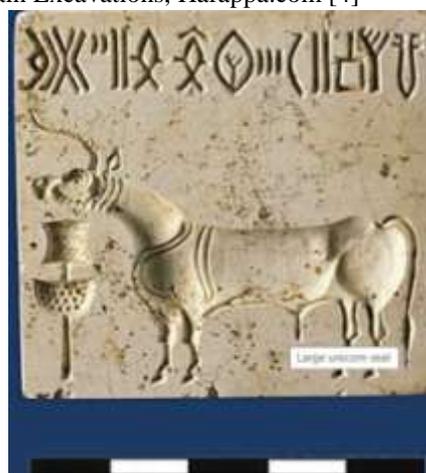


Figure 4: Bead Necklace and Unicorn Seal [Harappa.com]

Region of Indus valley civilization –



Figure 5: Indus Valley Civilisation; Source ASI

Established time line of Indus valley civilization ASI:

Around 6500 BCE, agriculture emerged in Baluchistan, on the margins of the Indus alluvium. In the following millennia, settled life made inroads into the Indus plains, setting the stage for the growth of rural and urban human settlements. The more organized sedentary life in turn led to a net increase in the birth rate.

The Harappan civilisation finding can be represented in the following sequences:

Table 1. General Chronology of the Indus Valley Tradition
Integration Era
Harappan Phase 2600 to 1900 BC
Harappa: Period 3C, Final 2200-1900 BC
Localization Era
Late Harappan Phase ca. 1900 to 1300 BC
Harappa: Periods 4 and 5 1900-1700 BC
Harappa: Period 3B, Middle 2450-2200 BC = Nausharo, Period III
Harappa: Period 3A, Initial 2600-2450 BC = Nausharo, Period II
Regionalization Era
Early Harappan (several Phases) ca. 5500 to 2600 BC
Harappa: Period 2, Kot Diji Phase 2800-2600 BC = Nausharo, Period I, = Mehrgarh, Period VII (Kot Diji Phase)
Harappa: Period 1, A & B, Ravi Phase 3300-2800 BC = Mehrgarh, Period IV to VI 3500-2800 BC
Mehrgarh, Period III 4800-3500 BC Mehrgarh, Period II 5500-4800 BC
Early Food Producing Era
Neolithic ca. 7000 to 5500 BC
Mehrgarh, Period 1, Aceramic 7000-5500 BC

Figure 6: Timeline of IVC [Early developments of Art Etc.Harappa.com/Indus 3[4]

III. Conclusion

By the timeline from our Mahabharata books and scientific historical findings, we can conclude that the Mahabharat epoch and Indus Vally civilizations overlaps each other in certain area like time of occurrence, geographically, social values described and seen in archeological evidences, sudden disappearances of the IVC, after Mahabharata war conclusion possibilities.

- Occurrence: both Mahabharata and IVC timings are within the same 7000 BCE-1300
- Geographically: The Maps of happening of Mahabharata and IVC may be considered on the 500 kilometers both side of Kurukshetra or considering center as Kurukshetra encircling.
- Sociologically: The Moral values, Architectural knowledge to build the planned cities like Harappa and others like Hastinapur and Indraprastha.
- Sudden Disappearance of the Civilization: the possibilities of sudden disappearance may be considered as a natural calamity or the war-end effects of Mahabharata.

Concluding, the more and more studies to be done in the reference of composition, Symbolism, Metaphoric, Historic events will increase knowledge, critical analysis, cultural preservation, cross-cultural understanding, educational applications, and personal growth. These outcomes will contribute to a deeper appreciation and relevance of this era in contemporary society.

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