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Landscapes of Urbanisation and De-urbanisation: Integrating Site Location Datasets from Northwest India to Investigate Changes in the Indus Civilisation's Settlement Distribution



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Abstract

Archaeological survey data plays a fundamental role in studies of long-term socio-cultural change, particularly those that examine the emergence of social complexity and urbanism. Re-evaluating survey datasets reveals lacunae in survey coverage, encourages the reconsideration of existing interpretations, and makes it possible to integrate the results of multiple projects into large scale analyses that address a broad range of research questions. This paper re-evaluates settlement site location reports that relate to the major phases of the Indus civilisation, whose Mature Harappan period (c. 2600-1900 B.C.) is characterised by numerous village settlements and a small number of larger urban centres. By the end of the Mature Harappan period, people appear to have left these cities, and a de-nucleated pattern of settlement is evident in the subsequent Late Harappan period. Survey data from the plains of northwest India are key to understanding this process of de-urbanisation, as it has been argued that there was an increase in the region's settlement density as the cities declined. Assembling site locations from multiple surveys into an integrated relational database makes it possible to conduct geographical information systems (GIS)-based analyses at larger scales. This paper finds that the number of settlements on the plains of northwest India increased between c.1900 and 700 B.C., and that some settings within this region were favoured for settlement, resulting in new landscapes of de-urbanisation. These results lay the foundation for future research that will ask whether this shift in settlement location occurred at the expense of alternative social processes, such as movement to highland areas, fortification of nodes of long

distance exchange, and political consolidation. More broadly, investigating the Indus civilisation's landscapes has the potential to reshape models of social complexity by revealing how it emerged and transformed across extensive and varied environmental settings.

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The phenomena of accelerated urbanisation is the main culprit, wherein besides bringing higher standard of living, it has also brought problems, as growth of dense and unplanned residential areas, environmental pollution, non-availability of services and amenities, solid waste etc. Remote sensing satellite data is suitable for urban land use mapping to get detail and up-to-date information for environmental management. Random forest classification of urban landscape using Landsat archive and ancillary data: Combining seasonal maps with decision level fusion *Applied Geography*, 2014 DOI:10.1016/j.apgeog.2014.01.003. [18]. Patterns of Urbanization and Environmental Quality in the Context of Indian Cities *Environment and Urbanization ASIA*, 2013 DOI:10.1177/0975425313510768. [21]. Landscapes of Urbanization and De-Urbanization: A Large-Scale Approach to Investigating the Indus Civilization's Settlement Distributions in Northwest India. Survey data play a fundamental role in studies of social complexity. Integrating the results from multiple projects into large-scale analyses encourages the reconsideration of existing interpretations. This approach is essential to more. This paper examines the interpretation that northwest India's settlement density increased as Indus cities declined by developing an integrated site location database and using this pilot database to conduct large-scale geographical information systems (GIS) analyses. It finds that settlement density in northwestern India may have increased in particular areas after ca. The Indus Civilization, therefore, provides a unique opportunity to understand how an ancient society coped with diverse and varied ecologies and change in the fundamental environmental parameters. This paper integrates research carried out as part of the Land, Water and Settlement project in northwest India between 2007 and 2014. Adam S. Green, Cameron A. Petrie *Landscapes of Urbanization and De-Urbanization: A Large-Scale Approach to Investigating the Indus Civilization's Settlement Distributions in Northwest India*, *Journal of Field Archaeology* 43, no.44 (May 2018): 284–299. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00934690.2018.1464332>. Carla Lancelotti, John P. Hart 'Not all that burns is wood'. Until now, studies of urbanization in India have been based only on official urban figures as provided by Census surveys. This approach has inevitably introduced several avoidable biases into the picture, distortions which are further compounded by numerous regional inter-Census adjustments. 1With increasing attention being paid to India's economy after the impressive global surge of the country's top industrial corporations, a new perspective has emerged on the urbanization in the subcontinent. It now focuses on the metropolitanization process associated with the opening up of the economy and the concomitant high economic growth.