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## Concept of City (Definition of City) by Various Scholars & the Harappan Culture

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**Abstract:** *During Harappan age the concept of city defines the big storage houses, written language and monumental ceremonial centers. Different scholars distinguish the city from contemporary villages of a certain culture. In these some foreign scholars also taken part but in Indian context the concept of city difference than its contemporary world. In India urban habitants indulge in various works with agriculture. In this research paper it is focused on these differences.*

**Keywords:** Topography, Ceremonial, Monumental, Craft Man, Merchant, Astronomy.

**Introduction:** The concept of city is hard to define. It has been said by many scholars that for the creation of a city the society must build up a surplus of food stuff. Such a surplus “was a precondition for the growth of a village into a city”<sup>1</sup> Sjoberg in 1967 defines a city as “a community of substantial size and density that shelters a

variety of non-agricultural specialists including a literate elite.<sup>2</sup> The attributes of ‘size and density’ has not been precisely defined and according to C.K. Khukhohn an urban group should possess at least two of the following features: settlement of upward of 5,000 people, a written language and monumental ceremonial centers.<sup>3</sup> But as Arnold Toynbee says, “A city is never a habitat of a crowd that has to buy food by selling something else in exchange for it. Close settlements do not constitute a city unless the inhabitants of the buildup area are citizens in the non-arterial sense of having a corporate social life”<sup>4</sup>. So he is right in saying that more increase in the population of a village would not turn a village into a city. V. Gorden Childe lays down the following ten abstract criteria to distinguish the city from contemporary village.<sup>5</sup>

- (1) In point of size the first cities must have been more extensive

- and densely populated than on other previous settlements.
- (2) All cities must have accommodated in addition non-food-producing classes, full-time specialist craftsman, transport workers, merchants, officials and priests-supported by the surplus produced by peasants.
  - (3) Each primary producer paid over his tiny surplus to a deity or divine king who thus concentrated the surplus.
  - (4) Monumental buildings distinguish each city from the villages.
  - (5) Priests, civil and military leaders and officials absorbed a major share of the concentrated surplus and thus formed the 'ruling class', which did confer substantial benefits upon their subjects in the way of planning and organization.
  - (6) Writing was a significant trait of city.
  - (7) The predictive sciences like arithmetic, geometry and astronomy was known to the laisneed class.
  - (8) Artist-craftsman-full-time sculptors, painters or seal engravers began to carve model or draw according to sophisticated styles.
  - (9) A part of concentrated surplus was paid to import raw material not available locally. Hence regular foreign trade over quite long distance was feature of all city.
  - (10) The city was a community to which a craftsman could belong politically as well as economically.
- According to K.V. Soundara Rajan the base of city is : (1) its topographical advantage (2) high consumer potential (3) unquestioned cultural, religious or spiritual sanctity (4) where civil control is even otherwise, well established; which is self governing and therefore not directly linked with a ruler or a political center.
- Rural settlements on the other hand, are chiefly concerned with primary production, be it agriculture, fishery, mining, forestry etc.
- But as well as, where site size is a criteria of city and rural settlement is concerned, the cities such as Mohenjodaro

and Harappa are usually defined in terms of size but the size concept varies among the scholars or according to the lines of argument being discussed. When the size is disregarded and a city is defined on the basis of its layout or important components, such as citadel and 'lower' town as in case of Kalibangan which is 4.5 ha, but still called a metropolis and city, it becomes very confusing. It seems that other regions where such studies on settlement patterns have been done are no exception to this confusion of terminology. Robert Mcc Adams nomenclature of village, town and cities are not consistent with their size as is evident from the definitions and usage in two works<sup>7</sup>:

City : More than 1 sq. km.

Urban Centre : more than 50 ha

Small urban centre : more than 30 ha, and less than 100 ha (1 sq. km.)

Urban area : more than 30 ha

Large town : more than 10 ha

Small town : 4-10 ha

Town : 6.1 – 2.5 ha. Also more than 6 and less than 30 ha.

Village : more than 1 and less than 4 ha.

Hamlet : less than 1 ha.

Broadly speaking, Adam's definition of a village covers an area between 0.1 and 6 ha; and that of a town between 4.1 and 25 but less than 30 ha. An urban area or centre is placed between 30 and 50 ha. But less than 100 ha; and for a city the area should be more than 1 sq. km.

Phillip Kohl in his study of settlement pattern in southern central Asia classified settlements into three broad categories: villages between 0 and 5 ha; towns 5-20 ha, and cities more than 20 ha in size. Thus, Kohl's towns (5-20 ha) in Turkmenia would fit Mesopotamian 'town', 'small town' and 'large town' and the size of a 'city' in Turkmenia would equate with an 'urban' area in Mesopotamia.

For cholistan area M. Rafique Mugal categories the following sizes, fit for Proto History of that region:

Small villages : 0.1 – 5 ha.

Large villages : 5.1 – 10 ha.

Small towns : 10-1 – 20 ha.

Large towns : 20.1 – 30 ha.

Cities : 30.1 – 40 ha and more.

More than 40 ha – large city or urban centre.

Further, we will study in coming chapters about the settlement density, size and hierarchy of sites (period wise), sites

occupied area (pd. wise) and percentage, settlement locations, settlement pattern, population estimate, main works of settlements according to found material, locational grid of the major sites, core areas of Harappan culture in our area of study, extension of Bara culture inside or outside of our area, frequency of size-categories in diff.diff. districts or soil areas, site catchment area and the central sites or nodal centers and other related things.

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