

ALLIES AND ENEMIES

Mesopotamia was surrounded by other peoples and cultures. Sometimes they were allies and trading partners, but often they were rivals and enemies. Here are some of the most important ones.

ELAM

Elam lay between the river Tigris and the Zagros mountains, with its capital at Susa. Its culture goes back as far as 4000BC.

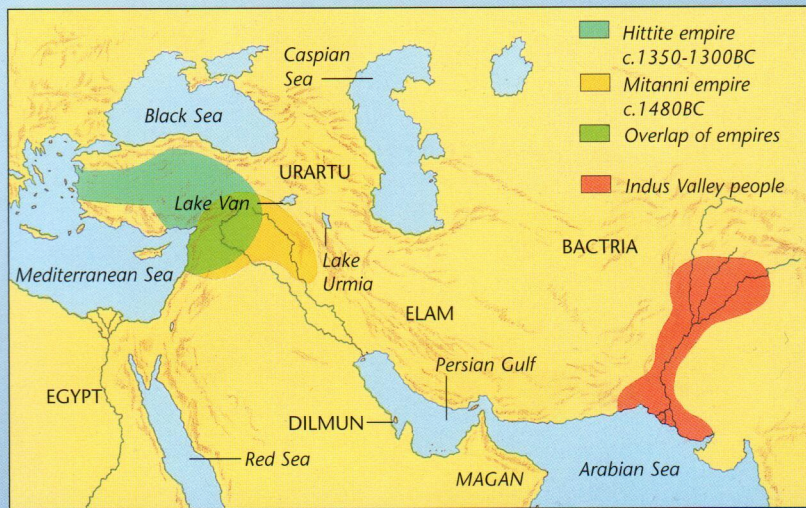
A painted beaker found in the tombs of Elam.



The Elamites were often the enemies of the peoples of Mesopotamia but they adapted cuneiform script (see page 19) and often wrote in the Sumerian language. Elam disappeared when the Persians occupied its land, but Susa remained as the Persian capital.

TRADING PARTNERS

Mesopotamians developed trading links with many places to the east, including Dilmun, Magan and Bactria. Dilmun, in the Persian Gulf, was especially important, as it was strategically placed for trade between Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley.

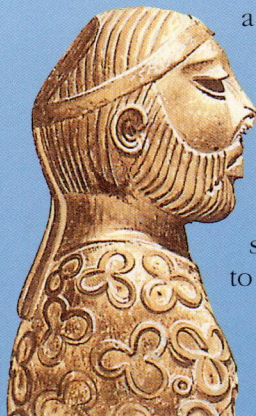


Map showing where the civilizations on these two pages were based.

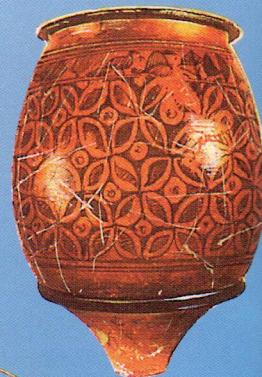
THE INDUS VALLEY

By about 2500BC, an advanced culture was flourishing in the Indus Valley. The Sumerians described it as Meluhha. Well-planned cities were built, with comfortable houses and a good drainage system. The people of the Indus Valley traded with Mesopotamia and invented their own writing, but experts still haven't managed to understand it.

This statue probably shows an Indus Valley ruler or priest.



A toy pig



A decorated pot



A toy ox

Indus Valley potters made a wide variety of objects, including cooking pots, drinking cups and children's toys.

These are carved stone seals showing gods and animals, as well as some Indus Valley writing.

