Harappans

Indus Valley
Harappa
Mohenjo-Daro
Indus Valley

- The Harappan culture existed along the Indus River in what is present day Pakistan.
- It was named after the city of Harappa. Harappa and the city of Mohenjo-Daro were important centers of the Indus valley civilization.
- This Indus Valley “civilization” flourished around 4000-1000 B.C.
Old World Civilizations

- Egypt
- Mesopotamia
- Indus Valley
- China
Comparative Timeline

- **1000 B.C.E.**
  - New and Middle Kingdom
  - Old Assyrian Kingdom
  - Chou

- **2000 B.C.E.**
  - Old Kingdom Pyramids
  - Akkadian Period
  - Shang Hsia
  - Ur Period
  - Cemetery H Culture
  - Longshan Bone Writing?

- **3000 B.C.E.**
  - Writing
  - Akkadian Period
  - Ur Period
  - Indus Valley Culture

- **4000 B.C.E.**
  - Egypt
  - Mesopotamia
  - China
  - Indus
Early Harappan-Ravi Phase
3300-2800 BC

- Trade networks linked this culture with related regional cultures and distant sources of raw materials, including lapis lazuli and other materials for bead-making.
- Domesticated crops included peas, sesame seeds, dates and cotton.
- Domestic animals also used, such as the water buffalo.
- Mud brick for building.
Earliest Phase-Ravi (3300-2800 B.C.)
Middle Harappan-Integration Era
2600-1900 BC

- By 2500 BCE, communities had been turned into cities (urban centers).
- Six such urban centers have been discovered, including: Harappa, Mohenjo Daro and Dicki in Pakistan, along with Gonorreala, Dokalingam and Mangalore in India.
Middle Harappan-Integration Era
2600-1900 BC

- In total, over 1052 cities and settlements have been found.
- Irrigation used to increase crop production and mud brick structures.
Indus Valley-Integration Era

Major Sites and Interaction Networks
Indus Tradition, Integration Era
Harappan Phase (2600-1900 B.C.)
Late Harappan-Cemetery H
1700-1300 BC

- Cremation of human remains. The bones were stored in painted pottery burial urns.
- Reddish pottery, painted in black with antelopes, peacocks etc., sun or star motifs.
- Expansion of settlements into the east.
Late Harappan-Cemetery H
1700-1300 BC

- Rice became a main crop.
- Apparent breakdown of the widespread trade of the Indus civilization.
- Continued use of mud brick for building.
Indus Valley-Cemetery H (1700-1300 BC)
Natural Resources

- The Indus Valley contained numerous natural resources that were an important part of Harappan civilization.
- Resources included:
  - Fresh water and timber.
  - Materials such as gold, silver, semi-precious stones.
  - Marine resources.
Himalayan Mountains

- continuous source of water.
- timber, animal products, and minerals, gold, silver, tin and semiprecious stones that were traded throughout the Indus Valley.
Valleys

- Cedar
- Afghanistan, a source of the deep blue lapis lazuli.
Valleys

- mined during the Indus period and traded throughout the Indus Valley and to far off Mesopotamia and Egypt.
Coast

- fishing and trading, using the monsoon winds to travel back and forth to Oman and the Persian Gulf region.
Major Cities: Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa

- The cities are well known for their impressive, organized and regular layout.
- They have well laid our plumbing and drainage system, including indoor toilets.
- Over one thousand other towns and villages also existed in this region.
Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa
Cities

The similarities in plan and construction between Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa indicate that they were part of a unified government with extreme organization.

- Both cities were constructed of the same type and shape of bricks.
- The two cities may have existed simultaneously and their sizes suggest that they served as capitals of their provinces.
- In contrast to other civilizations, burials found from these cities are not elaborate; they are more simplistic and contain few material goods.
- Remains of palaces or temples in the cities have not been found.
- No hard evidence exists indicating military activity, though the cities did contain fortifications and artifacts such as copper and bronze knives, spears, and arrowheads were recovered.
Mohenjo-Daro

- This shows the high western mound made up of a massive mud brick platform and brick houses of the Harappan period (2600 to 1900 B.C.).
- On top of the Harappan structures is a Buddhist period stupa made of mud brick that dates to the first century A.D.
The Great Bath

- The "great bath" is the earliest public water tank.
- The tank measures approximately 12 meters north-south and 7 meters wide, with a maximum depth of 2.4 meters.
- Two staircases lead down into the tank from the north and south and small sockets at the edges of the stairs are thought to have held wooden planks or treads.
- At the foot of the stairs is a small ledge with a brick edging that extends the entire width of the pool.
Great Bath
Streets

- At Mohenjo-Daro, narrow streets and alleyways are off of the major streets, leading into more private neighborhoods.
Many of the brick houses were two stories high, with thick walls and high ceilings to keep the rooms cool in the hot summer months.
Wells

- Private wells were rebuilt over many generations for large households and neighborhoods.
- This well in DK G area at Mohenjo-daro stands like a chimney because all of the surrounding earth has been removed by excavation.
Harappa Site

[Map of Harappa Site with labeled features such as Mound F, Mound AB, Cemetery H, Cemetery R37, Mound E, Southern Wall, Gateway, Old Bed of the Ravi River, Modern Harappa Town, Old Police Station, and Mughal Serai.]
Granary

- It is a brick structure that was built on a massive brick foundation over 45 meters north-south and 45 meters east-west.
Granary

- Two rows of six rooms that appear to be foundations are arranged along a central passageway that is about 7 meters wide and partly paved with baked bricks.
Granary

- Each room measures 15.2 by 6.1 meters and has three sleeper walls with air space between them.
Well

- A large public well and public bathing platforms were found in the southern part of Mound AB at Harappa.
These public bathing areas may also have been used for washing clothes as is common in many traditional cities in Pakistan and India today.
Inside the city is an area that has been identified as a crafts quarter.
Harappa: Mound E and ET

- Large quantities of manufacturing debris have been found in this area indicating the presence of workshops for making stone beads, shell ornaments, glazed faience ornaments, stone tools and possibly even gold working.
Language

- The Indus (or Harappan) people used a pictographic script.
- In addition to the pictographic signs, the seals and amulets often contain iconographic motifs, mostly realistic pictures of animals apparently worshipped as sacred, and a few cultic scenes, including anthropomorphomorphic deities and worshippers.
- This material is important to the investigation of the Harappan language and religion, which continue to be major issues.
The origins of Indus writing

- The origins of Indus writing (c. 3300-2800 BC) at Harappa.
- Some inscriptions were made on the bottom of the pottery before firing.
The origins of Indus writing

- This inscription (c. 3300 BC) appears to be three plant symbols.
# Ancient Indus

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<tr>
<td>Ancient Indus</td>
<td>![Symbol]</td>
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Gharial eating fish on molded terra-cotta tablet from Mohenjo Daro.
Seals

Silver Seal

Clay Seals
The Harappan civilization was mainly city and trade based.

Inhabitants of the Indus valley traded with Mesopotamia, southern India, Afghanistan, and Persia for gold, silver, copper, and turquoise.
The central ornament worn on the forehead of the famous "priest-king" sculpture from Mohenjo-daro appears to represent an eye bead, possibly made of gold with steatite inlay in the center.
Trade
Economy-Agriculture

- The Mesopotamian model of *irrigated farming* was used to take advantage of the fertile grounds along the Indus River.

- Earthen walls were built to control the river's annual flooding. Crops grown included wheat, barley, peas, melons, and sesame.

- This civilization was the *first to cultivate cotton* for the production of cloth. Several animals were domesticated including the *elephant* which was used for its ivory.
Terraced Fields
Elephants
Economy

- Cubical weights in graduated sizes.
- These weights were found in recent excavations at Harappa and may have been used for controlling trade and possibly for collecting taxes.
Harappan Astronomy

- The **straight streets** of the Indus cities are oriented towards the **cardinal directions**.
- Astronomical evidence dates the compilation of the Vedic calendar at around the 23rd century B.C., when the Indus civilization flourished.
Artifacts

- These egg shaped whistles may have been used for music, a tradition that is still present in rural areas of Pakistan and India.
Clay Sculpture
Figurines
Ceramics
Copper

- Copper plate with vertical sides.
Ornaments

- This collection of gold and agate ornaments (see next slide) includes objects found at both Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa.
- At the top are fillets of hammered gold that would have been worn around the forehead.
- The other ornaments include bangles, chokers, long pendant necklaces, rings, earrings, conical hair ornaments, and broaches.
- These ornaments were never buried with the dead, but were passed on from one generation to the next.
- These ornaments were hidden under the floors in the homes of wealthy merchants or goldsmiths.
Ornaments
Necklace

- Necklace from Mohenjo-Daro made from gold, agate, jasper, steatite and green stone.
- The gold beads are hollow and the pendant agate and jasper beads are attached with thick gold wire.
- Steatite beads with gold caps serve to separate each of the pendant beads.
Burial

- The body was placed inside a wooden coffin (which later decayed) and entombed in a rectangular pit surrounded with burial offerings in pottery vessels.
- The man was buried wearing a necklace of 340 graduated steatite beads and three separate pendant beads made of natural stone and three gold beads. A single copper bead was found at his waist.
Burial

- Burial of woman and infant, Harappa.
- This burial was disturbed in antiquity, possibly by ancient Harappan grave robbers.
- Besides the fact that the body is flipped and the pottery disturbed, the left arm of the woman is broken and shell bangles that would normally be found on the left arm are missing.
- The infant was buried in a small pit beneath the legs of the mother.
Collapse of Harappan “Civilization”

- The de-urbanization period of the Harappan Civilization saw the collapse and disappearance of the city phenomena in the South Asia.
- The theme for this period is localization.
- Architectural and ceramic forms changed along with the loss of writing, planned settlements, public sanitation, monumental architecture, seaborne and exotic trade, seals, and weights.

(McIntosh, 2002)
Four Theories of Collapse

- Archaeologists have offered four explanations for the collapse of the Harappan “Civilization”.
- Three are based on ecological factors: intense flooding, decrease in rain, and the dessication of the Sarasvati River.
- The fourth hypothesis is that of the Aryan Invasion, proposed by Sir R. E. Mortimer Wheeler and Stuart Piggott.
  - Image in text of “massacre” thought to support this hypothesis. Later interpreted as “peaceful” mass burial.
- Fourth largely abandoned in the 1940s in favor of a combination of factors from ecological disasters.
Civilization?

- Criticism of calling it a civilization because even though the culture is fairly homogenous, there is a lack of elite (such as high status burials).

- Thus, some researchers argue that it was actually more of a chiefdom, rather than a state-level society.
References Cited

- http://www.harappa.com/har/har0.html