

Emergence of Civilizations / Anthro 341: Notes 18
The Indus valley: Overview of Harappan civilization
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- Geographic and ecological setting
 - lowland Pakistan and northwestern India
 - A huge area compared to Mesopotamia or Egypt
 - generally hot and little rainfall
 - so most agriculture depends on river water
 - Indus floodplain is good for low-investment farming
 - rivers flood and form natural levees, as in Mesopotamia
 - making irrigation easy, with little need for large-scale canal systems until later times
 - floods come at a convenient time, like the Nile
 - bringing both water and rich silt
 - allows two different crops per year, without large investment in canals or other works
 - subsistence base was a local variant of the southwest Asian pattern
 - wheat, wheat, barley, peas, lentils
 - plus cotton and sesame
 - sheep and goats
 - plus species domesticated locally: humped cattle, buffalo, pig
 - the rivers sometimes break out of their channels and shift course, as in Mesopotamia
 - many archaeological sites are located along abandoned, dry river beds
 - rivers are mostly navigable
 - encouraging communication and exchange
 - mostly alluvial soils without mineral resources, like Mesopotamia
 - although some places have outcrops of stone useful for tools, jewelry, etc.
 - wide zones of resources roughly parallel to the rivers
 - beyond that, large expanses of desert
 - crossed by nomadic herders and traders probably since Neolithic times
 - this is a periphery similar to that surrounding Sumer and Egypt
 - a convenient natural disaster:
 - sites in the Indus floodplain are mostly buried by silt from annual flooding
 - the Ghaggar-Hakra river (sometimes called the Sarasvati river), paralleling the Indus to the southeast, had similar settlements along it
 - a shift in river courses cut off water from this river during the Mature Harappan period
 - leaving an entire region of Harappan sites stranded in the desert of northwestern India
 - where we can find them without the deep burial and water table problems along the Indus
- Relationship with surrounding areas, and with Mesopotamia
 - mountains to the west (Baluchistan) contain minerals, metals, are good for pasturing herds; occupied by nomadic herders and settled farmers
 - desert to east limits contact with rest of Asia
 - Himalayas to north also enclose the region

- these barriers enclose a huge area; not really circumscribed in Carniero's sense
- trade contact to the west by land through very rough mountains of Baluchistan
- sea routes to head of Persian gulf - a 4 to 5 week trip by traditional sailing vessel
- did significant contact with Mesopotamia actually occur? when?
- if yes, did it affect society in the Indus region very much?

- Neolithic Period: 7000 - 3500 BC
 - Agriculture seems to have started on the western margins, in Baluchistan and the edge of the mountains, by at least 7000 BC
 - cultures were highly variable from region to region, and changed a lot over time
 - people probably first settled out on the Indus plain in the Late Neolithic, around 4500 BC

- Early Indus Period 3500 - 2600 BC
 - a long period (900 years) that presumably lumps together a wide range of societies
 - roughly the same as “Early Harappan” in Wenke and Olszewski
 - contemporary with
 - Middle Uruk period through the first half of the Sumerian Early Dynastic period
 - Naqada II through Egyptian Early Dynastic
 - overall, overlapping but a bit later than the first complex societies of Sumer and Egypt
 - Early Indus period saw an increasing number of farming settlements on the Indus plain
 - early on, cultures were local, different from place to place
 - during the last 200 years of the Early Indus period, a pottery style first identified at Kot Diji (“Kot Dijian” ceramics) was used at many sites over much of the Indus region
 - this suggests increasing interaction of some kind, maybe trade
 - this is called the Kot Diji phase, from 2800 - 2600 BC
 - Most early Indus period people lived in small agricultural villages
 - But there were also a few large towns or cities
 - example: Rahman Dheri, in second half of Early Indus (say 3000 BC), got to 22 hectares
 - over 4 times the size of the SSU main quad
 - same ballpark of size as large Early Uruk centers, but 500 to 1000 years later
 - rectangular mudbrick houses in somewhat orderly rectangular street plans
 - not strictly planned, but far more so than the chaotic jumble of Mesopotamian towns
 - some had a wide main street running north-south, with narrower secondary streets perpendicular and parallel to it
 - some towns had a raised “citadel”
 - large rectangular raised area or tell, often with high-status residences and non-residential buildings on top, and the sides held up by retaining walls
 - the name is misleading; these were not necessarily mainly for defense, although access was limited by the surrounding wall
 - once thought to be artificial platforms
 - now thought to be just the oldest section of town, where more debris had accumulated
 - apparently where the high-status people lived
 - apparently where central functions were carried out
 - maybe because it was safest from flooding

- located to one side of the lower, residential part of town
- some early Indus towns were walled
 - like Rahman Dheri, Kot Diji, Kalibangan, Harappa, etc.
- these towns are thought to have been relatively independent, self-sufficient, not united
 - each subregion within the Indus system had a different style of pottery
- but at least one site, Lewan Dar Dariz, was economically specialized
 - people at Lewan Dar Dariz specialized in making groundstone tools
 - axes, donut stones (clubs? clod breakers? or...?)
 - grinding stones for grain processing
 - presumably for exchange with people from other towns
 - meaning that some towns were already partially interdependent
 - large, but not among the largest: 10 hectares
 - surrounded by a massive mudbrick city wall
- Harappa
 - Harappa was already a walled city by the Kot Diji phase
 - by the end of the Early Indus period, Harappa
 - occupied at least 25 hectares
 - produced quantities of beads from jasper, agate, carnelian, and other stones
 - imported steatite and carved stamp seals from it
 - would become one of the largest cities in the following Mature Harappan Period
- at Harappa and other centers, increasing evidence of complex economies and trade, especially during the Kot Diji phase
 - most pottery was made on “foot wheel” (like the “fast wheel” we have seen elsewhere)
 - allows greater production, presumably for exchange, possibly capital investment
 - copperwork became more common (although still rare)
 - spread of “Kot Dijian” ceramic style suggests increasing interaction, maybe trade
 - oxcarts were in use by the time Kot Dijian ceramics were widespread, possibly indicating larger-scale hauling of goods
 - Many seals and sealings with geometric motifs suggest a lot of trade
 - internal trade: Lewan Dar Dariz produced groundstone items that were widely traded; maybe other towns had similar specialties
 - external trade: in jewelry stones from Baluchistan and Afghanistan
- but still very minor social stratification in burials, housing, etc.
- Writing: a few early examples of Harappan writing have been found at Harappa during the Kot Diji phase (more on this later)
- did Early Indus settlements qualify as “civilized”?
- Meanwhile, to the west of the Indus system, in Baluchistan: the site of Mundigak
 - two mounds with large buildings on top, one with a colonnaded hall
 - presumed to be in trading contact with Indus sites
 - late in the Early Indus period, added massive walls with square bastions
 - just one example of the complex societies that arose between Mesopotamia and the Indus
 - a big issue that we aren't going to touch here...

- Mature Harappan Period (also called Mature Indus, or just Harappan) 2600 - 2050 BC
 - started several centuries after dynastic kingship was well established in Sumer and Egypt
 - started about the same time as
 - the royal burials at Ur
 - the building of the great pyramids
 - and lasted over 500 years after that
 - the Mature Harappan period may have begun with a dramatic change
 - widespread adoption of Harappan style ceramics over a span of maybe 200 years
 - Around the end of the Early Indus period, several cities suffered extensive fires, then were rebuilt
 - Kot Diji had two big fires around 2500 BC
 - evidence of widespread fires at Amri and Kalibangan
 - Orderly town plans were imposed on top of the earlier, less organized town plans
 - after the fires, the pottery styles were mixed, with old styles continuing, but mostly the new Harappan style
 - some see this as evidence that these sites were sacked and rebuilt by Harappans
 - but others (like Mark Kenoyer) think this is just a coincidence of small fires
 - he sees the changes in ceramics and site planning as more gradual
 - Harappan pottery was also adopted in peripheral areas, in addition to local styles
 - suggests that Harappan people and/or goods moved into these outlying regions that already had their own pottery styles
 - due to conquest?
 - trade?
 - Harappan outposts or colonies...or?
 - Rise of really big cities and complex settlement pattern
 - At least four major cities or capitals
 - Harappa and Mohenjo Daro on the Indus river
 - Ganweriwala and Rakhigarhi on the dry bed of the Ghaggar-Hakra river
 - these probably comprised several competing but similar states, rather than one huge one
 - Secondary sites seem to be smaller versions of the same city plan
 - Kalibangan, Kot Diji, Sandhanawala, Judeirjo Daro, and many others
 - There were also some possibly special-purpose sites
 - example: the small site of Lothal was apparently a port and trade/manufacturing center
 - reservoir or docking area (debate about which it was)
 - workshops for intensive production of stone beads, bronze, and ivory items
 - many clay sealings, with up to four seal impressions, suggesting commerce
 - Plus many hundreds of smaller village sites
 - so most Indus people were probably rural
 - continuing Neolithic practices of farming wheat and barley with small-scale irrigation
 - Cities were walled, although maybe for flood control as much as defense
 - Very uniform artifacts, planning, architecture
 - standardized styles of pottery, jewelry, seals, etc. over the whole vast region
 - standardized brick proportions (1:2:4 for easy laying) and sizes (7 x 14 x 28 cm)

- supposedly a standardized pattern of laying bricks: “English bond”
 - alternating rows of all headers and then all stretchers
 - although site photos suggest that the bricklaying pattern was not really that consistent
- standardized length units; several graduated rulers have been found
 - two basic units
 - a “cubit” of around 52 cm (51.8 to 53.6 cm)
 - a “long foot” of 33.5 cm (or 37.6 cm)
 - one ruler is divided into subunits of 1.7 mm, with each 10th mark emphasized, like a modern metric ruler
- standardized weight system
 - cubical weights of various stones
 - most common unit is 13.6 grams (about 1/2 ounce)
 - weights come in sets that include fractional units, 1 unit, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64 units, etc.
 - balances on which the weights were used have also been found
 - suggest concern with exact measurement of amounts of materials
 - maybe associated with trade
- standardized city plans, as discussed below
 - even small towns seem to emulate an ideal city plan
- various interpretations of all this standardization and uniformity:
 - centralized production of standardized goods that were then widely distributed?
 - strong control of production in many different places in order to ensure standardization?
 - extreme cultural conservatism that led people to make things in the same way?
 - an ideology that promoted conformity?
- Typical Harappan city features
 - size and population
 - Mohenjo Daro: 2.5 square km (250 ha)
 - over 2.5 times the size of the entire SSU campus
 - estimates from 35,000 - 41,000 people
 - Harappa: population estimates range from 23,500 to about the same as Mohenjo Daro
 - Most towns had a “citadel”, as some had in the Early Indus period
 - on the west side of site
 - raised, rectangular platform running north-south
 - size varies from 215 x 460 m at Harappa (about 4 times as long and wide as Stevenson)
 - to 65 x 130 m at Kalibangan (a bit bigger than Stevenson hall)
 - to smaller citadels at smaller sites like Lothal
 - as high as 12 m
 - bland looking, but very large
 - citadels were typically enclosed by a wall with big corner buttresses/bastions, and buttresses along length of wall
 - used to be thought that these were artificial platforms
 - but probably just the oldest sectors of towns that had walled, enclosed neighborhoods
 - so the oldest neighborhood formed the greatest accumulation of debris, like a tell

- retaining walls around the edges produced a platform-like appearance
- these oldest neighborhoods were apparently also the most prestigious and wealthiest
- big, presumably administrative buildings on top of the “citadel”
 - at Mohenjo Daro, one big 27 m square courtyard was filled with rows of pillar bases, probably to hold up a roof of a large columned hall
 - also at Mohenjo Daro: a sunken rectangular bath with wide steps leading into it...
 - 12 X 7 m, 3 m deep (36 x 21 feet, 9 feet deep)
 - Two skins of water-resistant fired brick, sawn to precise shape to fit tightly, in gypsum mortar, with a layer of bitumen (natural asphalt or tar) between them: clearly designed to hold water
 - has a drain
 - presumably filled with water carried from a large well in an adjacent room
 - surrounded by porticos and rooms
 - generally thought that this pool was for ritual bathing, as is still done in India
 - only known from Mohenjo Daro; not yet found at other sites
- many towns also had a “granary”
 - located on the citadel or next to it
 - elevated brick foundations with crossing channels on top, hints of a wooden superstructure, and at Mohenjo Daro, a ramp-like entrance or “loading dock”
 - originally thought to be foundations for a wooden grain storage warehouse
 - built to allow air flow underneath to prevent rot and spontaneous combustion
 - because some known Roman granaries were built this way
 - may or may not actually be granaries, still uncertain
 - A few burned grains were found between the bricks of the “granary” of Lothal, but is this enough?
 - they could also be foundations for some other kind of wooden building
 - one “granary” has traces of repeated small fires on the brick platforms; maybe they are some kind of offering structures?
 - at Harappa, the “granary” is near circular platforms once thought to be for grinding or threshing grain
 - recent excavations found no traces of grain, but rather accumulations of silt, as if they had been vats
 - Kenoyer thinks the platforms and wooden sheds on the “granary” foundations were a textile shop, where indigo dye was produced and textiles were dyed...
- lower town
 - east of the citadel, and covering a larger area
 - on the natural ground level, lower than the citadel
 - dense domestic area
 - houses rebuilt many times in the very same plan, using old walls as foundations for the new ones, much as we saw at Çatal Hüyük
 - excavations show series of superimposed wall bases, not whole walls from one time
 - streets are orderly, appear to be planned
 - widest streets run north-south, straight through town
 - narrower secondary streets run east-west, staggered in places (not straight through)

- some streets have sewage or drainage channels, some covered, with manholes for cleaning!
- house layout and construction
 - blank walls face the main streets
 - most room complexes face onto central courtyards
 - flat, timber roofs
 - many have stairways indicating use of the roof or a second story
 - most excavated houses in cities like Mohenjo Daro had a room for bathing
 - usually with a floor of water-resistant fired brick, often surrounded by a curb like a shower stall
 - often raised or on second story, with a drain that slopes from the floor through the thick mudbrick wall, emptying onto the sewer or drain channel along the street outside
 - others drain into local underground pits where the water would soak away
 - some have pottery drainpipes
 - some have vertical drains into large ceramic pots set into the floor
 - these are apparently privies (toilets)
 - this concern with bathing and cleanliness within households may reflect the same ideas as the huge bath on the citadel at Mohenjo Daro
 - relatively speaking, many houses are pretty uniform in size, layout, and features
 - although not all had two stories, and not all had wells
 - but at both Harappa and Mohenjo Daro, there are also rows of single-roomed houses
 - presumably for poorer people
 - workers? soldiers? slaves? lower-caste people?
- massive mud brick city wall around at least the citadel; in at least some cases around the lower town, too
 - may be for flood control
 - the lower city of Mohenjo Daro was destroyed by flooding several times
- Often said that there are no obvious temples, monumental sculpture, ziggurats
 - but in the lower town at Mohenjo Daro, an unusually massive building had a “monumental entrance and double stairway, leading to a raised platform on which was found one of the rare stone sculptures - of a seated figure...”
 - generally accepted as a temple, although not on the scale of a Mesopotamian one
 - Harappan sculptures are rare and small
 - the famous priest sculpture from this temple is only 17.5 cm high (under 7 inches)
 - the statue is broken, but it would have been well under two feet tall
 - possibly a similar “temple” on the citadel
 - the citadel itself might be considered monumental, but it is more like an accumulated tell than an intentionally constructed platform
 - the pillared hall might be considered monumental
 - the “granary” structures may actually be foundations for some other type of large wooden building – like a monumental hall of some kind
- craft specialization
 - many known workshop areas for different crafts

- stone sculptors can be inferred from the few sculptures
- ceramic kilns and pottery made on fast wheels imply specialized potters
- specialists worked copper, bronze, silver, gold
 - copper and goldsmiths' shops
 - tin bronze and arsenic bronze were made by alloying copper
 - axes, chisels, knives, saws, spear points, arrow points
 - copper vessels made from hammered sheet metal pieces
 - cast figurines, carts, etc.
 - gold beads, pendants, amulets, brooches, needles
 - silver vessels hammered from sheet silver; beads
 - lead cakes, plumb-bobs, vases
 - skilled in combining different metals, inlays, etc.
- uniform stone blades (long, sharp-edged flakes) made from chert (a kind of stone)
- shell beads and inlays
- stone bead makers
 - carnelian: agate roasted to produce red-brown color
 - also extremely small stone beads, which are hard to make and are used in vast numbers
 - several large bead workshops or shop districts have been found, where beads were produced in great quantity, representing great amounts of labor
- textile dyers and weavers noted above
- terracotta (lightly fired clay) figurines
 - some 2000 known
 - male and female humans, animals, wheeled carts, imaginary creatures, etc.
 - some female figurines have headdresses that held small amounts of burning oil
 - like votive candles?
 - what were they for?
 - toys?
 - puppets?
 - ritual uses, like offerings or charms?
 - these might have been made by specialists, but not necessarily
- Dice
 - gambling?
 - divination?
- writing (Mature Harappan period, 2600-2050 BC)
 - unfortunately, it cannot be read
 - mostly, but not exclusively, known from stamp seals
 - used as in Mesopotamia and Egypt, to seal clay
 - sealings often have impressions of cloth or cords on the back, suggesting that they labelled bundles of some kind
 - unlike Mesopotamia, few tablets with writing on them
 - unlike Egypt, very few painted symbols
 - maybe a lot of writing was done on cloth, leaves, bark, etc. that has not been preserved
 - inscriptions are almost always brief

- probably labels identifying names or offices, places, contents
- suggests specialized literate people, as well as specialized seal makers
- religion
 - some parallels with later Indian beliefs suggest that Indus religion may have been the origin (or part of the origin) of Hinduism
 - ritual cleanliness
 - the “priest” figures with their garment off one shoulder
 - in historic times, this was an indication of piety
 - numerous other parallels in iconography on seals, etc.
- trade
 - internal (within the Indus)
 - sealings were sometimes made from clay not local to where they were found
 - that is, the sealings were probably put on in one town and the sealed goods shipped to another town, where the sealings were broken off and later found by archaeologists
 - flint from a single region (about 50 km from Mohenjo Daro) was processed near the source into blades, which were traded throughout the Indus system
 - shell goods were also made at two sites and traded widely
 - carnelian beads apparently come from just two sites, etc.
 - that is: site-level specialization of production with wide distribution
 - external (with “foreigners”)
 - goods imported into the Indus drainage
 - metals: gold, silver, copper, lead
 - stones for jewelry and carving: lapis, turquoise, alabaster, etc.
 - A Harappan lapis trading center in Afghanistan (Shortughai)
 - a plainly Harappan site
 - located about 500 km (300 miles) north of the Harappan culture area, separated from it by very difficult terrain
 - Mesopotamian trade
 - according to Sumerian records from the Agade Period (Sargon, 2373-2247 BC) and on through about 1800 BC, Sumerian merchants traded with people from a place called Meluhha, which may have been the Indus region
 - Meluhhan traders provided goods that the Indus region could have produced:
 - ivory, oils, furniture
 - gold, silver, carnelian (a red gemstone)
 - Sumerian tablets record
 - Meluhhan ships docking at Sumerian ports
 - Meluhhans living in various Sumerian cities
 - a Meluhhan town or district at one city
 - the Sumerian records indicate a large volume of trade
 - one describes a shipment from Meluhha that contained 6½ tons of copper
 - Physical evidence of this trade is extremely scanty
 - In the Indus region, just a handful of possibly Sumerian objects or local imitations

- plus some possible Mesopotamian influence, like several seals showing a figure holding two tigers
- In Mesopotamia:
 - about two dozen Indus-style seals found at Susa and other sites
 - some carnelian beads, inlay work, etc. in unmistakably Harappan style
 - including the long carnelian beads and other jewelry from Puabi's tomb at Ur!
 - Maybe Puabi was from the Indus - a marriage alliance by a Sumerian king...?
 - maybe there is little evidence because most of the goods were perishable, like cotton cloth
- This trade seems too late to have contributed to the *rise* of Indus civilization
- Sumerian documents mentioning trade that might be with the Indus first appeared several hundred years *after* the Mature Harappan began in 2600 BC
- and 400 years after the “Kot Dijian” spread of uniform pottery, copperwork, walled towns, etc.
- social stratification
 - Harappan society looks relatively egalitarian compared to Mesopotamia and Egypt
 - but there is some variation in housing
 - citadel dwellings vs. lower town dwellings
 - houses with or without courtyards, wells, privies
 - rows of one-room houses: barracks or tenements?
 - rural village dwellers
 - overall, though, there is not much evidence of ostentatiously rich people
 - but a lot of evidence of many people, not just a few, living pretty well in the cities
 - granaries (warehouses?) suggest accumulation of vast stores of wealth
 - if they were granaries, then some people must have owned or controlled them
 - if not, they were still large, probably public buildings that would have taken concentrated wealth to build and use
 - the huge amount of craft specialization and trade suggests that some people had better jobs and more wealth than others
 - burial evidence for wealth differences is minor, compared to Mesopotamia or Egypt
 - many people were buried with nothing, sometimes in communal graves
 - at Harappa, the richest burials have up to 24 pots and some jewelry
 - at Lothal and Kalibangan
 - the fanciest burials are in brick chambers up to 4 x 2 m (13 x 6 feet)
 - similar in size to the painted tomb at Hierakonpolis (Naqada II)
 - so the largest, richest Harappan burials seem pretty modest for an urban civilization
 - suggests much less difference in wealth between classes
 - but note that certain kinds of goods rarely, if ever, turn up in Harappan burials
 - metals and jewelry are rare in burials
 - instead, these are found in caches in holes dug in the floors of houses
 - so wealth items were made, used, and hoarded, but not buried with the dead
 - so the lack of rich burials might not reflect the lack of wealth in life, but rather an idea that wealth items were not appropriate grave goods

- perhaps they had an ideology of equality or humility in death
 - which may or may not imply equality or humility in life
- caches of goods below floors of houses
 - a copper pot full of copper weapons and tools
 - caches of beads or jewelry
 - suggests that whoever made these caches was better off than those that didn't
 - so that there might have been more variation in wealth than the burials suggest
- seals, sealings, tablets, etc. are concentrated in certain houses
 - one house near Mohenjo Daro's "main street" had 11 seals, tablets, etc. with writing
 - suggests that there were houses of scribes and/or merchants who kept accounts
 - while other people did not
 - maybe the people who used writing in their houses were wealthier, higher status, etc.?
- political organization
 - Settlement hierarchy: pretty clearly at least four levels of site sizes, so the Indus region surpasses the "three-level" requirement for state organization
 - Mohenjo Daro, Harappa, Ganweriwala, Rakhigarhi would be "capitals" or major centers
 - Kalibangan, Kot Diji, etc. would be secondary centers
 - Lothal and others would be smaller, specialized towns
 - and most people would live in tiny hamlets or scattered farms around the countryside
 - Total Harappan population in the Indus drainage at least 200,000 by around 2000 BC, and probably much more, divided among perhaps four states
- Decline (Late Harappan, 2050 - 1700 BC)
 - Civilization did not suddenly disappear
 - sophisticated craft production continued: Quetta treasure 1900 BC
 - Several sites in Baluchistan burned around the end of the Mature Harappan period
 - Sprawled skeletons in a street of Mohenjo Daro might indicate warfare
 - but the decline of Harappan civilization is no longer blamed on invasion by foreigners
 - extremely little evidence of anyone else suddenly appearing there
 - but conflict (maybe internal) could have been involved
 - Harappa had a final stylistic phase that seems to reflect some foreign influence from Iran
 - but not a radical replacement or change that might indicate an invasion
 - Nevertheless, by the end of the Late Harappan, the cities were permanently abandoned
 - Sumerian records ceased to mention trade with Meluhha
 - the Harappan tradition largely disappeared
 - people ceased to use the writing system, the system of weights and measures, and some of the imagery that was found on seals and pottery
 - burial traditions changed from extended burials in coffins to secondary burials with bones collected in large ceramic pots
 - presumably indicates a change in religion
 - leaving only echoes in myths and general cultural traits
 - unlike the Sumerian, Egyptian, and Chinese early civilizations, all of which were known from historical sources, the Harappan civilization was truly lost and forgotten until archaeologists rediscovered it in the 1920s

- cities might have been abandoned due to...
 - Flooding?
 - Desiccation due to changing rainfall that affected farming, pastoralism, and travel routes?
 - Desiccation due to shift in river courses due to tectonic activity?
 - Introduction of millet, leading to people to move out of cities to better-suited areas?
 - Epidemic disease?
 - Military incursions? (by “Indo-Europeans”?)
- Conclusions
 - when did civilization arise?
 - Neolithic?
 - Early Indus?
 - Kot Diji phase (the last 200 years of the Early Indus period)?
 - Mature Harappan?
 - does uniformity mean strong control and therefore power hierarchy?
 - if so, where are signs of rulers?
 - could traditionalism and/or something like the caste system account for the uniformity?
 - Was this a special case of a relatively egalitarian civilization?
 - What was the role of warfare?
 - What was the role of trade?
 - internal vs. external
 - timing; quantity; nature of goods
 - Was this civilization “pristine”, partially so, or not at all?