

Eastern River Valleys

2500 B.C.–1000 B.C.

▼ Terra-cotta toy horse



▲ A Harappan necklace

2500 B.C.

Cities appear in Indus River valley

2000 B.C.

Cities appear in Huang Ho valley

1766 B.C.

Shang come to power in China

1200 B.C.

Aryans arrive in Indus River valley

1122 B.C.

Zhou invade Shang kingdom

Chapter Focus



Read to Discover

- How the Indus River valley civilization developed.
- What has been learned from the ruins of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro.
- How religion influenced the Shang dynasty.
- Why the Shang dynasty declined.

Chapter Overview

Visit the *Human Heritage* Web site at humanheritage.glencoe.com and click on **Chapter 5—Chapter Overviews** to preview this chapter.



Terms to Learn

planned communities
citadel
dynasty
ancestors
oracle bones
nobles



People to Know

Harappans
Aryans
Yü the Great
Wu



Places to Locate

Indus River
Harappa
Mohenjo-daro
Huang Ho valley



Why It's Important By 2500 B.C., cities started to appear in the Indus valley of South Asia. By 2000 B.C., they were being established in the Huang Ho (Yellow River) valley of China.

More isolated than the people of Mesopotamia or Egypt, the people of the eastern river valley civilizations were cut off from other parts of the world by high mountains, broad deserts, and large bodies of water. As a result, they became *self-sufficient*, or able to take care of nearly all their own needs. Compared to the Sumerians and the Egyptians, they did little trading with other parts of the world.

Because few artifacts have been found, much of what is known about the ancient eastern river valley civilizations comes from legends. Even so, available evidence points to unique and rich cultures that continue to interest archaeologists.

SECTION 1 The Indus River Valley

The Indus River flows through the countries known today as Pakistan and India. About 2500 B.C., a group of people called Harappans (huh rap' uhnz) settled in the valley of the Indus River. Although others had lived there before, the Harappans




were the first to create a civilization. Harappan civilization extended about 1,000 miles, or 1,600 kilometers, from the foothills of the Himalayas to the Indian Ocean. This area was more than twice the size of either Mesopotamia or Egypt.

The lives of the Harappan people were shaped by the Indus River. The river fertilized the land and made its soil rich. When the river flooded, however, it swept away everything in its path. People had to control the Indus in order to settle near it. To do this, they built dikes and dams. They cleared land for farming and built irrigation systems to bring water to dry areas. They grew barley, wheat, peas, melons, and dates and fished in the river.

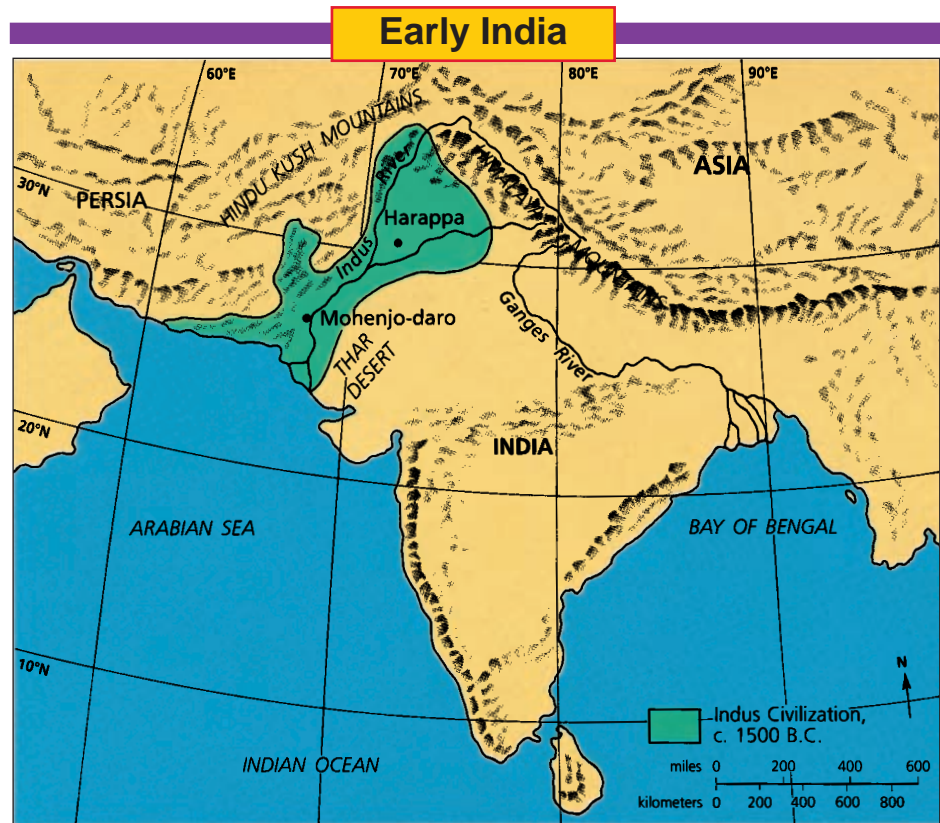
The Harappans were the earliest known people to grow cotton. They spun the cotton, wove it into cloth, and dyed it bright colors. They produced cotton cloth hundreds of years before anyone else.

The Indus River influenced the way the Harappans built their cities. To protect cities from floods, the Harappans built them on raised mounds. They used river mud to make bricks, which they baked in the sun. Then they went one step further. They *fired*, or baked, some bricks in *kilns*, or ovens. They used these kiln-dried bricks as a covering over the mud bricks. The fired bricks were stronger and lasted much longer than sun-dried ones. The Harappans used fired bricks for houses and public buildings.



MAP STUDY

PLACES AND REGIONS India is part of the triangle-shaped peninsula that forms the southern part of the continent of Asia. What geographic features would have helped to protect the people of the Indus River valley from enemies?





Student Web Activity

Visit the *Human Heritage* Web site at humanheritage.glencoe.com and click on **Chapter 5—Student Web Activities** to find out more about Harappan civilization.



THE GREAT BATH AT MOHENJO-DARO The people of Mohenjo-daro may have washed themselves at the Great Bath. It measured 40 feet, or 12 meters, long and 23 feet, or 7 meters, wide. To make the Bath watertight, they used cement, tar, and four layers of brick. **What was the purpose of the Great Bath?**


Harappa and Mohenjo-daro Harappan civilization centered around two major cities, Harappa and Mohenjo-daro (mōhen' jō dahr' ō). These cities were about 400 miles, or 640 kilometers, apart. Many experts believe they were twin capitals.

Harappa and Mohenjo-daro are the oldest examples yet found of **planned communities**, or cities built to a definite plan. Both cities contained hundreds of small buildings. Some buildings served as homes, while others served as shops. The buildings were laid out on a planned street *grid*, or uniform network. The streets crossed each other at almost perfect right angles. The buildings that lined the streets were arranged in blocks of about the same size.

Most buildings were two stories high and were built around a courtyard, which opened into several rooms. Outer walls of buildings had no windows, and walls fronted on narrow lanes in such a way as to break the force of the wind. Almost every building had its own well, bathroom, and drains. The drains carried waste away from the houses and emptied it into drain holes lined with brick. These drains were cleaned often. This sanitation system helped protect the health of the Harappans.

The most important buildings of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro were built high above the houses and shops so as to be safe from neighboring peoples and floods. In each city, a **citadel** (sit' uh duhl), or fortress, stood on a mound at least 40 feet, or 12 meters, high. It was surrounded by a thick brick wall. Inside the citadel at Mohenjo-daro was a huge watertight tank called the Great Bath. Some experts believe it was used for religious ceremonies. Next to

 **Reading Check**
What are **planned communities**?

 **Reading Check**
Where was a **citadel** located, and what did it look like?

Fun Facts

No Showers?

Harappan bathrooms contained no bathtubs. People preferred to pour water over themselves from hand-held pitchers.

the Great Bath stood a huge granary. Traders from other areas who stopped at Mohenjo-daro most likely left their goods there.

Harappa also had a series of huge granaries. The floor of each granary was supported on low walls. In the walls were air holes that allowed air to move around in the granary. This kept the grain dry and prevented it from spoiling. Nearby were circular brick platforms. Each had a scooped-out area in the center where grain could be pounded.

Decline of the Harappans No one knows for certain how Harappan civilization came to an end. One reason may have been that the Harappans used up their natural resources. For example, the Harappan farmers may have tried to raise more and more crops on the same plots. This would have robbed the soil of nutrients needed to make it fertile enough to produce well. Without good harvests, there would not have been enough food to feed everyone, especially if the Harappan population was increasing.

Another reason may have been that the Harappans cut down too many trees to fuel their ovens. Without tree cover, floods would have swept away the soil and forced people to leave their cities and farming villages. It is known that parts of Mohenjo-daro had to be rebuilt several times because of floods. At first, the city was rebuilt carefully. As time went on, however, new buildings were not made as well, and older ones were patched up. Then, too, the Harappans may have gotten tired of rebuilding and decided to move somewhere else.

A third reason may have been that the Indus River valley was invaded and all the Harappans were killed. Unburied skeletons of groups of men, women, and children have been found in the streets of Mohenjo-daro's ruins. Every skeleton showed some kind of injury.

All that is certain is that Harappan civilization began to change about 1700 B.C. Not only were homes no longer built as well, but pottery was no longer made as carefully. By 1200 B.C., a group of people called Aryans (ār' ē uhnz) had taken over the Indus River valley. Harappan civilization ceased to be.

Evidence of a Lost Civilization Very little is known about the Harappan people and their civilization. As yet, no one has been able to read Harappan writing. There is no record of the civilization's political history. No royal tombs have been discovered. All that is known about Harappan religion is that there was more than one god, and most Harappan gods were female.

Much of what is known comes from the ruins of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro. There, archaeologists have found jewelry made of gold and a blue stone called lapis lazuli (lap' uhs laz' uh lē), as

Sculpture of Harappan Priest-King





HARAPPAN SEAL This Harappan seal is 1 inch, or 2.5 centimeters, square. It shows a bull facing an incense burner. In eastern civilizations, the bull was a symbol of strength. The seal also shows Harappan writing. **What is unusual about Harappan writing?**

Then... & Now

Bangles Today, many people in India and Pakistan wear bangles—ring-shaped bracelets and anklets. So did the Harappans. To find out how the Harappans made their bangles, archaeologists in the 1980s and 1990s turned to present-day bangle makers. Using traditional methods, they gave archaeologists insights into how the Harappan bangle makers might have worked.

well as tools and weapons of stone, copper, and bronze. They have also found clay models of animals, rattles, dice, and toy carts with movable wheels.

One of the most important finds was a series of tiny seals made of soapstone. An animal and a line of writing were carved on each seal. The animals included tigers, elephants, rhinoceri, and crocodiles. This suggests that at one time much of the area was jungle. Most of the seals had a small hole in them and could be worn as necklaces or bracelets. The seals may have stated the names, titles, or trades of a person, family, or business. Experts believe the seals were used to stamp the wet clay that sealed packages of goods. Some Harappan seals have been found as far away as Sumer.

Section 1 Assessment

- 1. Define:** planned communities, citadel.
- How did the Indus River influence the Harappans?
- What were some of the outstanding features of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro?

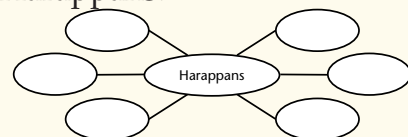
Critical Thinking

- 4. Predicting Consequences** What do you think archaeologists would learn

about the Harappans if they could read Harappan writing?

Graphic Organizer Activity

5. Draw a diagram like this one, and use it to summarize the accomplishments of the Harappans.



SECTION 2 The Huang Ho Valley

About 2000 B.C., or 500 years after the Harappans settled in the Indus River valley, a civilization developed in the Huang Ho valley of northern China. There are no records of its beginnings, and no remains have been found. For this reason, much of what happened comes from legend.

According to Chinese legend, a man-god named Yü the Great drove out the serpents and dragons that lived along the Huang Ho. He drained the land so that people could live there and grow crops. Yü founded a kingdom called Xia (shē' ah) and united most of northern China under his rule.

Many experts believe that the early settlers of China chose the Huang Ho valley for their home because it was fertile. The river flooded every year, bringing rich soil with it.

The valley was cut off from other civilizations. The people there developed their culture without borrowing from other civilizations. By 1800 B.C., there were villages and farms all along the river. The people farmed the land and used the river for travel and trade. They made clay ovens, cupboards, benches, and pottery. They built small round clay houses with thatched roofs.

 **Reading Check**
What is a
dynasty?

Cities of the Shang The first records of Chinese civilization come from a **dynasty** (dī' nuh stē), or ruling family, called Shang. The Shang came to power in 1766 B.C. They built the first Chinese

THE WISE MAN FU HSI Chinese legends tell the stories of Yü and another man-god, Fu Hsi. Here, Fu Hsi points to eight geometric designs used to tell the future. Why are legends important to historians studying early China?



Shang China



MAP STUDY

PLACES AND REGIONS The landforms of China contributed to the early isolation of the Chinese. What geographical features would have discouraged the Shang people from movement to other lands or their contact with other people?

cities. Most were designed in the same way. At the center stood a palace and a temple. Public buildings and the homes of high government officials were built around the palace. Within an outer district were workshops, burial grounds, and the homes of the workers.

Most of the Shang people, however, did not live in the city. The city was the home of the rich, the educated, and the skilled. Poorer people lived in the countryside. They were farmers who grew such grains as millet, wheat, and rice and raised cattle, sheep, and chickens. The farmers also produced silk, which was used to make clothes for the very rich. The Chinese produced silk hundreds of years before anyone else.

Spirits, Ancestors, and Kings The Shang worshiped **spirits**, or supernatural beings, which they believed lived in mountains, rivers, and seas. The people believed they had to please the spirits. If the spirits became angry or unhappy, the people might suffer a poor harvest or lose a battle.

The Shang believed that **ancestors**, or those from whom one is descended, also influenced people's fortunes. So, they offered their ancestors food, wine, and special prayers. They hoped their ancestors would help them in time of need and bring them good fortune. Because of this respect for ancestors, family ties were very important to the Shang. They had rules about how family members should act toward one another. Children were taught to

✓ **Reading Check** What role did **spirits** play in Shang religion?

✓ **Reading Check** Why did the Shang respect their **ancestors**?

Reading Check

What were **oracle bones**? Who were the **nobles**, and what role did they play in the Shang dynasty?

People in History



Wu
c. 1000 B.C.

Zhou King

Wu, the ruler of a former Shang territory, led the attack against the last Shang emperor. The emperor was so cruel that many soldiers gave up without a fight. Wu, known as “the Military King,” believed the gods wanted the Zhou dynasty to rule China, and he became the first Zhou ruler.

obey their parents and to honor older people. Wives were trained to obey their husbands.

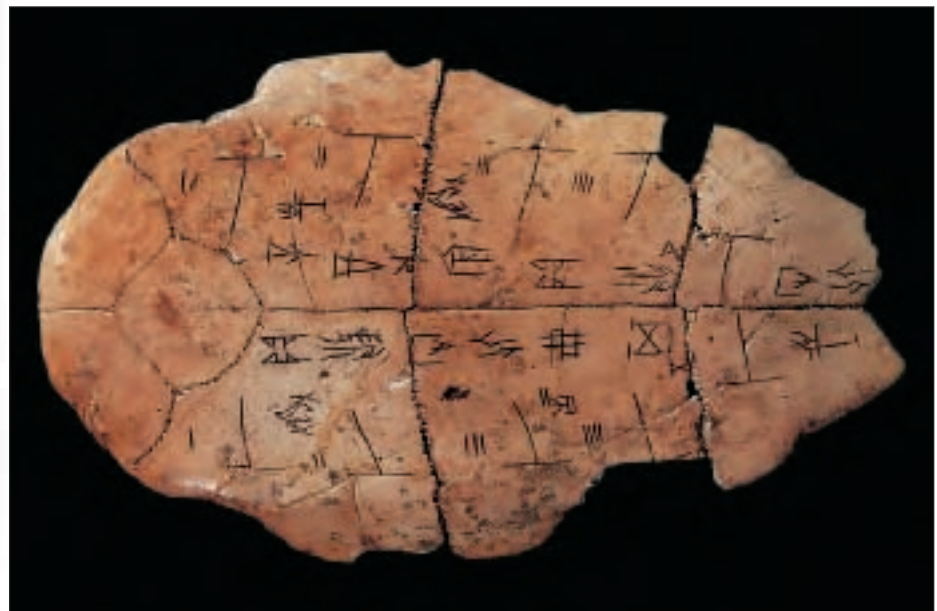
The Shang believed that their kings received their power from the spirits of nature and their wisdom from their ancestors. For this reason, religion and government were tied closely together. An important duty of kings was to contact the spirits of nature to make sure they provided enough water for farming.

Kings also asked the advice of their ancestors before making important decisions. To do this, kings had questions scratched on a flat, polished piece of bone. The bone had a hole drilled in it, and a hot bar was put in the hole. Heat from the bar produced a pattern of cracks on the bone. The cracks were believed to be the ancestors’ replies to a king’s questions. A special interpreter gave the king the meaning of the ancestors’ replies. These bones are known as **oracle** (ōr’ uh kuh) **bones**. The writing on them is the oldest known form of Chinese writing.

Under the king was a large class of **nobles**, or people of high rank in a kingdom. They spent much of their time hunting, both for pleasure and as preparation for war. Nobles often fought with each other about land. They joined together only when they had to fight other people who refused to accept Shang rule.

Nobles rode into battle in horse-drawn bronze chariots. They wore bronze helmets and armor made of buffalo or rhinoceros hide. They were skilled in the use of the bow and arrow. Their

ORACLE BONES Shang rulers tried to learn the future by using oracle bones. Here, a turtle shell used for this purpose shows an early form of Chinese writing. When did Shang rulers use oracle bones?



arrows had sharp points of bone or bronze. Soldiers marched on foot behind nobles' chariots. These soldiers generally were poor peasants whom the nobles had forced to leave their farms and join the army.

Decline of the Shang There was a great gap between rich and poor during the rule of the Shang. Rich Shang lived in the cities in wooden houses. They owned bronze weapons and ornaments and wore linen, wool, fur, and silk clothes. Poor Shang lived in the countryside and worked with wooden or stone tools. Their houses were thatched or mud huts or caves scooped out of the ground. Neither group felt any loyalty toward the other.

Many experts believe that this gap between rich and poor weakened the Shang civilization. In 1122 B.C., a people known as Zhou (jō) invaded the Shang kingdom. The Shang were not united enough to hold off the invaders, and their civilization came to an end.

Linking Across Time

Metal Casting Shang metalsmiths perfected a form of casting to create some of the finest bronze works the world has ever known (below). Metalsmiths still use molds to create everything from artworks to machine parts (right). What conclusions can you draw about Shang technology?



The Shang left behind a great gift to the rest of the world in their works of bronze. These include sculptures, cups, vases, fancy vessels, and a variety of other items used for religious purposes. Many art experts believe these are among the finest works of bronze ever made.

Section 2 Assessment

1. **Define:** dynasty, spirits, ancestors, oracle bones, nobles.
2. What were some of the Shang religious beliefs?
3. What may have been the reason for the decline of the Shang civilization?

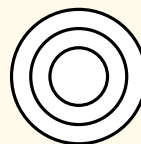
Critical Thinking

4. **Formulating Questions** If world leaders today could use oracle bones,

what questions might they want answered before making decisions?

Graphic Organizer Activity

5. Draw a diagram like this one, and use it to show the structure of a typical Shang city.



Chapter Summary & Study Guide

1. The eastern river valley civilizations began in the Indus River valley about 2500 B.C. and in the Huang Ho valley about 2000 B.C.
2. The first people to build a civilization in the Indus River valley were the Harappans.
3. The Harappans are believed to have been the first people to produce cotton cloth, bake bricks in ovens, and build sanitation systems.
4. The Harappan cities of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro are the oldest known planned communities.
5. No one knows for sure how the Harappan civilization ended, but the Aryans moved into and took over the valley about 1200 B.C.
6. The legendary kingdom of Xia probably was established in China about 2000 B.C.
7. The Shang started the first recorded Chinese dynasty around 1766 B.C.
8. The Shang believed spirits and ancestors influenced their lives.
9. The Shang developed the form of writing found on oracle bones and a method of making beautiful bronze artworks.
10. Shang civilization ended with the Zhou invasion of 1122 B.C.



Self-Check Quiz

Visit the *Human Heritage* Web site at humanheritage.glencoe.com and click on **Chapter 5—Self-Check Quiz** to assess your understanding of this chapter.

CLICK HERE 

CHAPTER 5

Assessment

Using Key Terms

Imagine you are preparing a feature film about the civilizations in the Indus River and Huang Ho valleys. Use the following words in a brief summary describing the facts you plan to present in your film.

planned communities	citadel
dynasty	spirits
ancestors	oracle bones
nobles	

Understanding Main Ideas

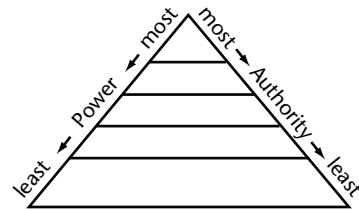
1. Why is so little known about the early life of people in the Indus River and Huang Ho valleys?
2. Why were Harappa and Mohenjo-daro unique places in which to live?
3. What were some of the possible reasons for the decline of the Harappans?
4. What evidence suggests that there was trade between Harappa and Sumer?
5. Why were family ties important to the Shang people?
6. How did Shang kings use oracle bones?
7. Why did the gap between the rich and poor help weaken the Shang?
8. What cultural contribution did the Shang leave to the world?

Critical Thinking

1. Why did people in the eastern river valleys borrow little from people in other regions?
2. What do you think may happen to a civilization if it uses up its natural resources? Why?
3. Do you think people today hold ancestors in the same high regard as the Shang? Explain.

Graphic Organizer Activity

Citizenship Create a diagram like this one, and use it to show the flow of power and authority in the Shang government. Groups that should appear on the chart include: artisans, farmers, king, spirits, ancestors, and nobles. Which group appears at the top? At the bottom?



Geography in History

Places and Regions Refer to the map of early India on page 84. Note the location of the Indus civilization and the geographic features that may have affected its development. Describe what other area of this region is a likely place for other civilizations to develop. Explain why.

Using Your Journal

Compare any details you may have noted about planned communities in Harappa and Mohenjo-daro with details about your own community. Create a chart illustrating the ways in which your community is similar and different.