

AIPS Travel Grant Final Report

Project Title: A Preliminary Report from the 2023-2024 Field Season at Mohenjo Daro

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1. Significance to Pakistan Studies

As arguably the best-preserved Bronze Age city in the world, Mohenjo Daro is probably the most famous archaeological site in Pakistan. Since there are so few archaeologists working in the Indus area compared to other ancient civilizations like Egypt or Mesoamerica, my paper represented a significant scholarly contribution to understanding ancient Pakistan. Using cutting-edge noninvasive techniques like lidar scanning and drone-based photogrammetry, my collaborators and I have been able to document portions of the site in unprecedented detail. We are also utilizing machine learning on some of our aerial photographs to identify and quantify surface artifacts at the site, something that has never been attempted at Mohenjo Daro before.

2. Key Outcomes and Deliverables

A major key outcome for me was being able to meet up with my collaborator Dr. Uzma Rizvi and plan future research. We were able to work on a National Endowment for the Humanities grant that would have us working together at Mohenjo Daro until 2027. Numerous informal conversations with fellow archaeologists provided no shortage of new ideas about future research avenues. As just one example, I had a conversation about the potential efficacy of using ground-penetrating radar at Mohenjo Daro in order to detect buried architecture.

Since I only recently switched my research focus to the archaeology of Pakistan, the most immediate deliverable was presenting the paper and having some of the world's most preeminent archaeologists who work in Pakistan in the audience. Another deliverable will be the eventual publication of the paper I presented: my understanding is that the EASAA publishes revised versions of all the papers they accept for presentation at their conference.