

Art & Culture

UPSC CSE

(Prelims + Mains)

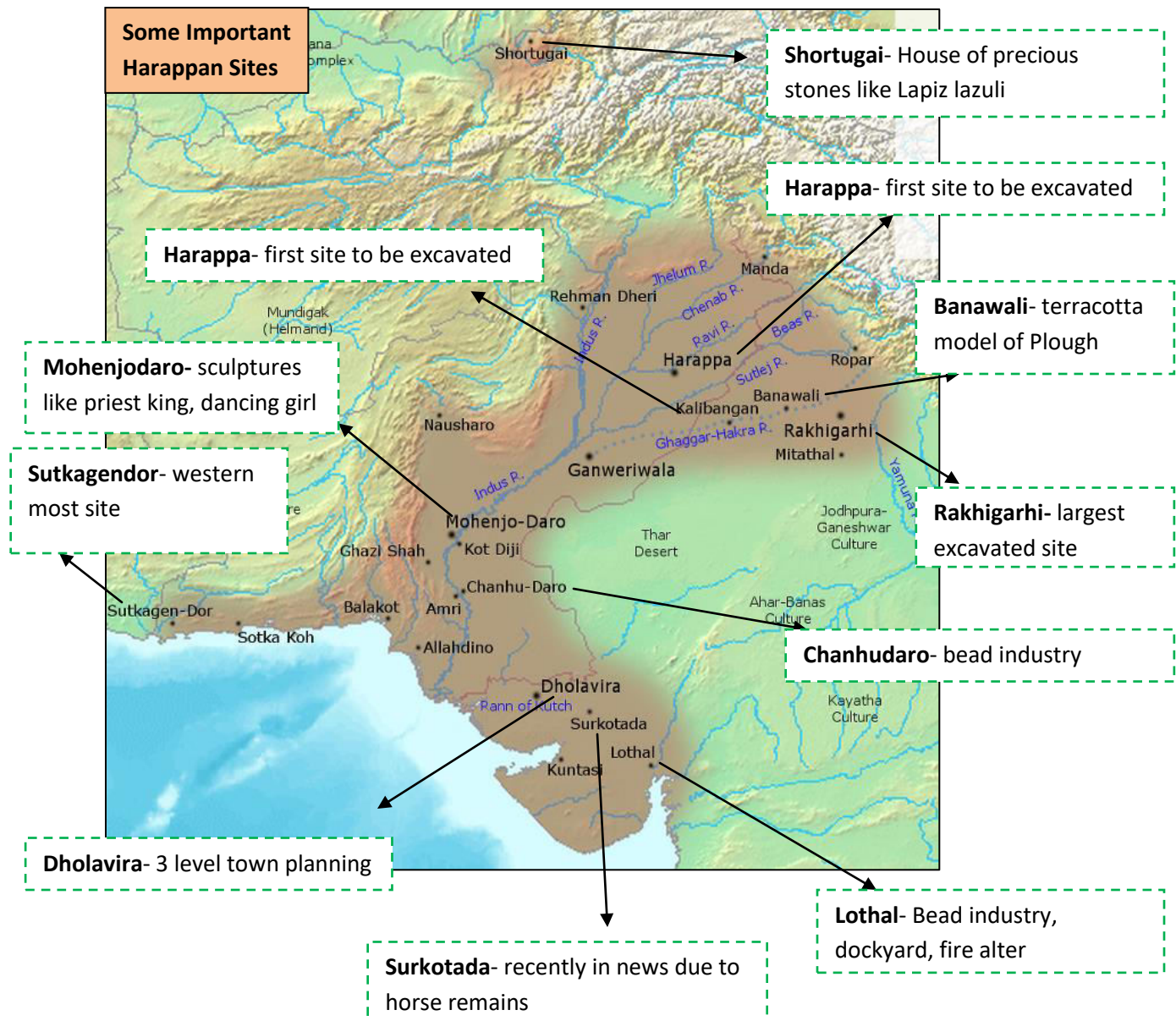
Module 1

Architecture & Sculpture

-Arti Chhawari

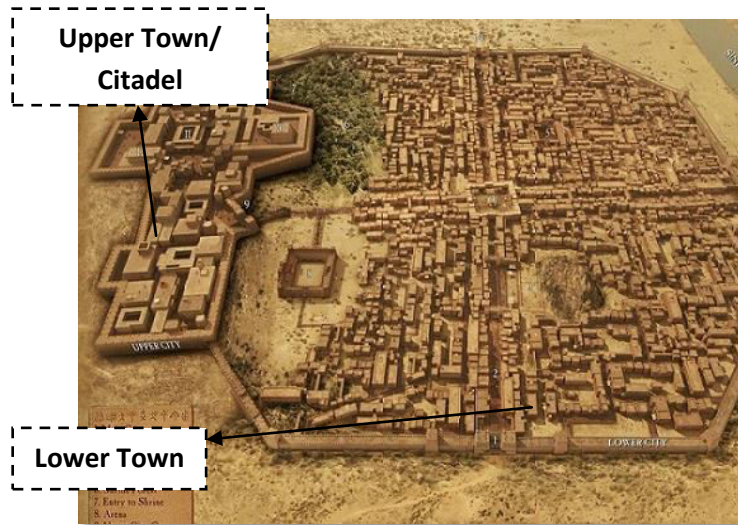
Indus Valley Civilisation

The Indus Valley Civilisation was a Bronze Age civilisation in the northwestern regions of South Asia, in its mature form from 2600 BCE to 1900 BCE. Many of the material remains and artifacts like seals, pottery, sculpture, gold jewellery, terracotta figures and many more helped Archaeologists to reconstruct the life of people living in this earliest urban settlement.



❖ Some Salient features

TOWN PLANNING



- The Harappan cities divided into two main parts - the raised area known as the 'Citadel', and the lower town.
- Networks of streets laid out in neat patterns of straight lines and right angles forming a grid pattern
- Advanced drainage and sanitation system. Drains were shielded by stone slabs.
- Use of burnt and sun dried bricks
- Special purpose buildings in citadel. E.g., Granary and Great bath at Mohenjo-Daro.
- Domestic Architecture/ houses- 1 or 2 storeyed, no windows (maintained

SCULPTURES

Stone Sculptures

1. Bust of a bearded man

- Found in Mohenjo-Daro
- Material used: soapstone(steatite)
- Interpreted as priest or Priest king
- Draped in shawl decorated with trefoil patterns
- Eyes: elongated and half closed as in meditative concentration
- Hairs parted in middle
- Armlet
- Fillet
- Necklace (holes around the neck)



Dancing Male Torso

- Found in Harappa
- Material used: Grey sandstone
- Music and Dance had great place in life



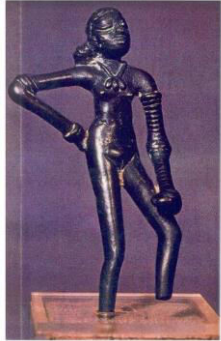
Male Torso

- Found in Harappa
- Material used : red sandstone
- socket holes in neck and shoulders (for the attachment of head and arms)
- Natural pose and sophisticated modeling



Metal Casting

Metal casting was practiced in wide scale in almost all major sites of the civilization and majorily used metal was Bronze [Cu (procured from khetri mines, Rajasthan) + Tin(from Afganistan and Iran)],The technique used for Bronze Casting was **Lost Wax Technique**.



Dancing Girl from Mohenjodaro

- 4 inch copper figure with long hair tied in a bun and Left arm covered with bangles, cowrie shell necklace around the neck (fashion conscious people)
- Tribanga posture (found in many other later sculptures)

Other metal sculptures: bronze Bull figure from Kalibangan and buffalo figure from Mohenjodaro, copper birds and dogs figure from Lothal.

Terracotta Sculptures

Compared to stone and bronze statues terracotta representations of **human** form are **crude**.



Left to Right

1. Mother Goddess, Mohenjo-Daro

2. Bearded Man, Harappa

3. Horned deity, Harappa

Bull figure from Kalibangan and plough from Banawali suggest Agriculture to be primary occupation in outskirts of urban areas

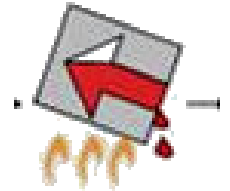


Lost wax technique:

First, wax figures were made and then covered with clay.



The clay as allowed to dry and then the figure was heated to melt the wax.



This wax was drained out through a hole in the clay. After that, the hollow clay was filled with the metal of choice. After cooling the metal, the clay was removed revealing the desired metal figurine.



Why some figures got interpreted as deities?

Repetition of the figure in exactly **same position in different sites**, suggests that these were deities or had some religious importance.

SEALS

Usually made of **steatite**, and occasionally of **agate, chert, copper, faience and terracotta, gold and ivory** with beautiful figures of animals, such as unicorn bull, rhinoceros, tiger, elephant, bison, goat, buffalo, etc. Realistic rendering of these animals in **various moods**. Purpose: mainly **commercial**. Seals were also used as **amulets**.



Most remarkable seal is one depicted with figure in centre and animals around. → identified as Pashupati Seal by some whereas some identify it as female deity or Proto Shiva.

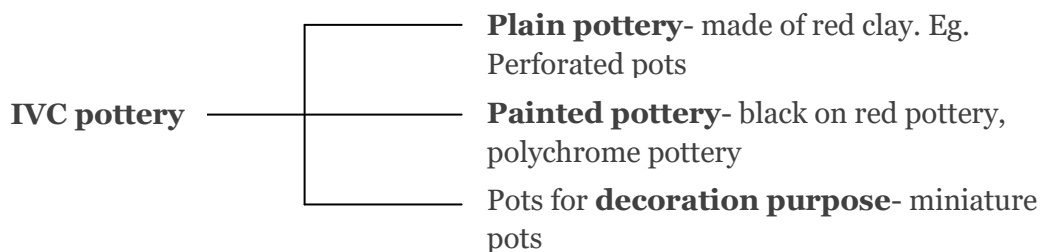
- This seal depicts human figure seated cross-legged.
- elephant and tiger = right side of seated figure
- On left: rhinoceros and buffalo.
- +2 antelopes below seat.
- Seals such as these = between 2500 and 1500 BCE + considerable numbers in sites such as Mohenjo-Daro.

Script found on seals.

Indus valley script is a pictographic script with 375-400 symbols. It is written in boustrophedon style and not yet deciphered. Symbols of this script mainly found on seals, copper tools, rim of jars, bone rods etc. Large letters of IVC script written using white stone on wood was found in Dholavira.

POTTERY

Indus valley pottery consists of **wheel made** as well as **handmade** pots.



BEADS AND JEWELLERY

The Harappan men and women used large variety of ornaments made up of materials ranging from precious metals and gemstones to bone and baked clay.

- Jewellery includes : Necklaces, fillets, armlets and finger rings worn by both men and women. . [remember the jewelleries on the priest king sculpture]
- Necklaces of gold and semiprecious metal stones, copper bracelets and beads, gold earrings and head ornaments found in Mohenjodaro and Lothalbead industries at Chauhudaro and Lothal.
- Beads were of various shapes disc-shaped, cylindrical, spherical, barrel-shaped, and segmented.



Dead body buried with ornaments: Farmana,

CLOTHING, COSMETICS AND MEDICINE

- Spindles and spindle whorls in houses discovered è **spinning of cotton and wool was very common**. Both **rich and poor practised spinning**: finds of **whorls** made of **expensive faience** as also of **cheap pottery and shell**.
- Men and women wore **2 separate pieces of attire** similar to **dhoti and shawl**.
 - Shawl covered left shoulder passing below right shoulder. [priest king]
 - People were **conscious of fashion**. Different **hairstyles** were in vogue[hairstyle of dancing girl and priest king] .**Cinnabar** was used as cosmetic and face-paint, **lipstick** and **collyrium (eyeliner)**.



Findings like that of mortar and pestle suggests that some medicines were also known to these people. Mortars and pestles were also used for grinding other food grains.



News Updates....

Five ‘iconic’ archaeological sites mentioned in the Budget 2020-21 : The government proposes to set up an Indian Institute of Heritage and Conservation under the Ministry of Culture, and develop five archaeological sites as “iconic sites” with onsite museums in Rakhigarhi (Haryana), Hastinapur (Uttar Pradesh), Sivasagar (Assam), Dholavira (Gujarat) and Adichanallur (Tamil Nadu).

Dholavira, Monuments and Forts of Deccan Sultanate nominated for UNESCO World Heritage Sites: The Ministry of Culture has nominated dossiers of Dholavira: A Harappan City, and Monuments and Forts of Deccan Sultanate for inclusion in the World Heritage List for the year 2020.

Do it yourself....

1. Which one of the following is not a Harappan Site? [2019]

- (a) Chanhudaro (b) Kot Diji (c) Sohagaura (d) Desalpur

2. .Regarding the Indus valley civilization, consider the following statements ? [2011]

1. It was predominantly a secular civilization and the religious element, though present, did not dominate the scene.
2. During this period, cotton was used for manufacturing textiles in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only. (b) 2 only. (c) Both 1 and 2. (d) Neither 1 nor 2

3. To what extent has the urban planning and culture of the Indus Valley Civilisation provided inputs to the present day urbanisation? Discuss. [2014]