

Indus Valley Civilization (IVC)

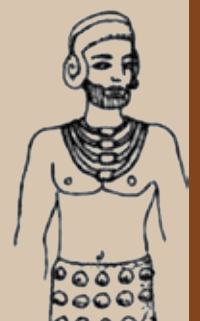


Social Life in the IVC

The social structure of the Indus Valley Civilization can be inferred from archaeological discoveries such as sculptures, figurines, and seals. These findings suggest that society was divided into two distinct groups: those residing in the citadels and those living in the surrounding cities.

Nature of Society

- ◆ There is no conclusive evidence regarding the social structure of the Indus Valley, leaving open the possibility that it could have been **either patriarchal or matriarchal**, but the egalitarian depiction in figurines, showing both male and female figures, suggests **gender equality** in some aspects.



- Some figurines **depict bearded men wearing feminine clothing**, hinting at the possibility of gender equality and shared status for both men and women.

Burial Practices

- The **Harappans** followed a burial ritual that involved placing the deceased in **north-south orientation**, often with goods to accompany them, indicating a belief in the afterlife.
- Burial Goods:** Pots, jewelry (e.g., **bangles, steatite beads**), and personal items (e.g., **copper mirrors**, found mostly with females) were buried with the deceased.
- In **Kalibangan**, some burials consisted of **urns** without skeletal remains, indicating cremation practices.

Variations in Burial Sites

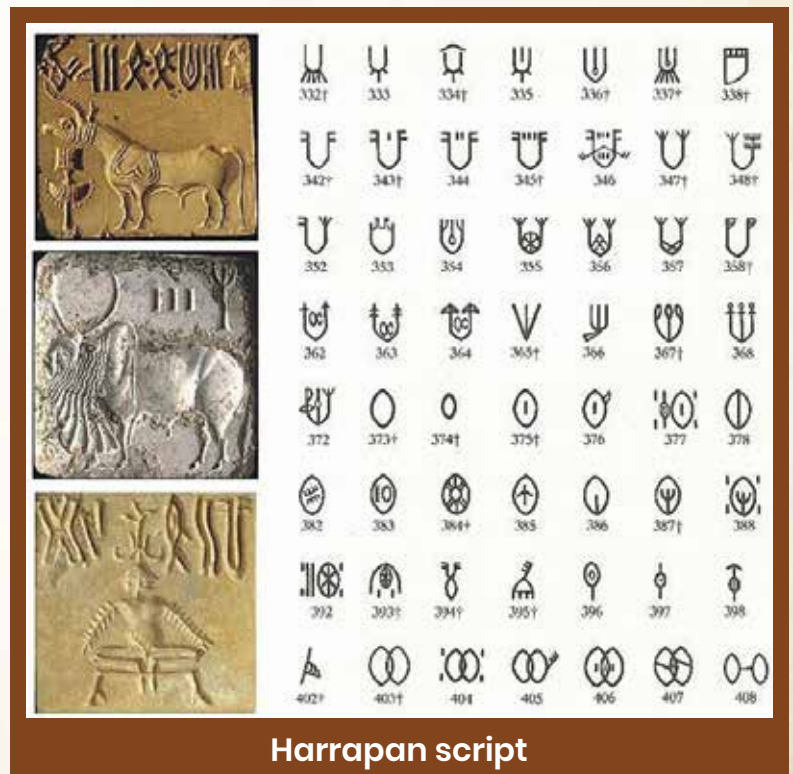


- Lothal:** Multiple burials, including **couple burials**, were found.
- Ropar:** A man was buried with a dog.
- Fire Altars:** Found in **Kalibangan**, these brick-lined pits suggest **ritual sacrifices** and **fire rituals**.

Script

Undeciphered Writing System

- The **Harappan script** remains undeciphered, despite efforts to connect it with languages like **Sanskrit, Dravidian languages, and Sumerian**.



Harappan script

- The Harappan script was **pictographic**. Most inscriptions were short, typically found on seals rather than lengthy texts, and **written in a Boustrophedon style** (alternating writing directions).
- The script appears to be **indigenous** to the Indus Valley and unrelated to other ancient civilizations.

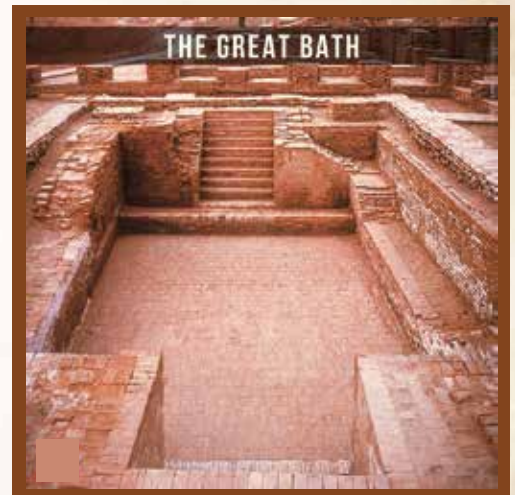
Cosmetics and Fashion

- ◆ **Fashion Conscious:** People were mindful of their appearance, with a focus on personal adornment.
- ◆ **Cinnabar** was used as face paint, lipstick, and collyrium (eyeliner).

Religious Practices

◆ Rituals and Beliefs

- The **Great Bath** at Mohenjodaro may have held **ritualistic significance**, possibly used for purification or religious ceremonies.
- The association of the **Great Bath** with a nearby structure suggests the presence of **priests** or religious leaders, pointing to organized rituals.
- **No evidence of temples has been found in Harappan culture.**



◆ Deities

- **Proto-Shiva:** Depictions of a deity with a **buffalo-horned headgear**, surrounded by animals like **tigers, elephants, and rhinos**, suggest the worship of a proto-Shiva figure, often identified as **Pashupati** (Lord of Beasts).

- **Mother Goddess:** Numerous **terracotta figurines** of a female figure suggest the worship of a **fertility goddess**, possibly linked to the earth and motherhood.



◆ Other Religious Symbols

- **Tree Worship:** Seals depicting figures worshipping a **Pipal tree** suggest the significance of trees in religious beliefs, with some figures possibly representing **sages** or **mothers** in mythology.



- **Animal Worship:** Animals like **bulls**, **tigers**, **elephants**, and **rhinoceroses** were revered, as shown in terracotta figurines and seals. The **unicorn** seal might represent a **rhinoceros**.



- ◆ **Fire Altars:** Found in **Kalibangan**, these **brick-lined pits** suggest the practice of **fire rituals** and **animal sacrifices**.



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