

Indus Civilization: Important Features

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DISCOVERY

Indus civilization is also known as Harappa civilization, as it was first discovered at Harappa.

The first person to notice Harappa was Charles Masson, a British Army deserter, who visited Harappa in 1826.

In 1831, Lieutenant Alexander Burnes visited Harappa.

Alexander Cunningham visited Harappa in 1853 and again in 1856.

Harappa provided bricks for laying 100 miles of Lahore-Multan railway.

Brahmanabad provided ballast for about 150 miles of railway.

SOME OF THE IMPORTANT FEATURES

- Indus civilization was one of the most advanced civilizations of the world.
- It occupied the largest area of any civilization – 1.3 million sq. kilometers.
- It was the earliest civilization to have town planning.
- Only Indus civilization had underground, covered drainage system.



CHRONOLOGY

- PRE-HARAPPAN 3000 – 2500 BC.
- MATURE HARAPPAN 2500 – 1750 BC.
- LATE HARAPPAN 1750 – 1500 BC.

TOWN PLANNING

DIVIDED INTO TWO/THREE AREAS:

CITADEL

MIDDLE TOWN

LOWER TOWN

CITADEL: Contained the living quarters of the **Ruling Family** and the important public buildings like the great bath, collegiate, town halls, etc. Enclosed by fortification wall.

MIDDLE TOWN : Houses of the **Well to Do** families like the traders and High officials. Fortified.

LOWER TOWN: Houses for the **Common People**, artisans and workers quarters. Sometimes fortified.

TOWN LAYOUT: Town divided into blocks in cardinal directions.

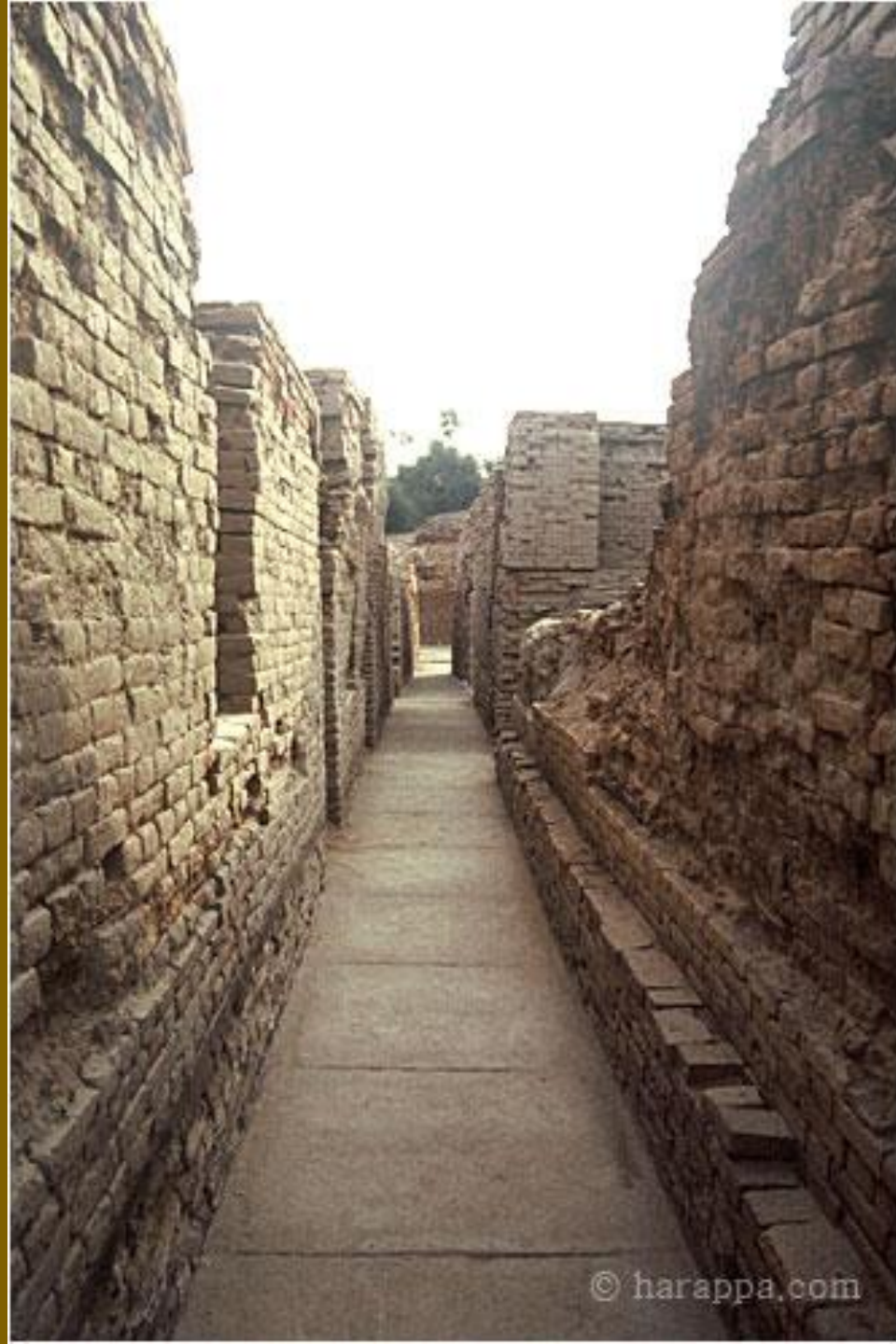






MOUND AB, HARAPPA

NARROW STREET



- Walls used to be plain.
- Very few windows, ventilation was poor.
- Different kinds and sizes of bricks were used. We find Rectangular, Square, Wedge-Shaped and L-shaped Bricks.
- Used both **Mud Bricks** and **Burnt Bricks**



FORTIFICATIONS

- **Mud-briks in Pre-Harappan Phase**
- **Burnt bricks and sometimes, mudbricks in mature Harappan phase.**
- **Rectangular in plan with bastions in corners and near entrances.**
- **Entrances 4 to 6.**
- **1.5 to 2 Km on longer side.**
- **The walls are about 2.5 M. to 7 Mt. wide and about 4 Mt. High.**



© Archaeological Survey of India

HOUSES

- **Most of the houses had SIX or more rooms**
- **Some houses had upper floors**
- **Living room, kitchen, bedrooms, bathrooms, store rooms, room for cattle, etc.**
- **Floors paved with brick and sometimes with glazed tiles.**
- **Lime, Gypsum (Plaster of Paris), Bitumen used for water-proofing.**
- **Walls used to be plain.**
- **Very few windows, ventilation poor.**





TRAFFIC CONTROL BLOCK



in extent) and proportions (prop. 0.8 to 0.9),

units: have similar dimensions and proportions.

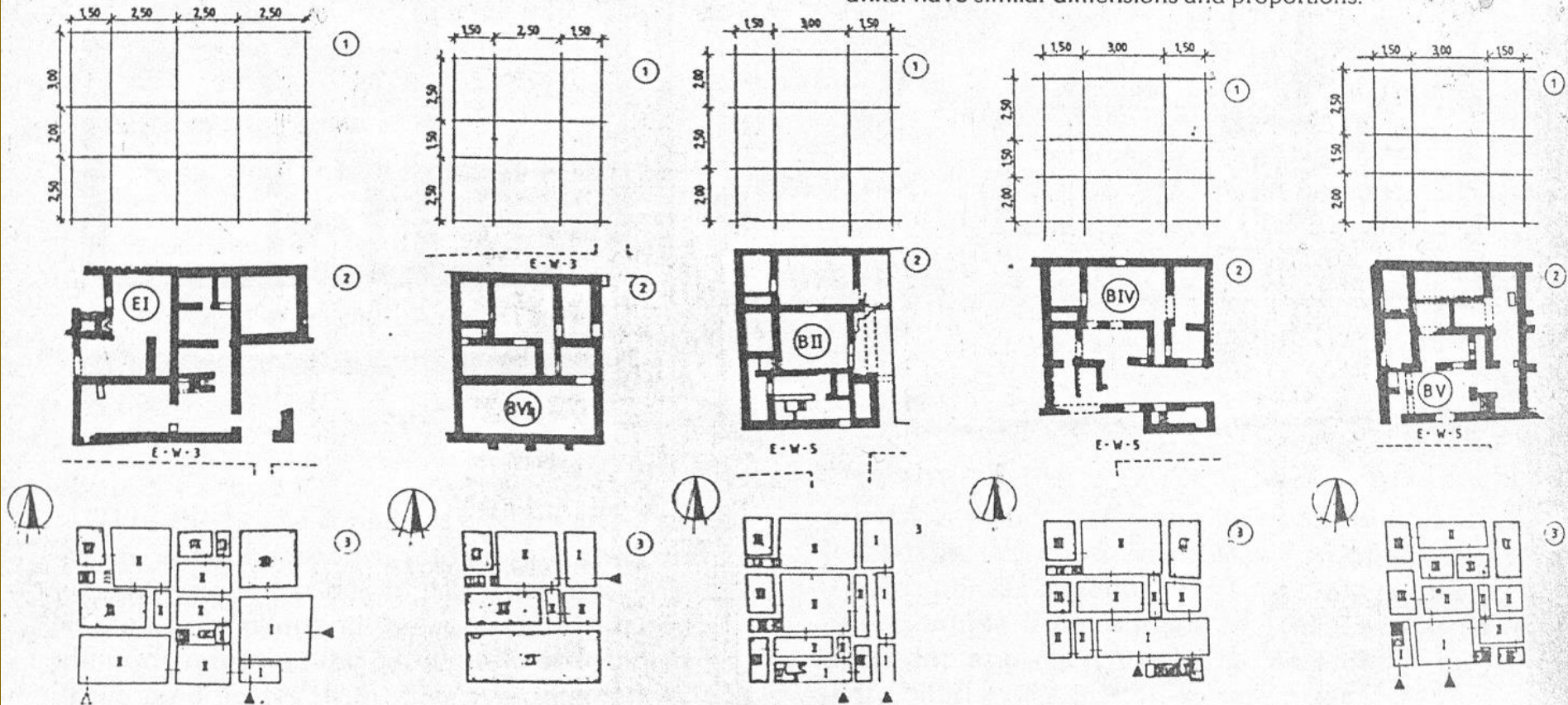


Fig.8.10. Mohenjo-daro: Typology of houses

TOILETS





© harappa.com



STAIR CASE OF A HOUSE



© shunya.net

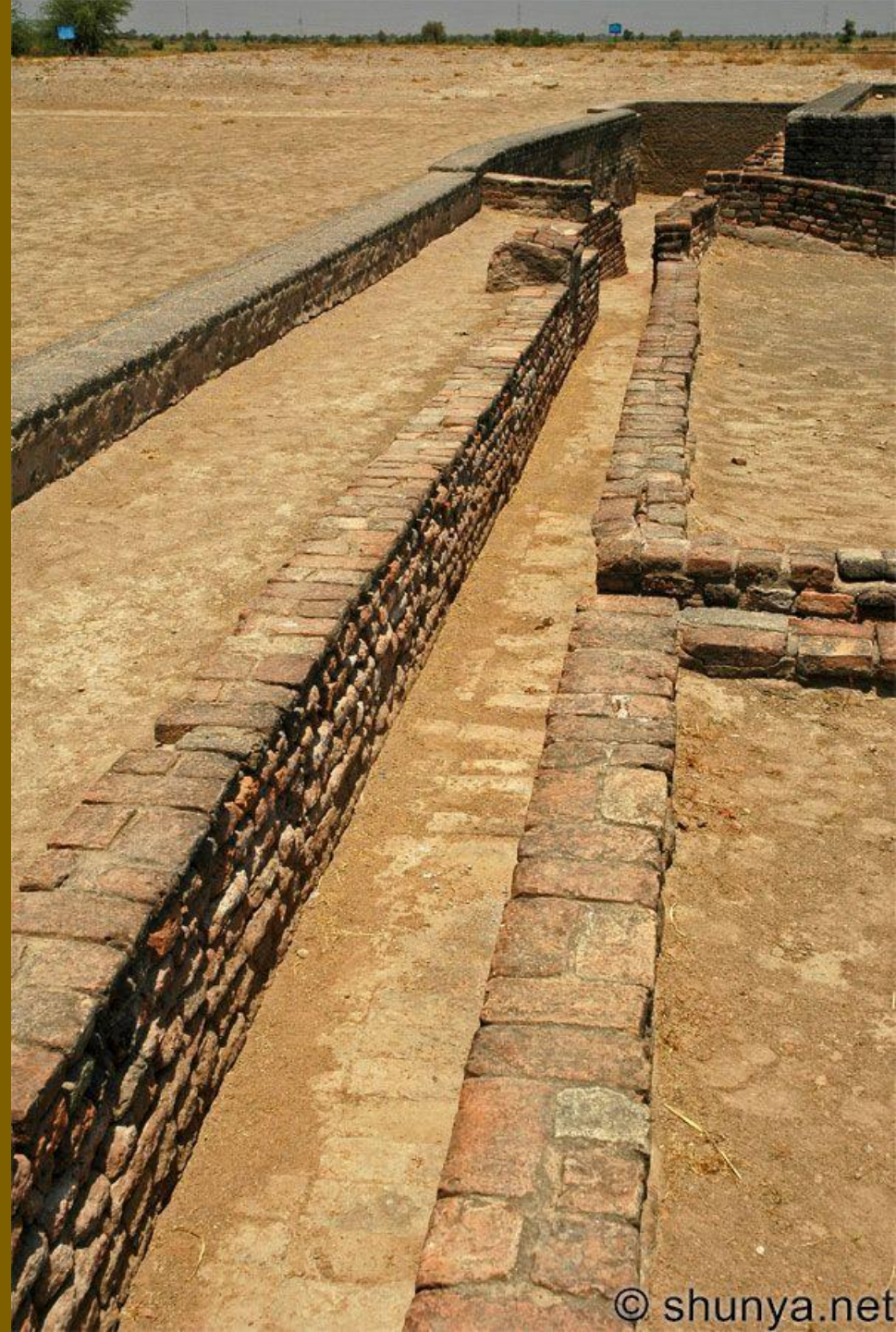


DRAINAGE SYSTEM

- **Underground, covered drainage**
- **Constructed using burnt bricks.**
- **Corbelled roof or slabs used for covers.**
- **Manholes for inspection and cleaning.**
- **Sumps for trapping solid matter**
- **Main drains empty into the river.**
- **Terracotta pipes for draining water from upper floors.**
- **The underground drainage system speaks of their engineering skills. 'Levelling' and slope maintained throughout the city for unhindered sewerage flow is a marvelous feat.**



LOTHAL DRAIN



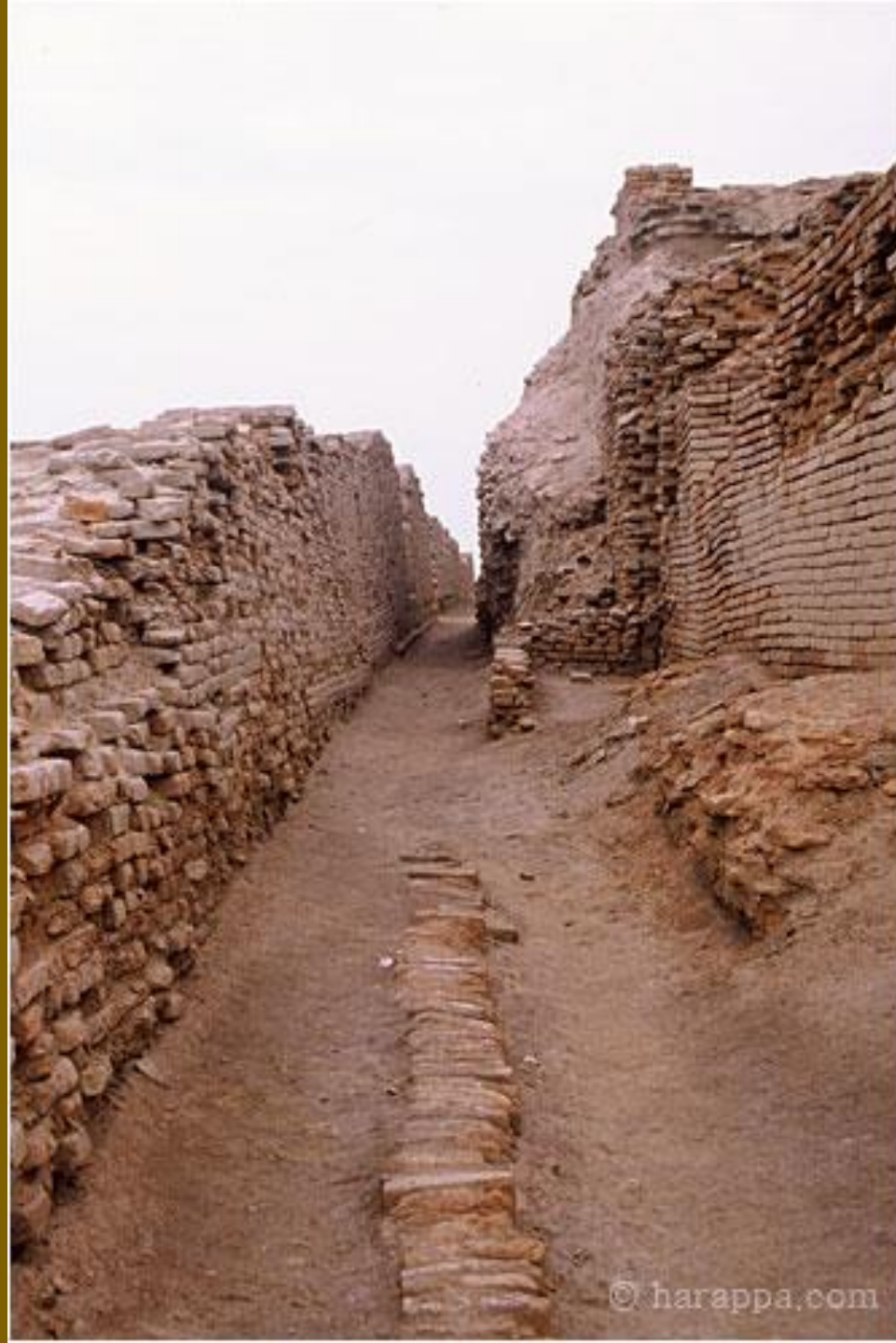


COVERED DRAIN



DRAIN, HARAPPA

COVERED DRAIN





GREAT BATH, MOHENJODARO





GRANARY? Or CLOTH INDUSTRY? HARAPPA

ROUND PLATFORMS



Courtesy:
MARK KENOYER

OPEN AIR
STADIUM



Courtesy: Mark Kenoyer



Villages on ancient mounds were above the flood levels



Mohenjo-daro Mound



Indus at winter low water level



**-latrines or commodes
in each house with
water pot for washing**

**- bathing platforms and
private wells made from
wedge shaped bricks (stone
at Dholavira)**

**Public wells for convenience
of visitors and traders in the
cities**

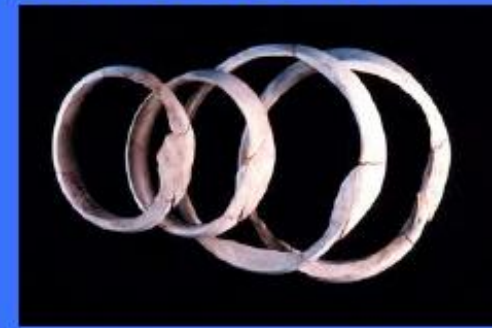


Courtesy: Mark Kenoyer

Hierarchies of materials can be linked to status and wealth



Courtesy: Mark Kenoyer



Shell



Stoneware

Faience



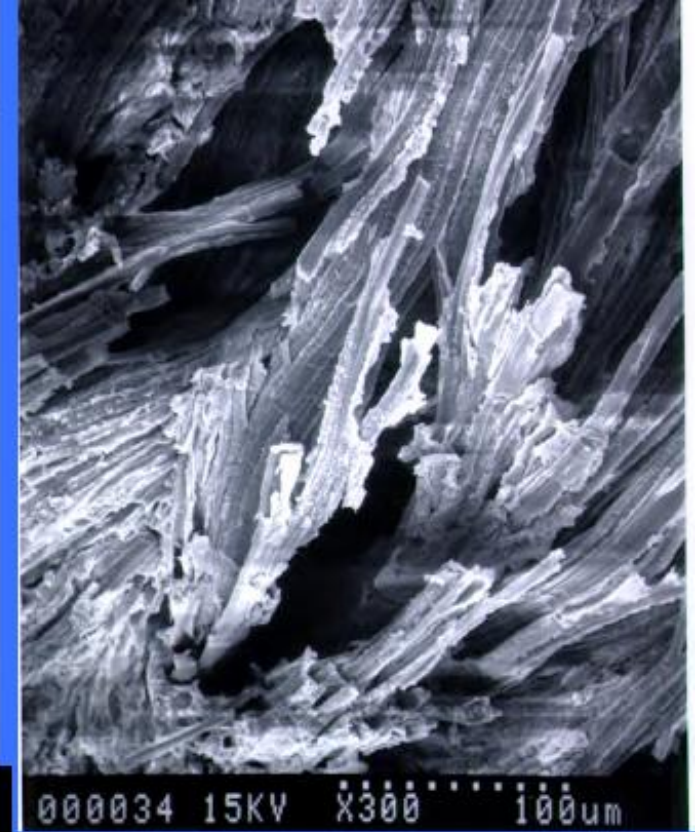
terracotta



Copper



**Silk thread inside
wire necklace from
Harappa, 2450 BC**



SEM of ancient silk



Courtesy: Mark Kenoyer



Male burial with beads



Courtesy: Mark Kenoyer



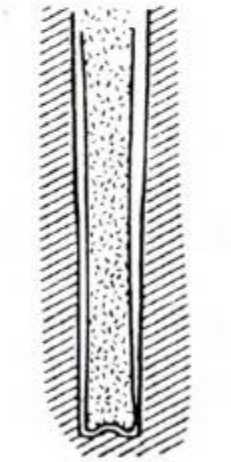
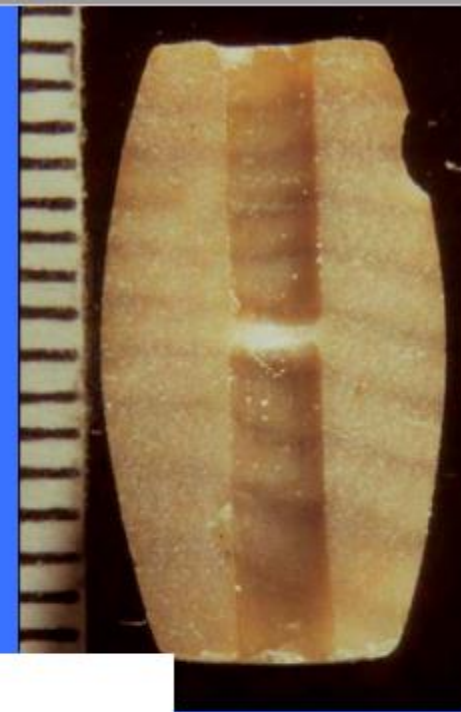
**Chanhudaro – long bead
manufacture – sawn and
chipped blanks**



**Harappan Period,
2600-1900 BC**

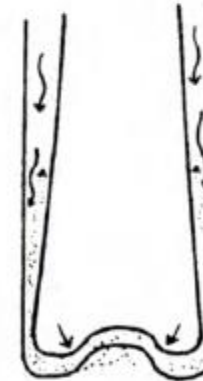
Courtesy: Mark Kenoyer

**Straight and stepped drilling with
constricted cylindrical drills of Ernestite –
set the foundation for later drilling using
diamond drills**



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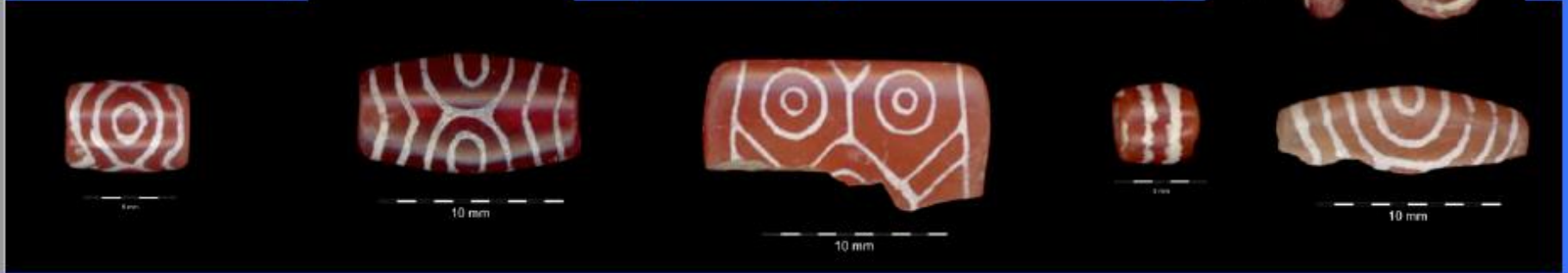
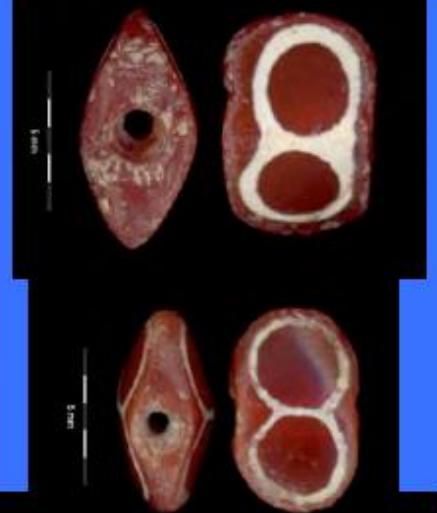
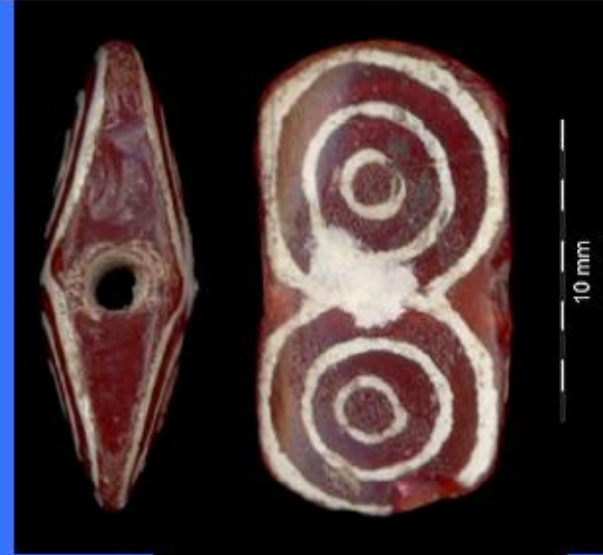
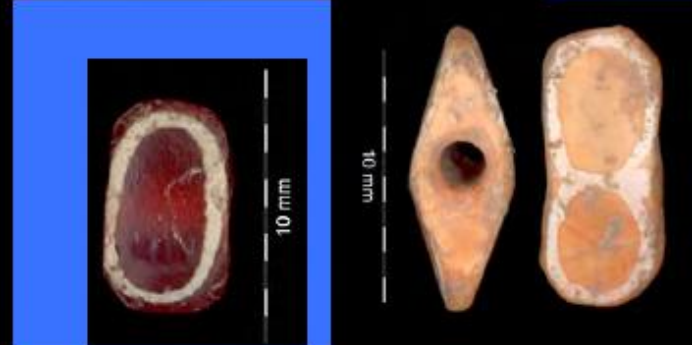
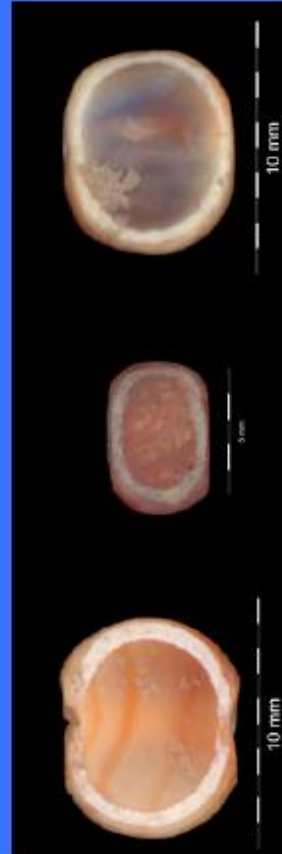
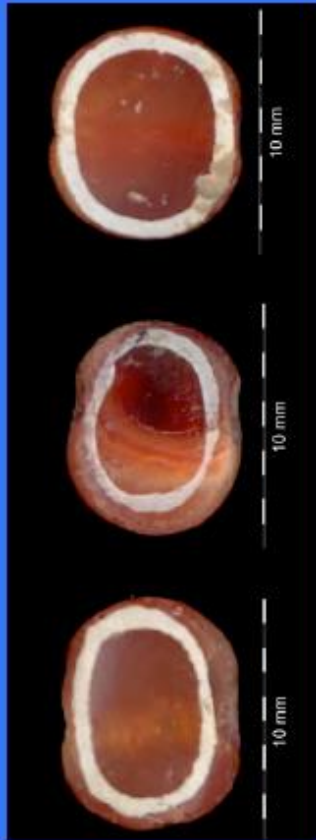
a.



b.

Dholavira Bleached Carnelian Beads

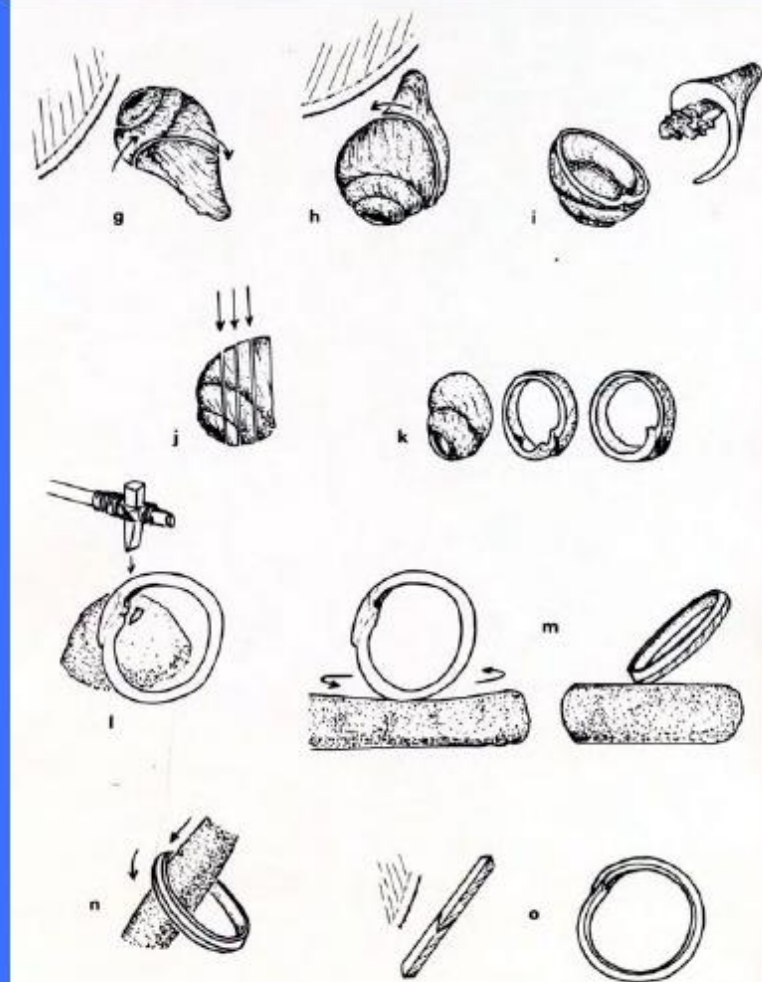
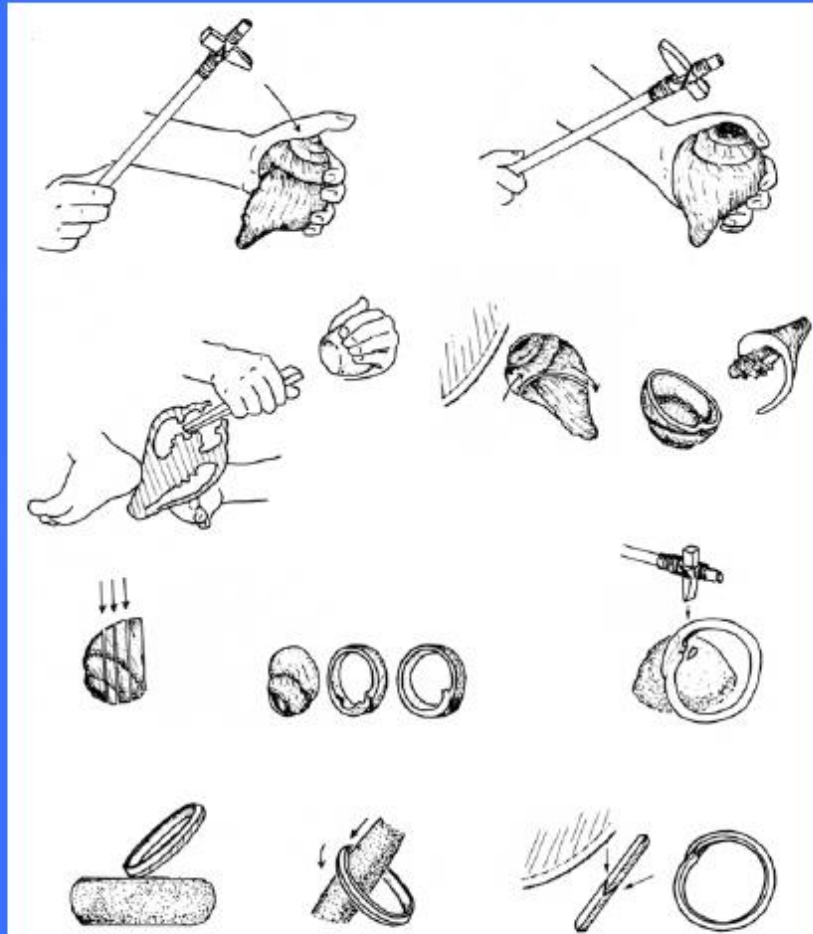
Courtesy: Mark Kenoyer



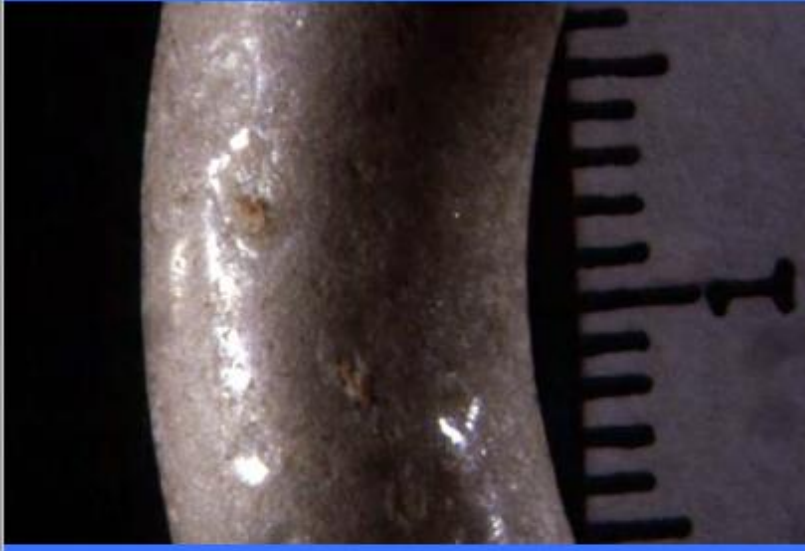
Shell Bangle manufacturing clam shell and gastropod



Turbinella pyrum



Faience Bangles

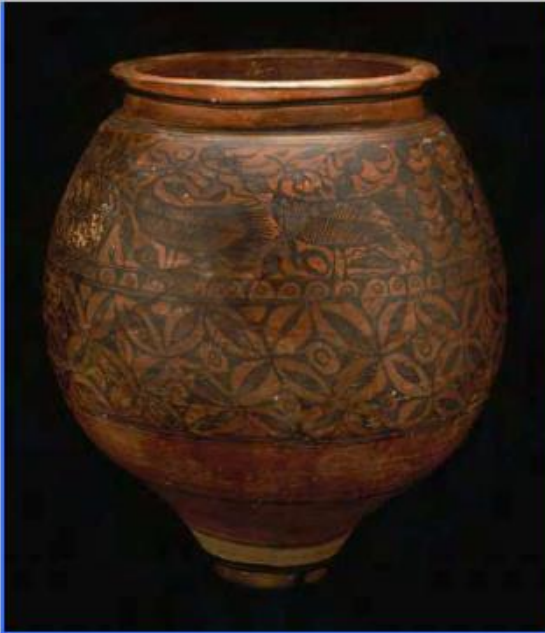


Set the foundation for
glass bangle production

Courtesy: Mark Kenoyer

Harappa Burial Pottery,
early burials with
elaborately painted
pottery that was
covered with a plain
slip and plain pottery,
and later burials with
banded designs





Harappan Rituals and Dowries

Feasting and Presentation



**Cooking specific Harappan
tasting foods and beer**

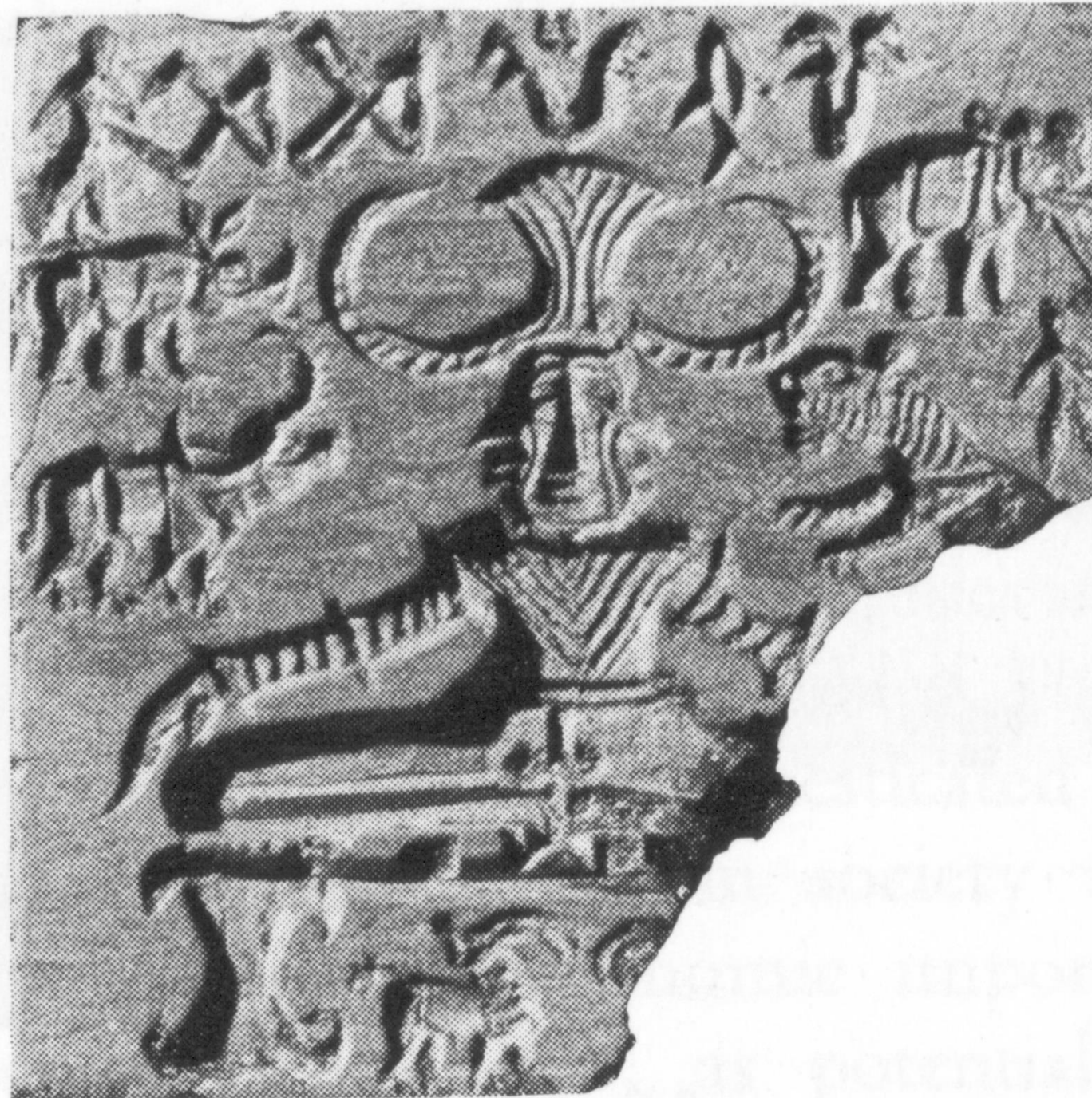




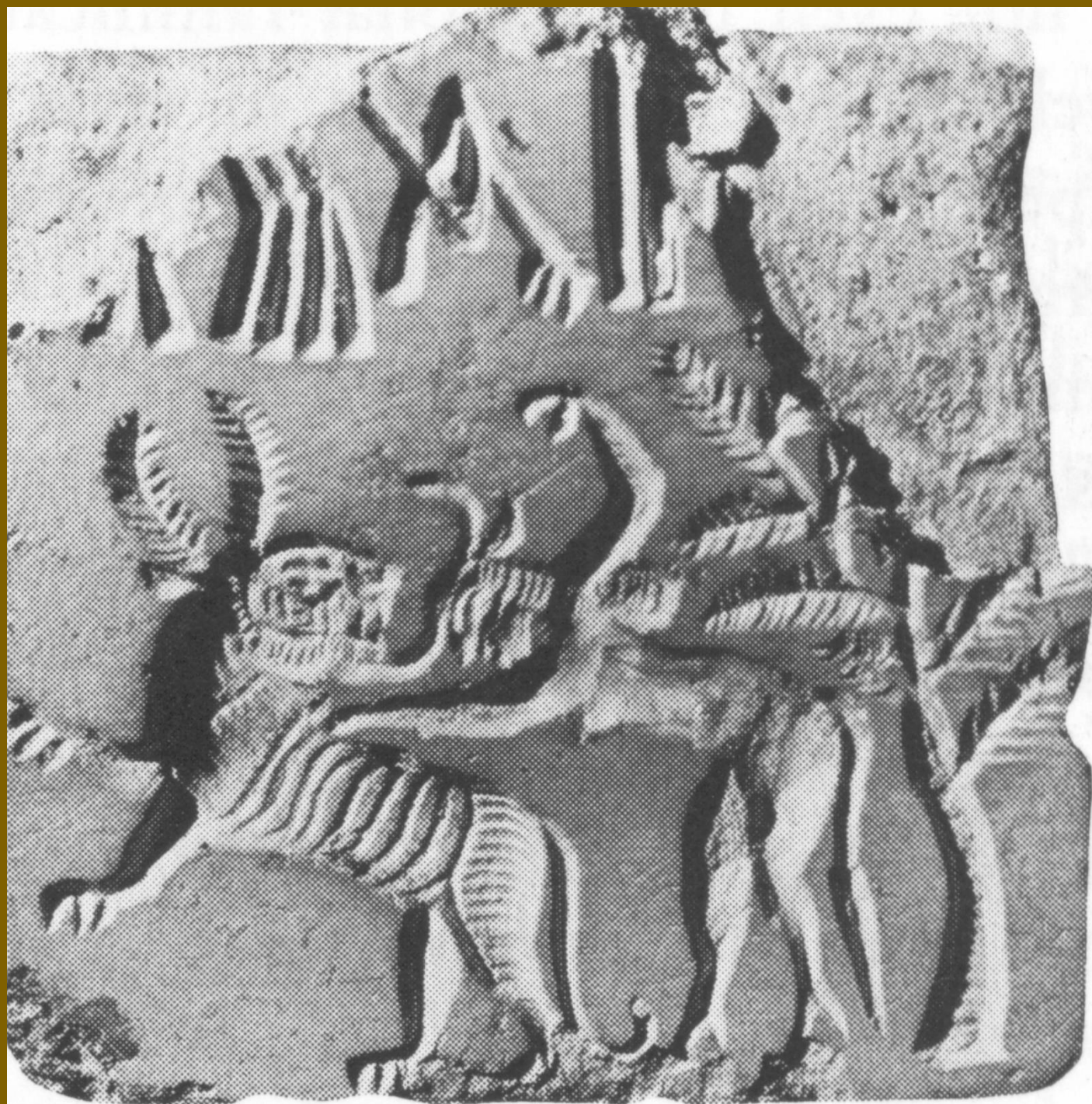
RELIGION

- **Gods and Goddesses**
- **Nature worship**
- **Proto-shiva known also as *Pasupati* (god of animals), three faced god.**
- **Mother Goddess most popular – fertility cult. Mostly nude with prominent female features.**
- **Sun and fire worship.**
- **Worship of Male and Female sexual organs known.**
- **Sacrificial.**

MOHENJO
DARO



MOHENJO
DARO



MOHENJO
DARO





MOHENJO DARO







SEALS

- More than 2500 seals found so far.
- Made of steatite or soap stone.
- Mostly square and rectangular.
- They are 'intaglios' – contain negative relief.
- Contain figures and script.
- Purpose not very clear – Suggestions: religious, trade stampings.







MOHENJO
DARO



MOHENJO DARO



MOHENJO
DARO



HARAPPA



SCRIPT

- **Mostly found on seals, but also on pottery and other media.**
- **Reveals both syllabic and pictographic character.**
- **Direction not known.**
- **Language of the Indus people not known.**



SEALING FROM BANAWALI
Excavated by R.S. Bisht



ORNAMENTS

- Gold, silver, copper, stone, ivory, shell, terra cotta used for ornaments.
- Head bands, nose and ear studs, necklaces, arm bands, ear rings, bangles, finger rings, girdles, anklets were used.
- Brass mirrors.
- Vanity cases with toilet objects – combs, hairpins, eye applicators, tweezers, nailparers, etc.

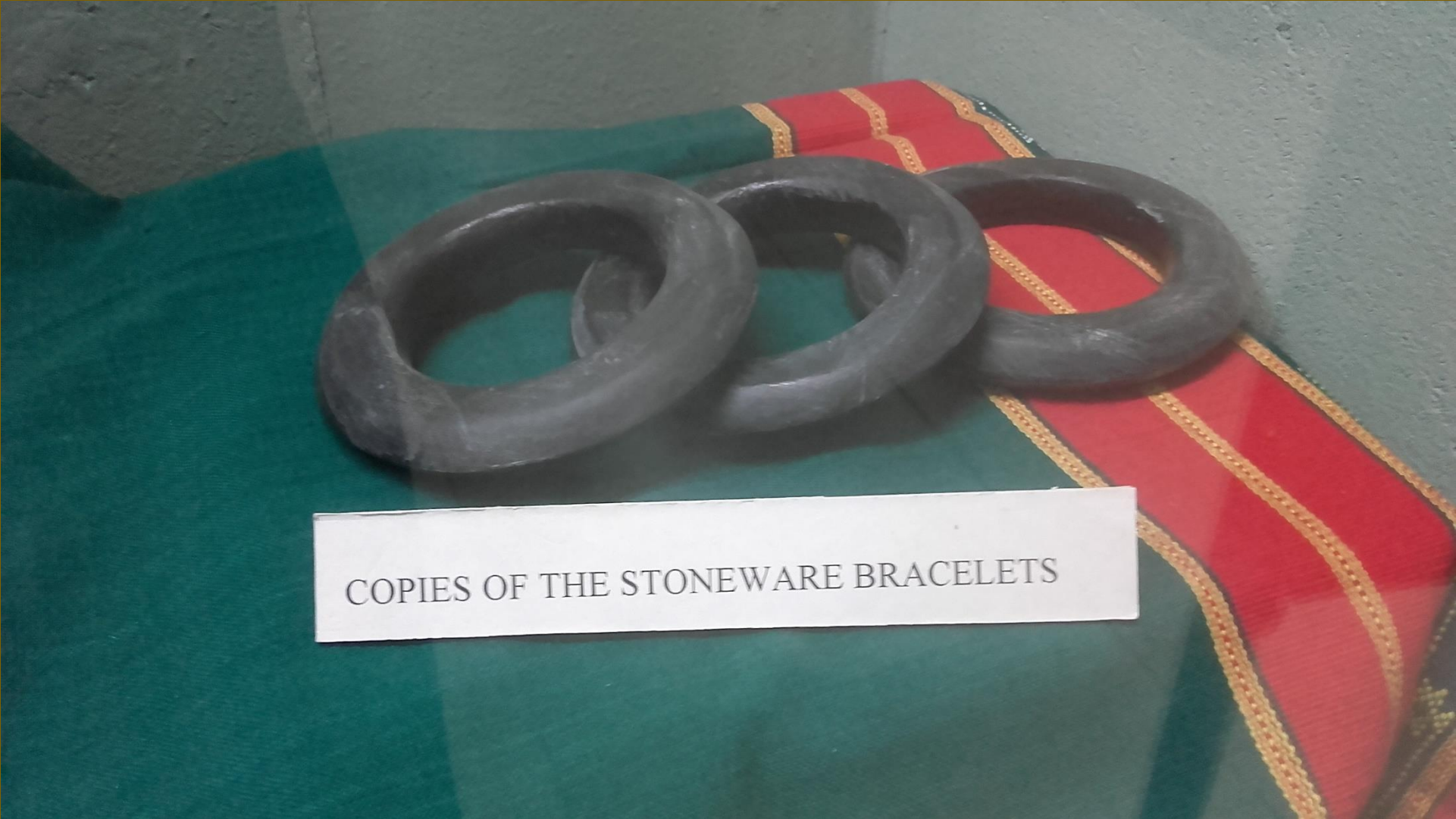
MOHENJO DARO



Female figure. From Mohenjo-daro.



NECKLACE OR BELT, MOHENJO DARO



COPIES OF THE STONEWARE BRACELETS



COPPER BRONZE BANGLES



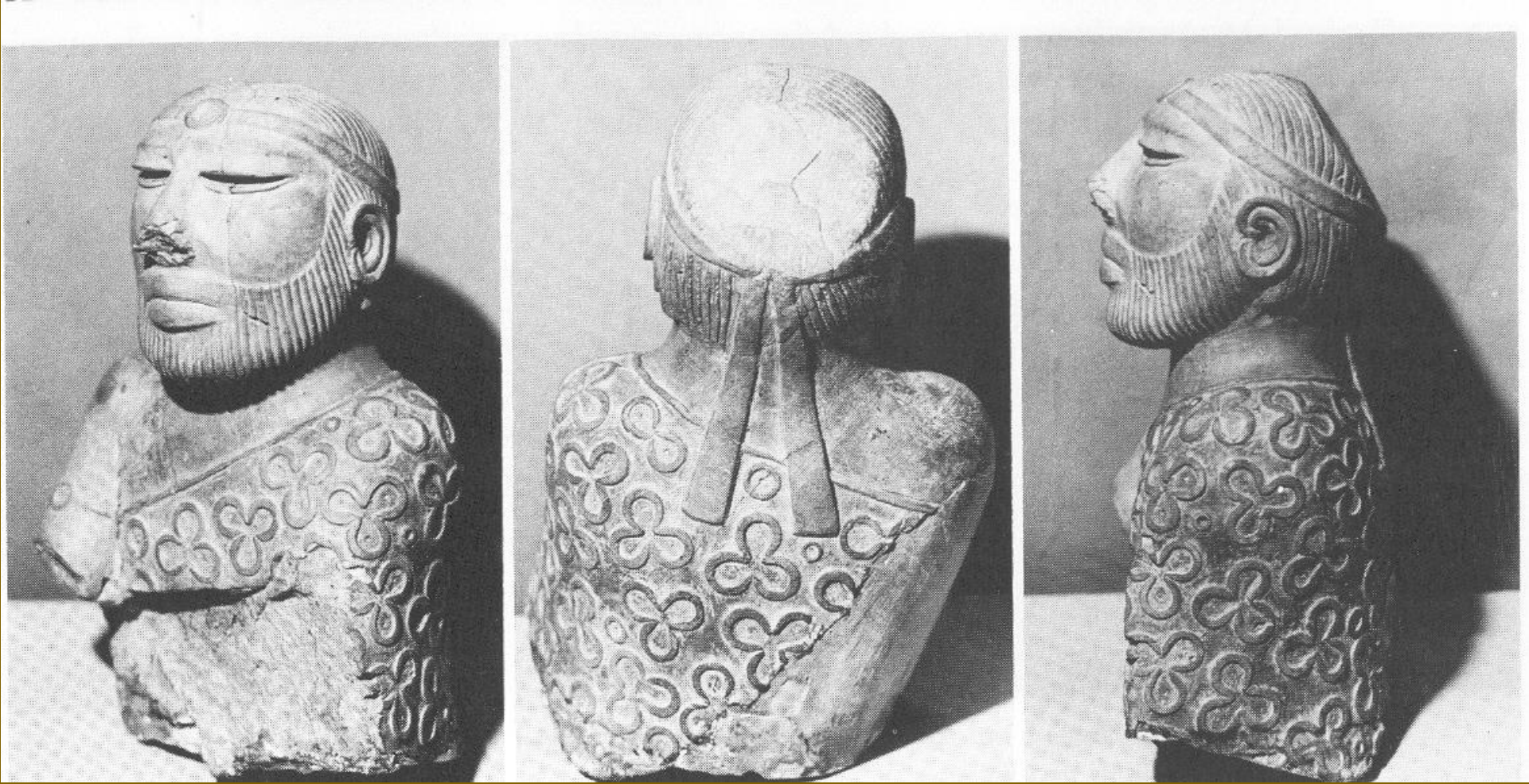
TERRACOTTA BANGLES
AND RINGS

INDUS ART

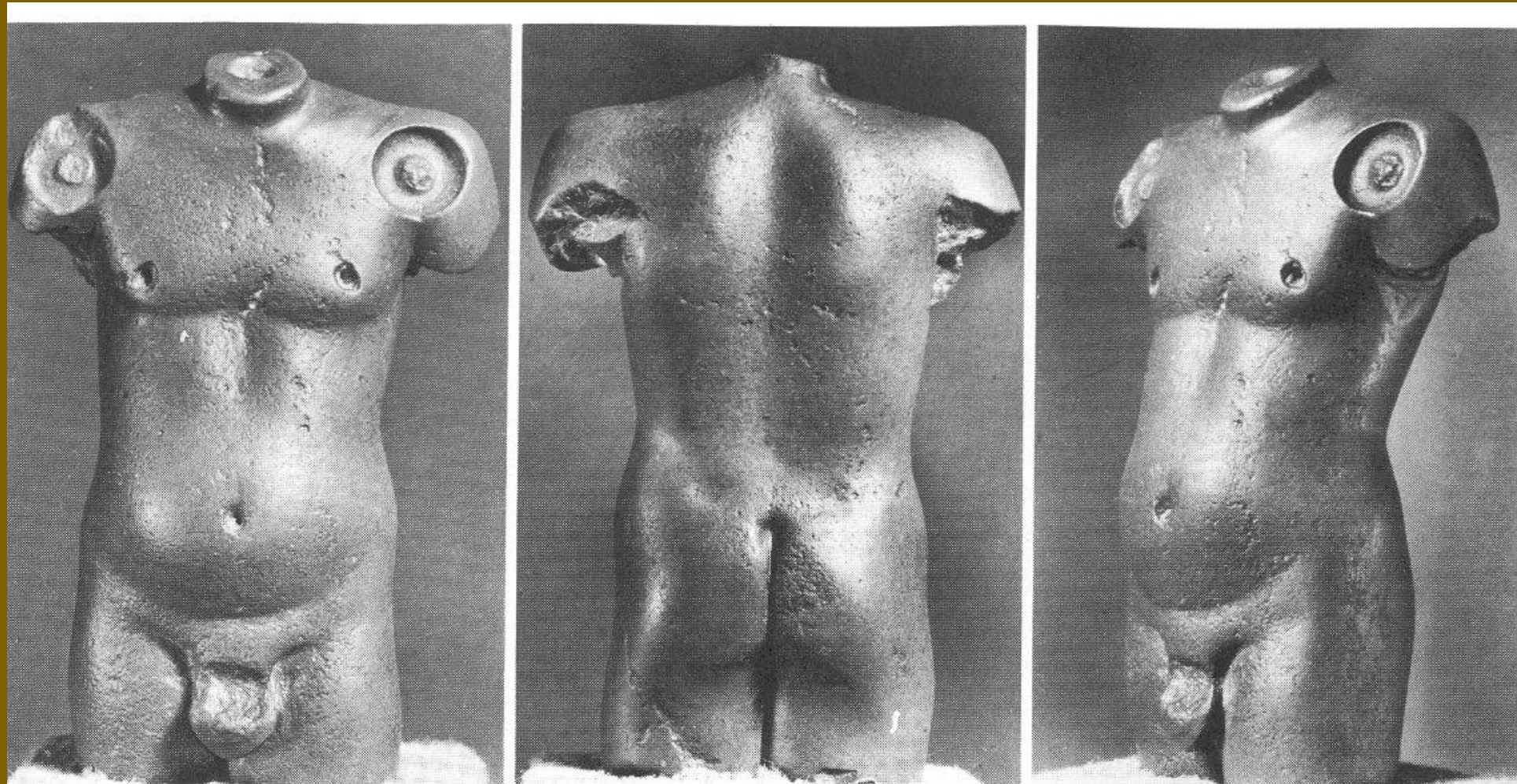
- Earliest stone carving tradition in India
- Perfect, realistic, lively, artistic and imaginative.
- Stone, Terracotta main media.
- Secular and Religious



MOHENJODARO



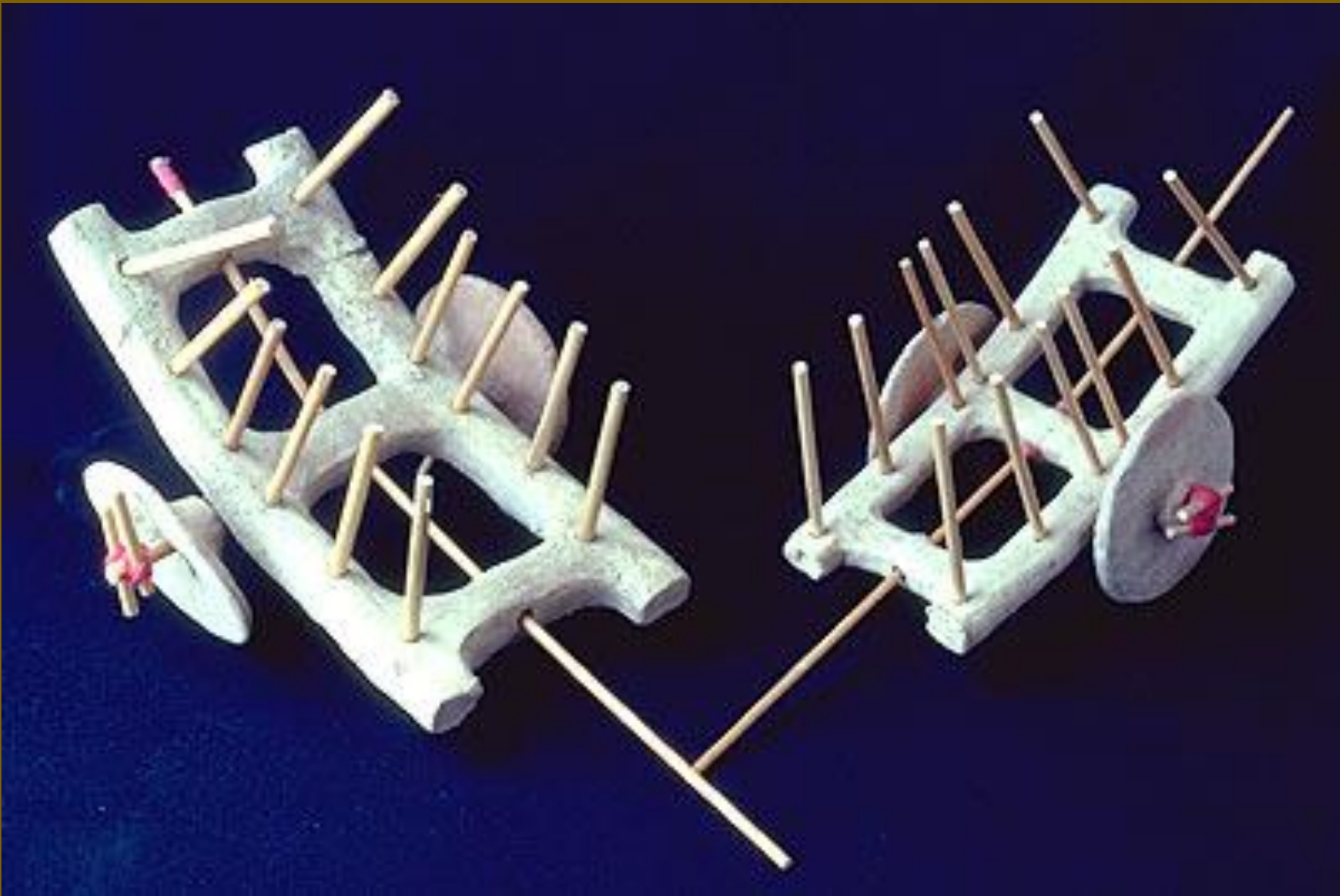
MOHENJODARO



HARAPPA



















TOY BOAT HARAPPA



END OF INDUS CIVILIZATION

- **The civilization disappeared by about 1500 BC.**
- **Various theories for its end.**
- **Excess floods in the rivers.**
- **Decreasing fertility because of environmental change.**
- **Sudden subsidence or uplift of land (Earth quake)**
- **Invasion by enemies.**
- **Rigid society.**

THANQ

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