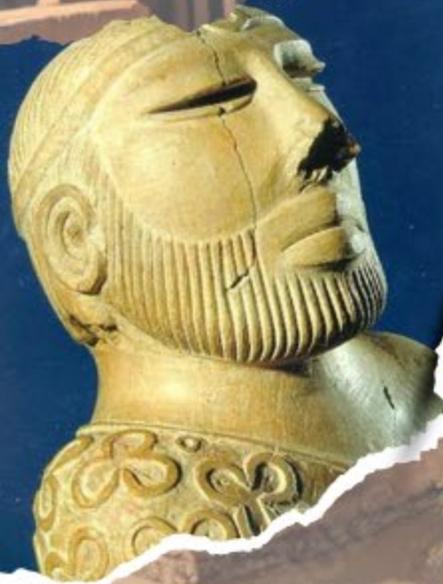


TOP 60

Part-1

HISTORY QUESTIONS FOR THE CBSE EXAM 2025-26"



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chapter wise previous year paper

**Q. 1 "The most unique feature of the Harappan civilization was the development of urban centres." Explain.
(8 Marks, 2024 Main Exam)**

Introduction

City Planning and it's Uniqueness

Concluding Remarks

**Q. 1 "The most unique feature of the Harappan civilization was the development of urban centres." Explain.
(8 Marks, 2024 Main Exam)**

- The development of **urban centres** is considered a unique feature of the Harappan civilization due to several aspects of their planning and structure:
- **Planned Cities:** Cities division into two sections: the smaller, higher **Citadel** and the larger **Lower Town**.
- **Standardization: Uniformity in planning** across different sites,
 - like standardized brick sizes (whether sun-dried or baked), suggesting a coordinated or centralized planning authority.

- **Citadel:**

- Built on mud-brick platforms and separated from the Lower Town.
- The Citadel housed structures used for special public purposes, like the **Great Bath** and the **Warehouse**.
- These indicate organised public life and administration.

- **Lower Town:**

- This residential area was also walled and built on platforms.
- Houses were centred around a courtyard, prioritizing privacy.
- Own bathrooms connected via drains to the street drainage system.
- Some larger houses had multiple stories and wells.

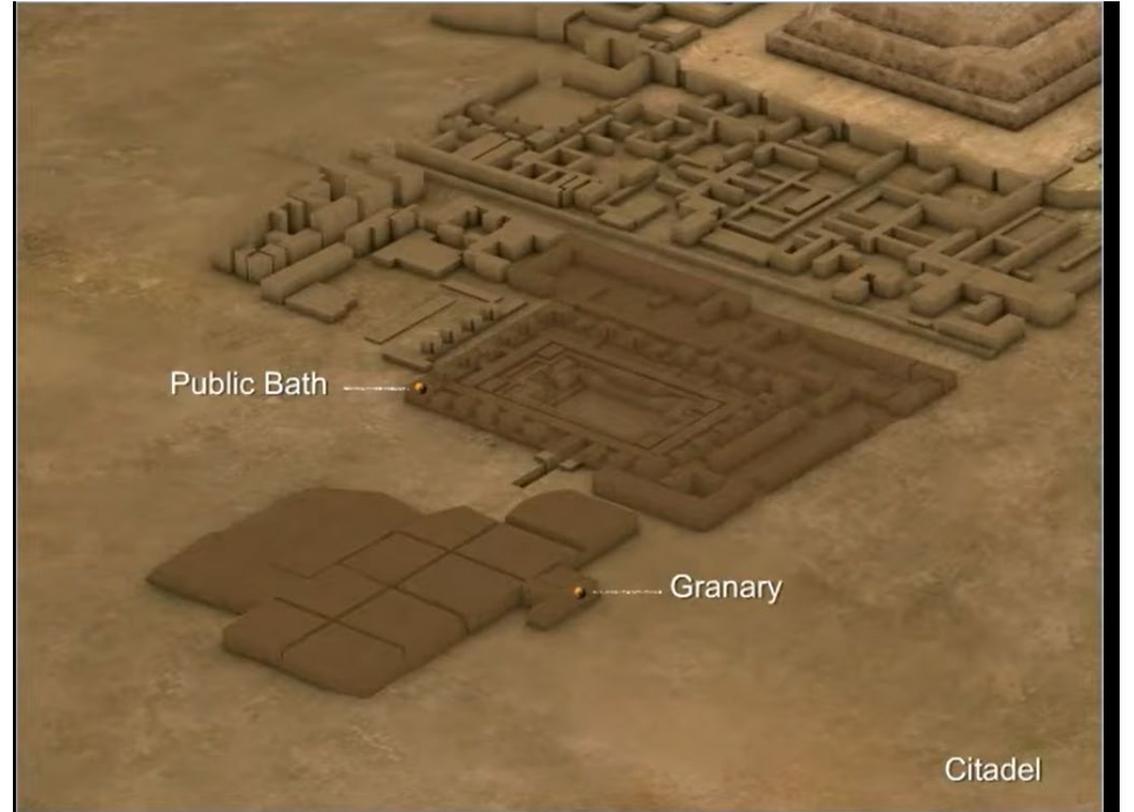
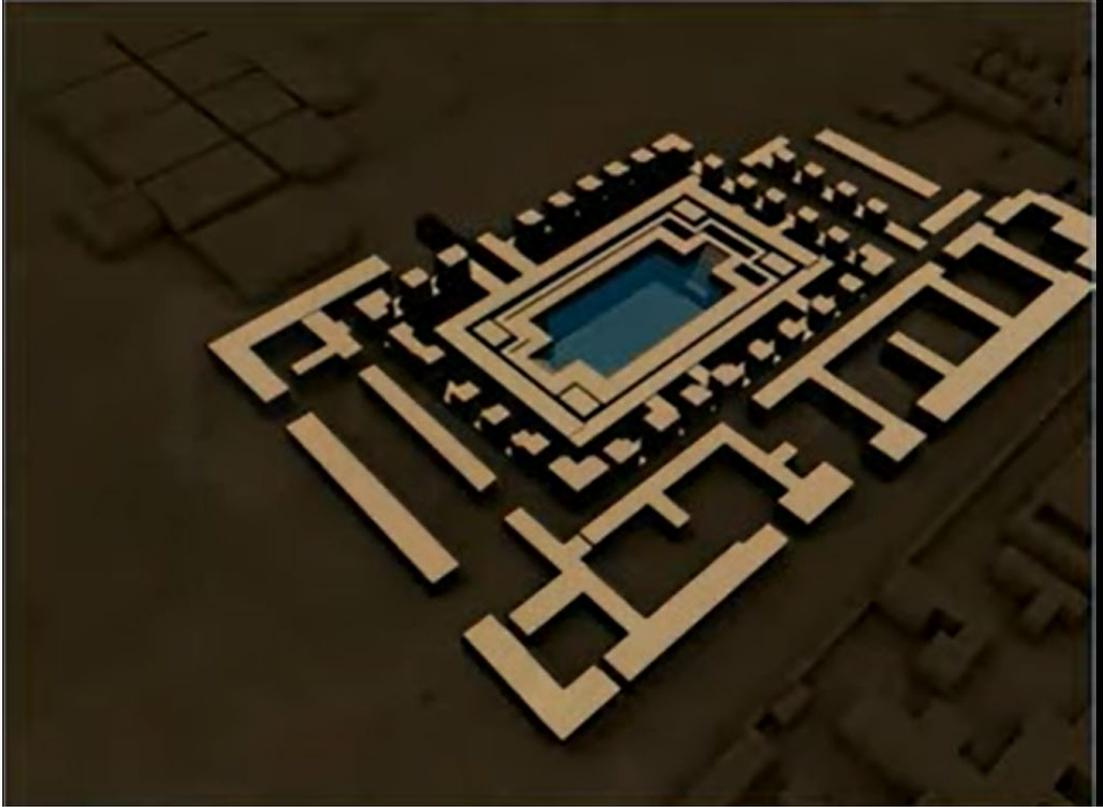


1. Main Gate
 2. Main Street
 3. Cattle Bazaar
 4. Market Square
 5. Granary Square
 6. Shrine Forest
 7. Entry to Shrine
 8. Arena
 9. Upper City Gate
 10. Maham's House
 11. Great Bath
 12. Senate
 13. River Gate
 14. North Gate

THE MAP OF MOHENJO DARO



7 x 14 x 28 cm (1:2:4 ratio).



- **Advanced Drainage System:**

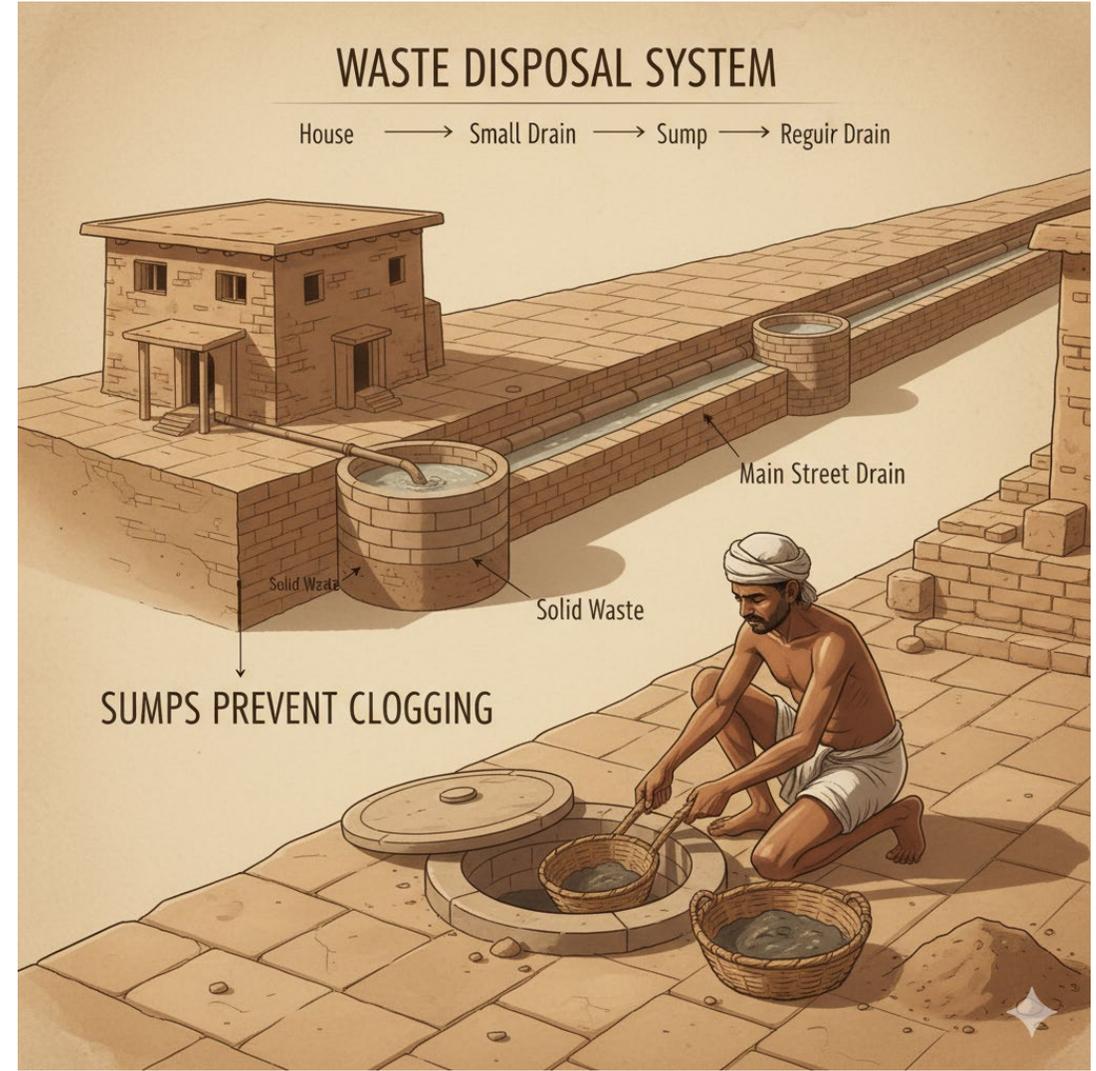
- Covering the entire city and integrated with individual houses.
- It highlights sophisticated engineering and emphasis on sanitation.

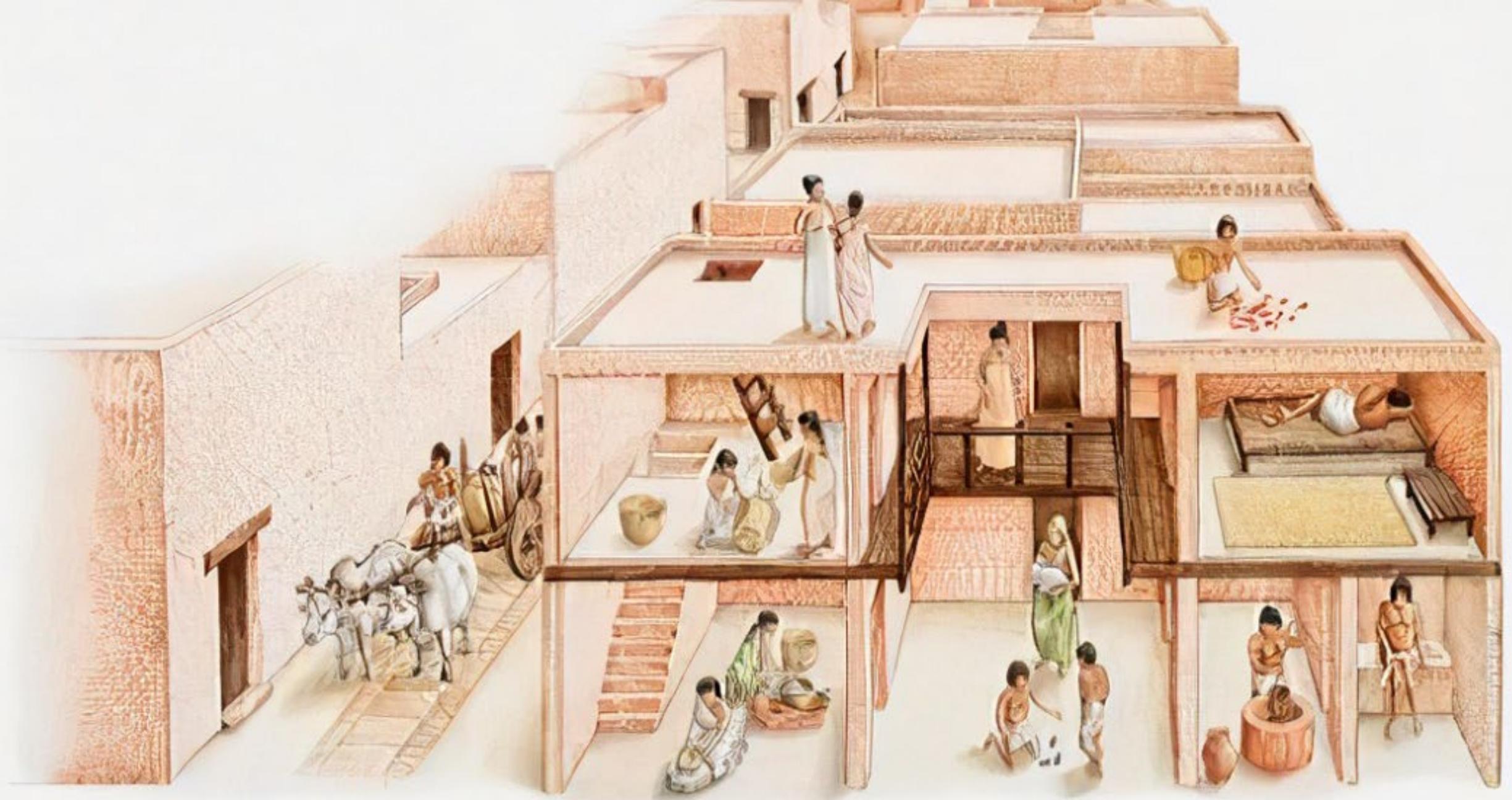
- **Roads and Streets:**

- Laid out in a grid pattern.
- Wide metalled Roads and street facilitating movement and organization within the city.



<https://www.youtube.com/@TheSoSietalSense>





- **Conclusion:** The scale of construction, standardization of materials, and complexity of infrastructure point towards a highly organized and unique society.



Q. "There are indications of complex decisions being taken and implemented in Harappan society." Substantiate the statement with suitable arguments. (8 Marks, 2024 Supp - OR)

Planned Settlements:

Standardized Weights and Measures:

Extraordinary Uniformity:

Large-Scale Construction:

Specialized Craft Production:

Seals and Script:

Q.2 "There is evidence that by c. 1800 BCE most of the Harappan sites had been abandoned." Substantiate the statement in the context of causes and evidences. (8 Marks, 2024 Supp)

Introduction

Evidences of abandonment

Possible Causes of abandonment

Conclusion

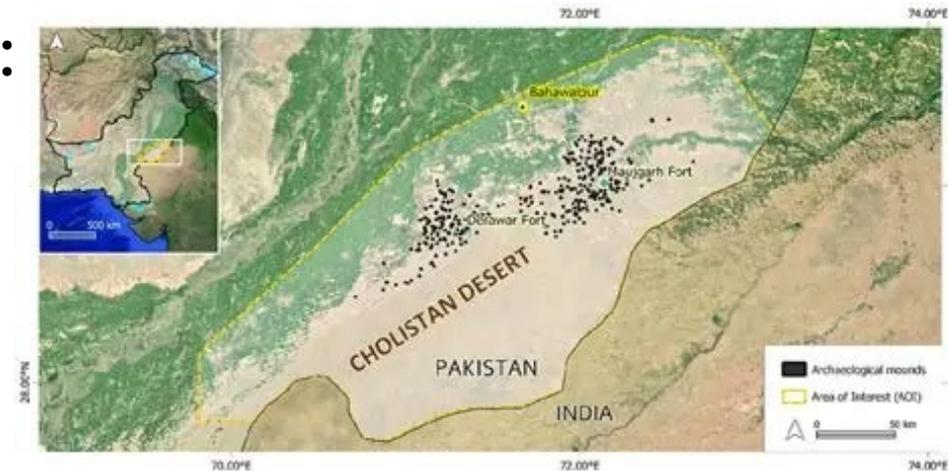
Q.2 "There is evidence that by c. 1800 BCE most of the Harappan sites had been abandoned." Substantiate the statement in the context of causes and evidences. (8 Marks, 2024 Supp)

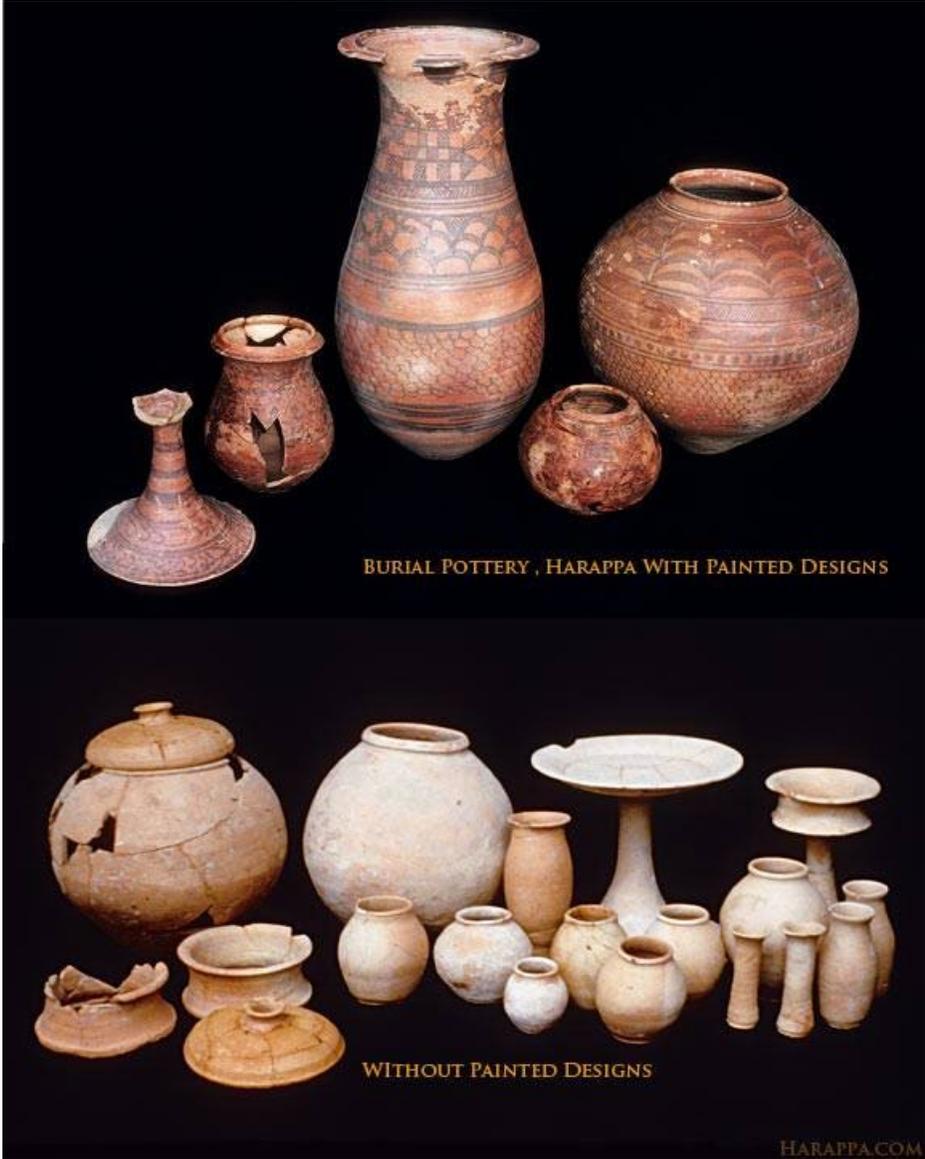
Introduction: Yes, evidence suggests a **decline and abandonment** of mature Harappan sites around 1800 BCE:

Evidences:

• Disappearance of Distinctive Features:

- Sites in Cholistan saw abandonment.
- There was a disappearance of key artifacts of the mature phase like weights, seals, special beads, standardized bricks, and distinctive pottery.
- Writing and long-distance trade also declined.





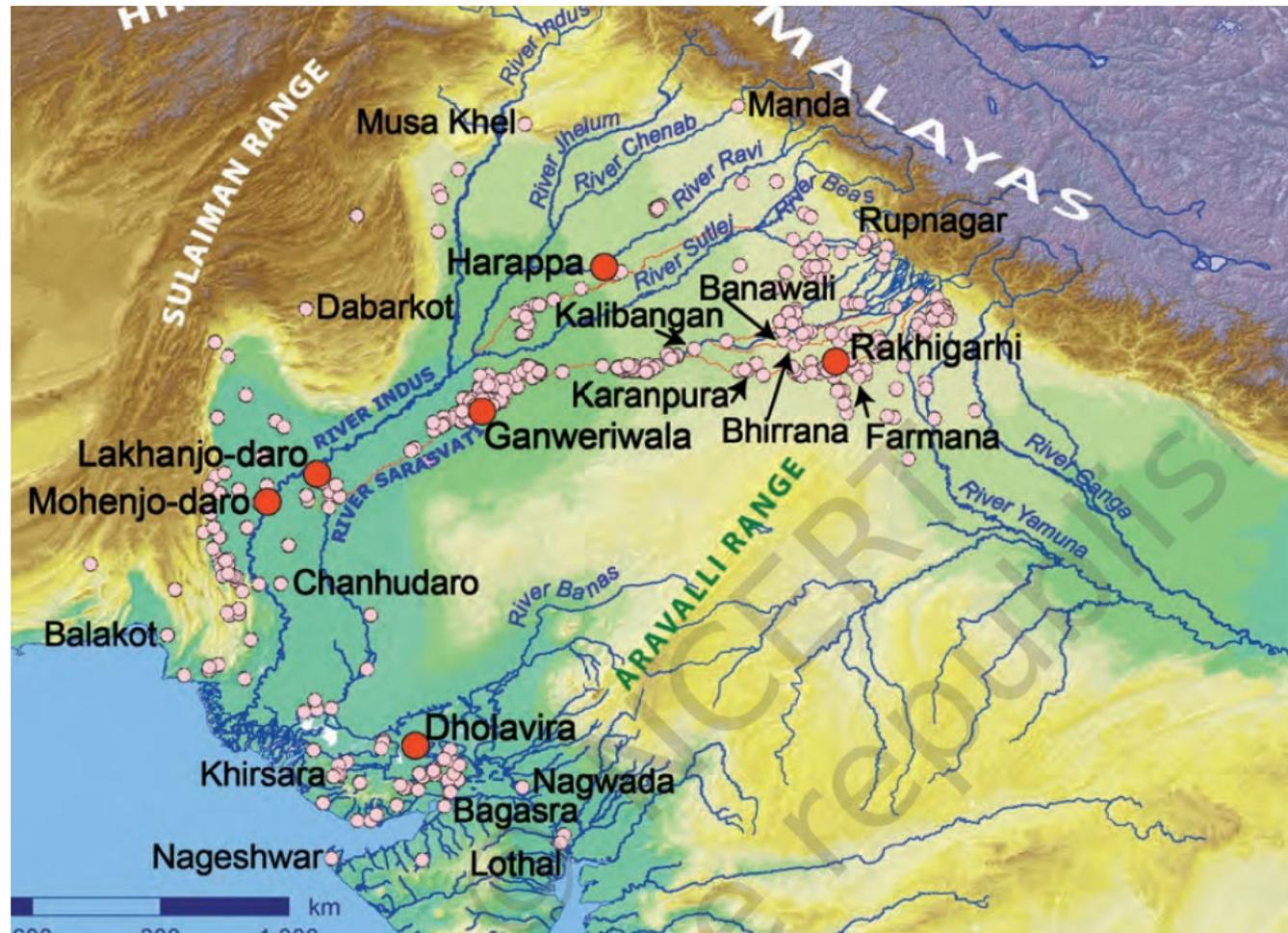
• Deterioration in Construction:

- House construction techniques deteriorated, and large public structures were no longer produced.
- Building materials became less standardized. (Kathya, Ujjain-House made of mud)

Shift in Settlements: There was an expansion of population into new settlements in Gujarat, Haryana, and western Uttar Pradesh, suggesting migration away from the core areas.

Transformation of Material Culture:

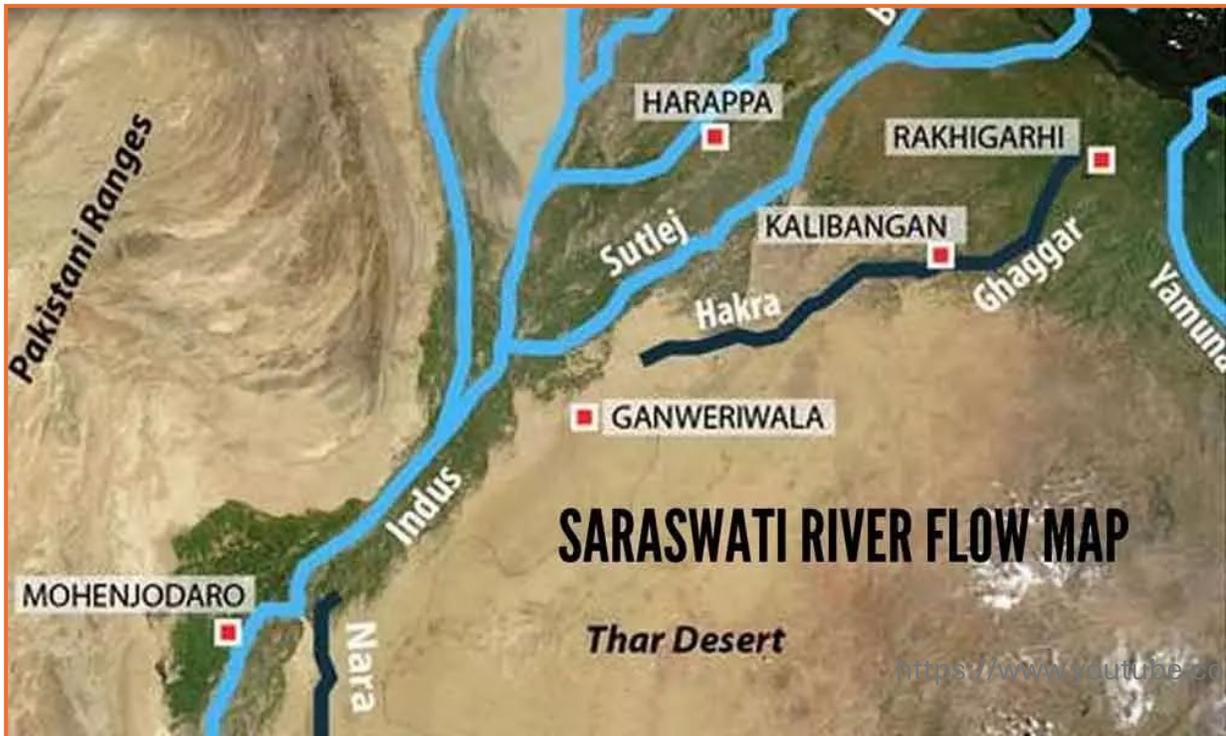
Overall, artifactual and settlement indicators point to a transformation, often termed "Late Harappan."



- **Possible Causes (Often Debated):**

- **Climate Change:** Increased aridity, shifting rainfall patterns, or changes affecting temperature could have impacted agriculture, the civilization's backbone.
- **Deforestation:** Excessive cutting of forests for timber (for brick-baking, smelting, construction) or fuel might have led to environmental degradation.

- **Flooding:** Evidence of repeated flooding at sites like Mohenjo-daro suggests catastrophic floods could have devastated urban centres.
- **Shifting/Drying Rivers:**
 - Tectonic shifts or natural damming could have altered river courses (like the Indus or the Ghaggar-Hakra), impacting water supply and trade routes.
 - Some theories suggest the drying up of the Sarasvati (Ghaggar-Hakra) river system.



- **Overuse of Landscape:** Intensive agriculture and grazing might have exhausted the land's resources.

Conclusion

- It's likely a combination of these factors, varying across regions, contributed to the gradual decline of the urban phase after 1800 BCE.

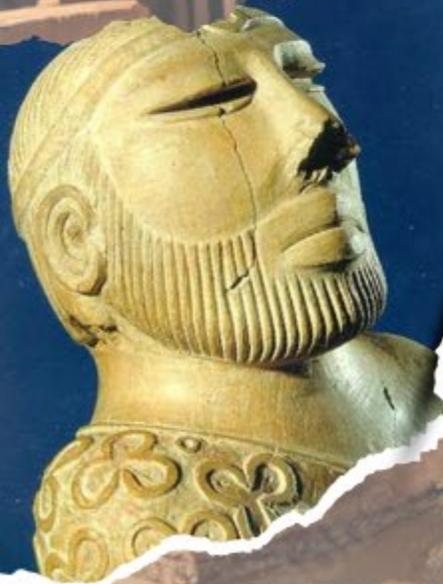
Q.3 "Historians considered the Harappan seals as the distinctive artifact." Examine the statement. (3 Marks, 2025 Supp)

Explain why the seals and sealings were used by the Harappans. (3 Marks, 2023 Main - OR)

TOP 60

Part-2

HISTORY QUESTIONS FOR THE CBSE EXAM 2025-26"



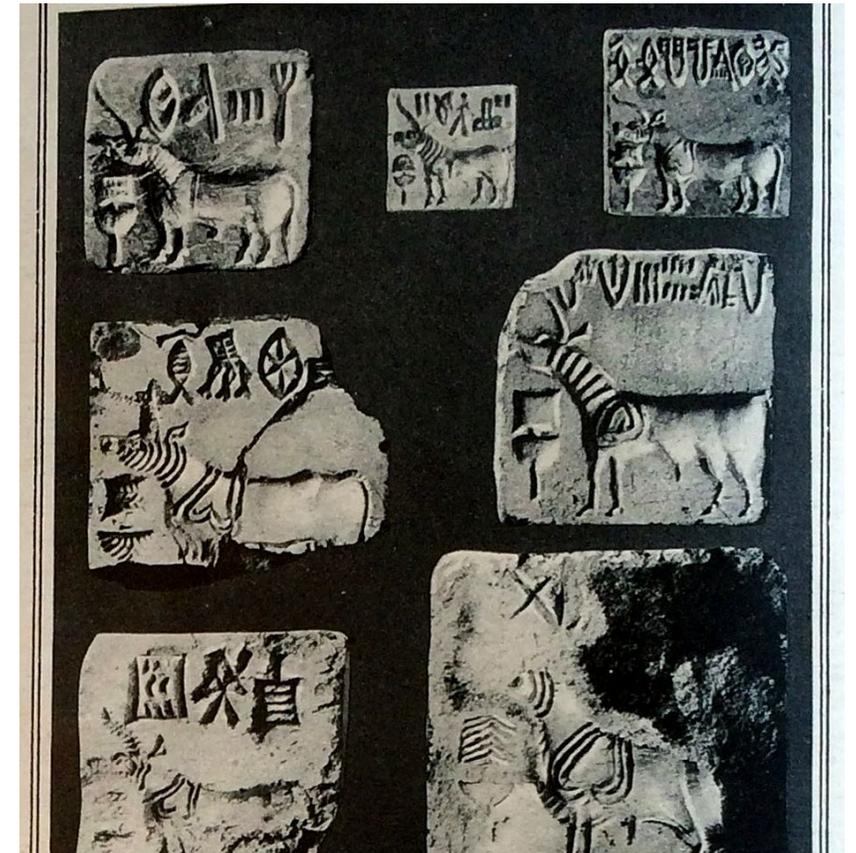
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<https://www.youtube.com/@TheSoScietaSense>

chapter wise previous year paper

**"Historians considered the Harappan seals as the distinctive artifact."
Examine the statement. (3 Marks, 2025 Supp)**

- Historians rightly consider **Harappan seals** as a highly **distinctive artifact** because:
- **Unique Material and Form:**
 - Most seals were square,
 - made of steatite (a soft stone),
 - featuring intricate carvings of animal motifs (like the unicorn, bull, elephant) and signs.



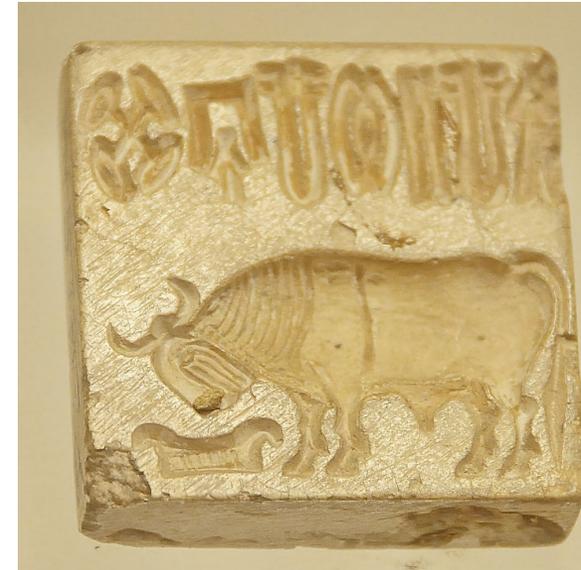
- **Widespread Discovery:**

- Indicating their common usage and importance within the civilization.

- **Source of Information:**

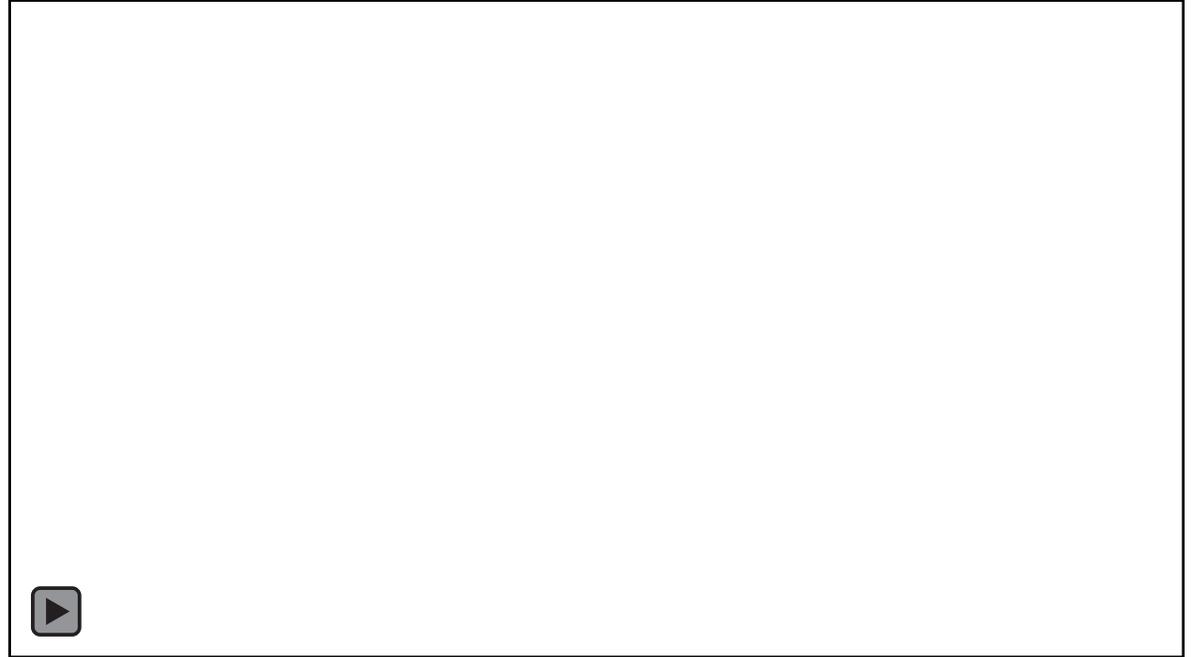
- The motifs provide insights into Harappan beliefs, artistic skills, and possibly economic activities (used in trade).

- **Uniqueness:** Such seals are unique to the Harappan civilization in their style, material, and iconography.

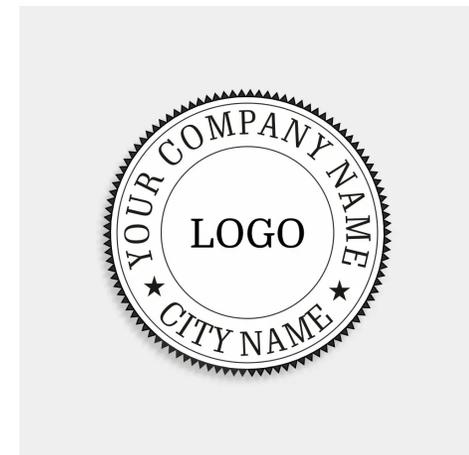


Explain why the seals and sealings were used by the Harappans. (3 Marks, 2023 Main - OR)

- Harappan **seals and sealings** were likely used primarily for:
 - **Facilitating Long-Distance Communication:** When a bag of goods was sent, its mouth was tied, and wet clay was affixed to the knot. The seal was pressed onto the clay, leaving an impression (sealing). If the bag arrived with the sealing intact, the sender knew it hadn't been tampered with.



- **Identity Marking:** The sealing also conveyed the identity of the sender, possibly indicating ownership or origin.
- **Possible Trade Authorization:** Seals might have acted as marks of authority or guaranteed the quality/quantity of goods, similar to a modern trademark or official stamp.



Q.4 Explain how the drainage system of Harappan cities indicate town planning. (3 Marks, 2023 Main)

- The drainage system of Harappan cities strongly indicates careful town planning:

(i) The drains were made of mortar-set bricks

(ii) They were covered with large bricks and limestone, which could be lifted for cleaning.

(iii) The streets followed a grid structure with straight streets crossing at right angles.

(iv) Houses were built and laid out only after the drainage system was planned.

(v) Every house had a drain connected to the street drains.

(vi) Solid matter from wastewater flowing in the drains was collected in a sump, and water flowed into the main drains.

- This system highlights the Harappan people's focus on cleanliness and efficient town planning.



WASTE DISPOSAL SYSTEM

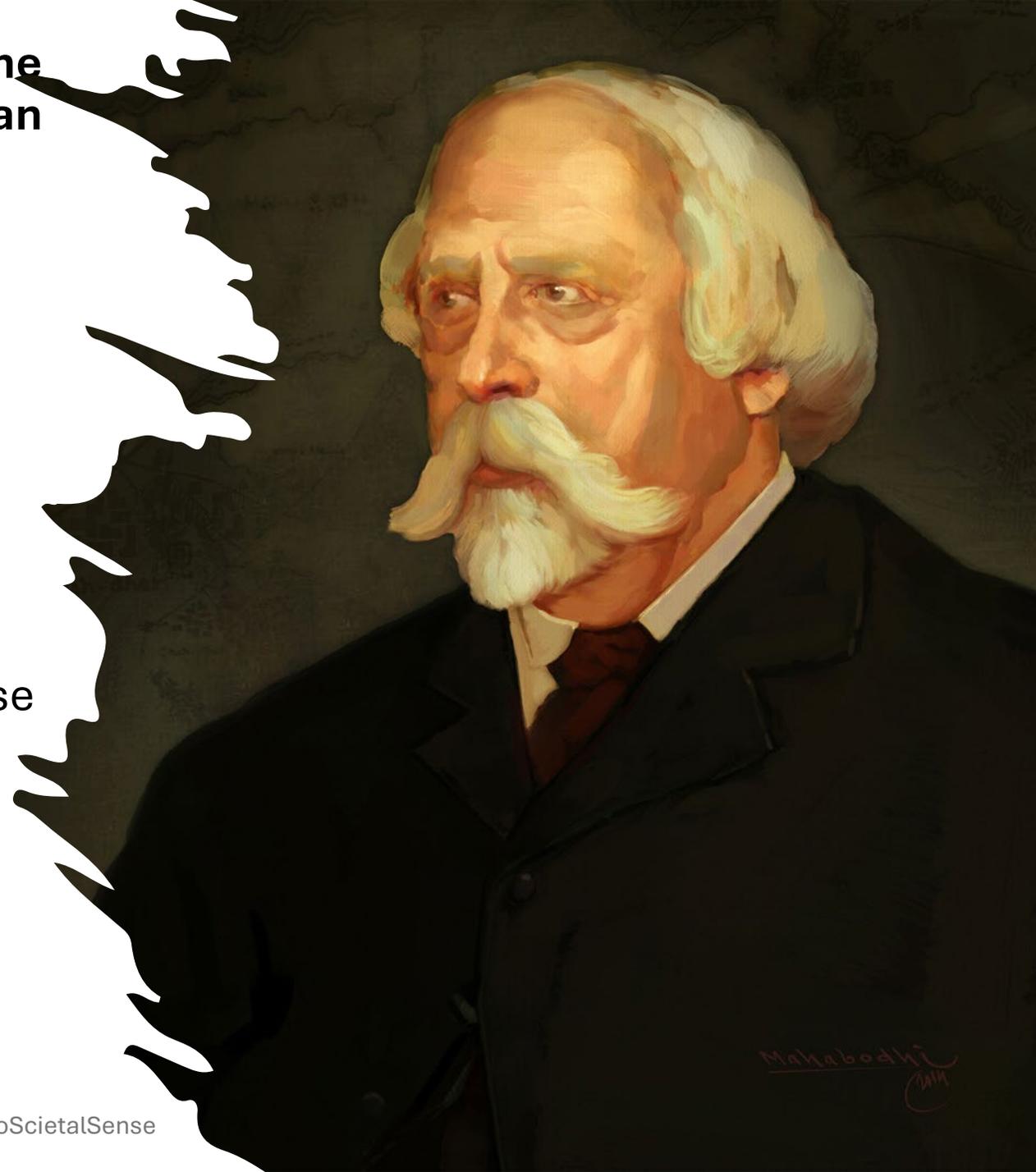
House → Small Drain → Sump → Reguir Drain

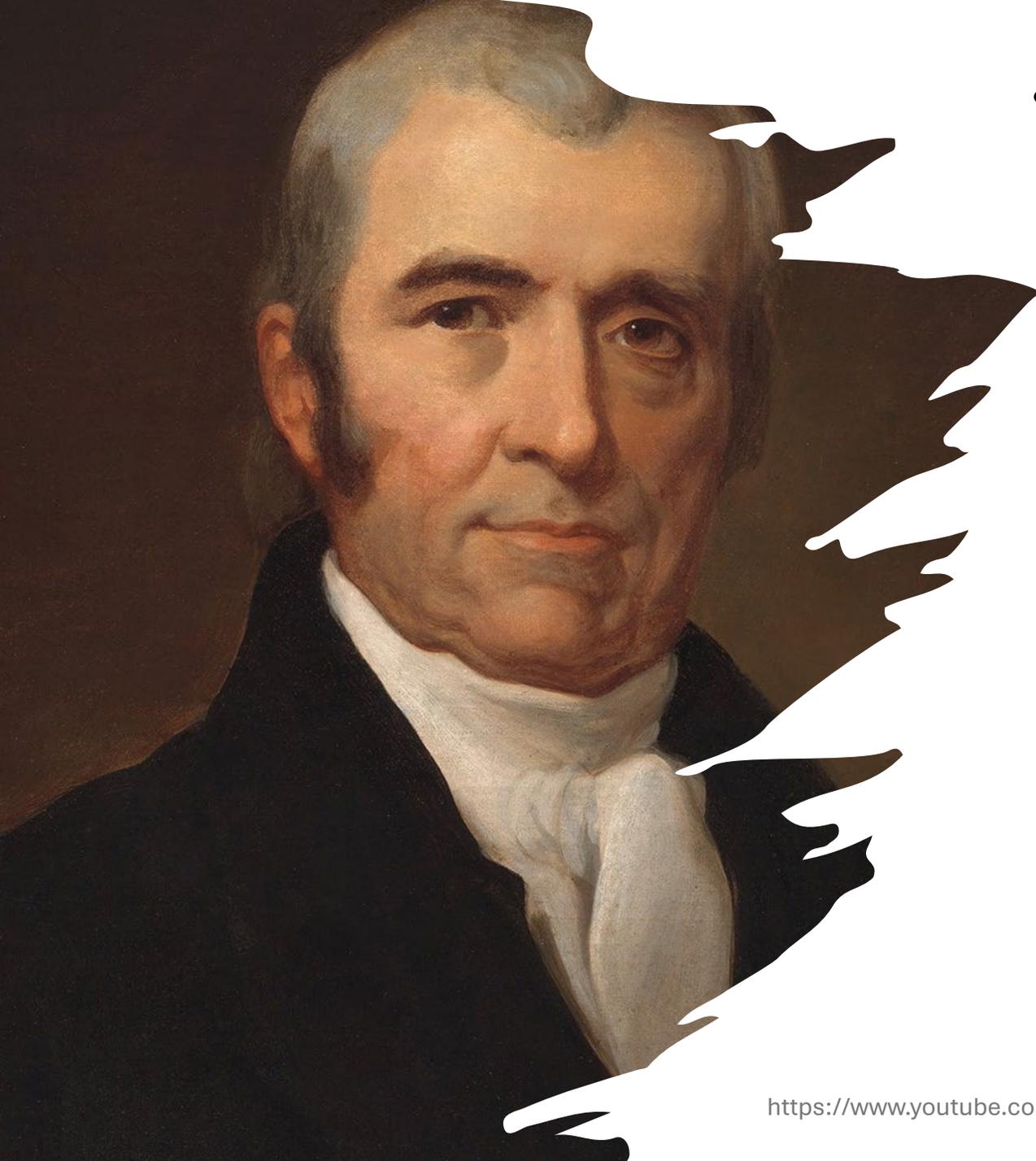




Q. 5 Explain the role of various archaeologists in the discovery of Harappa. (8 Marks, 2024 Main - OR)

- **Several archaeologists played key roles in the discovery and understanding of the Harappan civilization:**
- **Alexander Cunningham:** The first Director-General of the ASI, conducted excavations in the mid-19th century, he didn't fully grasp the significance or antiquity of Harappan artifacts (like seals), often trying to fit them within the timeframe of early historic India (c. 600 BCE - 600 CE).
- He primarily used written sources (like Chinese pilgrim accounts) to guide his explorations.



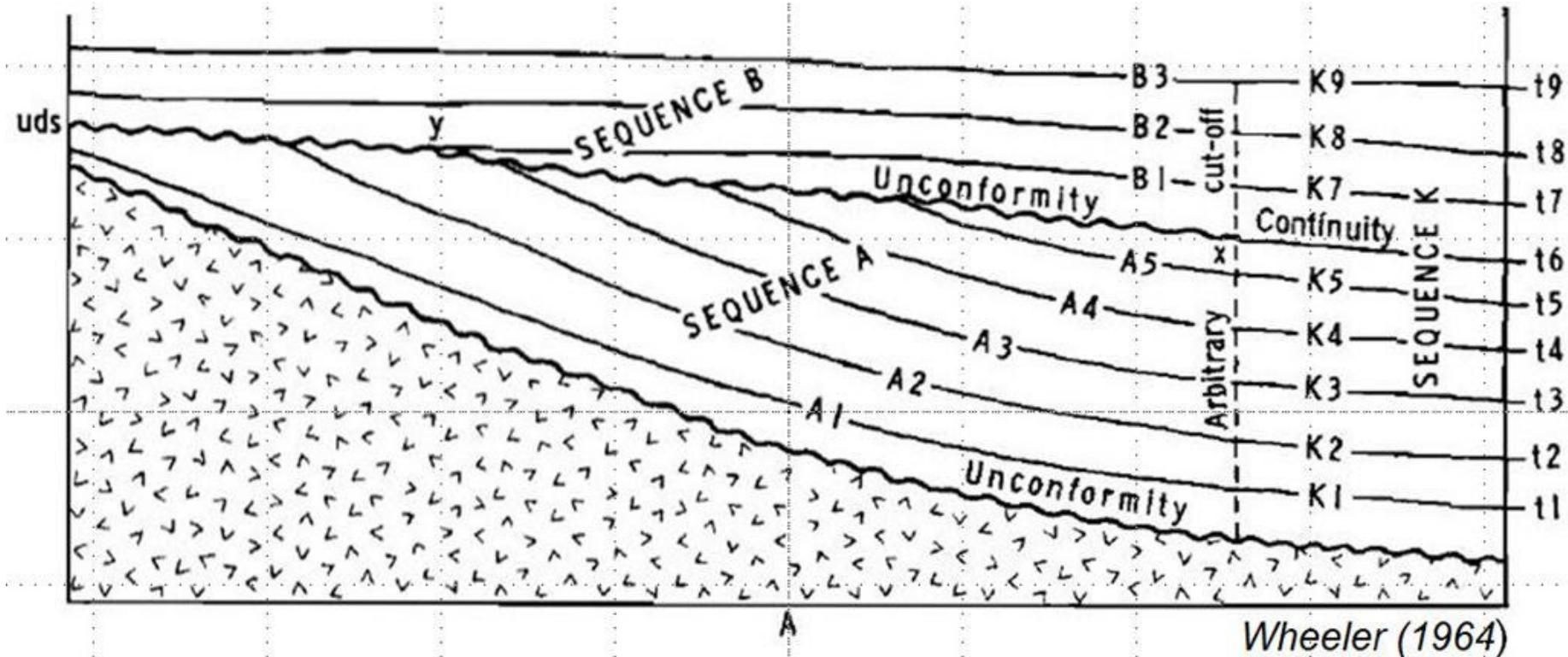


- **John Marshall:** As Director-General of the ASI in the early 20th century, Marshall **announced the discovery of a new civilization** – the Indus Valley Civilization – to the world in 1924. Marshall **excavated horizontally, ignoring stratigraphy**, which led to a loss of valuable contextual information.

- **Daya Ram Sahni: Excavated Harappa in the early 1920s**, uncovering seals and artifacts that were crucial for identifying the civilization.
- **Rakhal Das Banerji (R.D. Banerji): Excavated Mohenjo-daro** around the same time as Sahni's work at Harappa, finding similar seals, which confirmed the existence of a widespread ancient culture.



- **R.E.M. Wheeler:** Became Director-General of the **ASI in 1944**. He **rectified Marshall's excavation** methods by emphasizing the importance of following the **stratigraphy** of the site (excavating layer by layer).



- **Post-Independence Archaeologists:** Indian archaeologists like B.B. Lal, S.R. Rao, and M.R. Mughal continued explorations and excavations after 1947, contributing further insights, particularly in areas like Gujarat (Lothal, Dholavira) and Haryana (Rakhigarhi).

Q.6 Explain the strategies used by archaeologists to understand socio-economic differences among the Harappans.

Archaeologists generally use the following strategies:

(i) Burials:

- The dead were usually laid in pits.
- Some graves contained pottery, ornaments, and copper mirrors, indicating differences in social and economic status.



- **(ii) Artefacts:**
- Artefacts were classified into **utilitarian and luxury items.**
- Utilitarian items like quern stones, pottery, and body scrubbers were commonly used by all.
- Luxury items, made from costly and non-local materials, included faience pots and ornaments,
- These indicate the presence of higher social status.



Harappan Art and Architecture



HARAPPAN POTTERY



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