



Seminar on Indus Civilization

Saturday, July 23, 2016

10 AM – 4 PM

Lexington Community Center
39 Marrett Road, Lexington, MA

- : Indian State
- : present-day city
- : Harappan site
- : major site
- : international border
- : dry bed of the Sarasvati





Indus Civilization also known as Sindhu-Saraswati Civilization had its origin in the pre-historic Neolithic period and developed into an urban technology-based civilization by about 3000BC. Around 2500BC the culture associated with the settlements was spread about a million square miles, the largest expanse among the older cultures that have been explored. The housings appear to have been abandoned by about 1900BC possibly affected by acute sustained drought or by a massive earthquake. India Discovery Center welcomes you to a day long seminar offered by our local students and Faculty in New England.

PROGRAM

Session I

10:00 - 12:30

Welcome Remarks and Introduction of the Moderator
Introduction of the Chief Guest
Latest Findings in Harappa

- Bijoy Misra
- Sajed Kamal
- Richard Meadow

Track Presentations on Indus (Sindhu-Saraswati) Civilization:

Geography and People
Art and Culture
Language and Literature
Sindh - as seen by a Sindhii
Lunch - 12:30 - 1:30

- Swati Dave
- Srabonti Bandyopadhyay
- Jaspal Singh
- Niranjana Dudani

Session II

1:30 - 4:00

Track Presentations on Indus (Sindhu-Saraswati) Civilization (contd.)
Philosophy and Religion
Science and Technology
Economy and Politics
Sindh as I recall

- Chandrika Govardhan
- Krishna Gazula
- Sanjeev Tripathi
- Arjan Daryanani

Panel Discussion and Q&A

Closing Remarks
Vote of Thanks

- Richard Meadow
- Bijoy Misra

John Marshall, British Archaeologist, 1922:

When I first saw them I found it difficult to believe that they were prehistoric; they seemed to completely upset all established ideas about early art, and culture. Modeling such as this was unknown in the ancient world up to the Hellenistic age of Greece, and I thought, therefore, that some mistake must surely have been made; that these figures had found their way into levels some 3000 years older than those to which they properly belonged Now, in these statuettes, it is just this anatomical truth which is so startling; that makes us wonder whether, in this all-important matter, Greek artistry could possibly have been anticipated by the sculptors of a far-off age on the banks of the Indus.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indus_Valley_Civilisation

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Contributors:

Chief Guest:

Richard H. Meadow is a Senior Lecturer on Anthropology and Director of the Zooarchaeology Laboratory of the Peabody Museum. He has been carrying out research and teaching archaeology and zoo-archaeology at Harvard University since 1986. He began working at Harappa in 1987 and has served as Co-Director of the Harappa Archaeological Research Project since 1992.

Moderator:

Sajed Kamal is a poet, artist, author and an Award-winning solar energy expert. Born in a family of scholars in the present day Bangladesh, he came to the US in 1963 for undergraduate studies. He earned his doctoral degree in Humanistic Studies from Boston University. He champions human values and social strife in his poetic compositions.

Research Presenters:

Swati Dave is an engineer, educator, and an entrepreneur. She is the founder of the "Institute for Advancement of Vedic Mathematics", a global organization, the director of Professional Development at Teach India Project in Burlington, MA., She is the Chair-Elect of the Natick Cultural Council.

Srabanti Bandyopadhyay is an artist and engineer. She was trained in Odissi dance from an early age and maintains the art through performances and teaching. She is a Software Engineer by profession and works on complex technological problems in health care management.

Jaspal Singh is a student of philosophy and Vedic literature. He is a founding member of Academy of Punjab in North America (APNA). He is an active participant in the content development team at India Discovery Center.

Chandrika Govardhan has a Ph.D in Chemistry from Wesleyan University in CT. After extensive postdoctoral training at Brandeis University, she started working in the biotech industry formulating drugs for different end use. She holds 7 patents and is passionate about learning, mentoring and sharing.

Krishna Gazula earned his doctoral degree in Metallurgy from IIT, Kanpur. He works as an IT professional and is a serial entrepreneur. He serves as a teacher in Indian History and Philosophy at Shishu Bharati - a School of Languages and Culture of India. He is an active volunteer in IDC.

Sanjeev Tripathi is a writer, poet and an entrepreneur. He is an active participant in the cultural events in the local area with an interest in religion and literature. He helps India Discovery Center in content organization and meeting planning. He conducts the annual essay competition for children on behalf of IDC.



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**Seminar on Indus Civilizations the first offering in a series entitled
“Let us Explore the Cultural History of India”
Synopsis of the tracks in today's Seminar:**

Geography and People: Indus-Saraswati civilization appears to originate around 8000 BC, and flourished in different phases until about 1900 BC primarily on the banks of Indus and Saraswati river. These rivers along with the climate, vegetation, geography, and topography shaped the civilization. Rivers helped transportation of raw materials and inspired new technological innovations. Genetic studies indicate a matri-local society.

Art and Culture: No direct evidence on the culture of dance or music has yet been found. From the burial artifacts and the well-designed sculptures and potteries, a few of the cultural norms can be deciphered. There is evidence of cultural continuity of certain traditions like heavily bangled arms for women, yoga, worship of trees (in particular the Peepal tree) and the bangles made out of shell.

Language and Literature: Thousands of seals and tablets have been excavated across a million square kilometers, yet the script of Indus Valley remains undeciphered. Some scholars claim it is a form of Sanskrit, others relate it to Tamil, or to older languages like Santali and Gondi. A few contest the idea of a script. Town organization, urban planning and technology innovations suggest a literary heritage which possibly passed through conventions and symbols.

Philosophy and Religion: Representation of trees and powerful animals such as the water buffalo, tiger and elephant in the excavated seals indicates that these were considered symbols of fertility. Images of human beings in seated yogic postures with elaborate headdresses of leaves and animal horns, sometimes multi-faced, with bowed individuals before them point to deity or supernatural. Skeletal finds with pottery can lead one to conclude a belief of continuity of life after death.

Science and Technology: Indus civilization developed advanced urban settlements with water supply, sanitation and underground sewerage disposal. Metallurgy seems to be known and export quality industrial goods were produced. Brick making and bangle craft continue in the area today. Indigenous silk production is a new find.

Economy and Politics: Economy in Indus period appears to be prosperous. It was primarily based on agriculture and trade. Agriculture appears to be organized with advance methods in place for rain harvesting and irrigation. Trade relation with by far regions via sea is inferred. Administration seems efficient and systematic, possibly through a central authority, but there is no evidences of a king's rule.



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