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AIPS Travel Grant Final Report

On April 24, 2014 I presented my paper, “*Patterns of Elite Harappan Pottery in the Indus Civilization Borderlands of Gujarat*,” at the Society for American Archaeology 79th Annual Meetings in Austin. This paper contributes to the field of Pakistan studies by bringing together archaeological data on ancient pottery from major Indus Civilization sites (2600-1900 BC) located in Pakistan and India. The Indus Civilization was spread over large parts of both countries. Thus, comparative Indus studies, like mine, provide the foundation for understanding the antiquity and evolving nature of Pakistan and India’s interlocking cultural heritage. My research, as presented in this conference paper, is especially significant since Pakistani and Indian archaeologists are currently not able to obtain permission to do comparative research in both countries. Moreover, by presenting this paper at the SAAs, I hoped to extend awareness of the potential for new research in Pakistan to an audience of archaeologists who primarily work in North and South America. Our panel was the only symposium on South Asian archaeology at this conference, the most preeminent archaeology conference in the US.

This paper is part of my dissertation and new post-doctoral research where I directly compare styles of pottery and patterns of pottery use at the major cities of Harappa and Mohenjo Daro, as well as other sites located in the Cholistan and South Punjab regions of Pakistani Punjab, to settlements in the Indus Valley borderland region of Gujarat (India). Moreover, my paper shows how borderland, or periphery, regions of ancient civilizations have unique social landscapes making them fascinating places to study the construction, negotiation and manipulation of identities, which have often been defined by the Indus Valley core. At the same time, I presented new data that indicates the use of pottery to express identity varied between the urban centers of the Indus Valley and settlements in the borderlands of Gujarat. Through similar research in other world regions, archaeologists have learned that communities cannot be dichotomized into core (Indus Valley) and periphery (Gujarat), but must be studied through their overlapping ethnic, class and personal identities, which are so often expressed through material culture, including pottery.

Sincerely,

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