

A SEMINAR PRESENTED BY



Understanding the challenges of world heritage sites
and the role of **archaeology** in the global context



17 NOVEMBER 2021

We are delighted to announce the signing of an Agreement of Cultural, Educational and Scientific cooperation between University of Durham, United Kingdom and Indian Institute of Technology Gandhinagar, India.

In order to celebrate this momentous occasion, the Department of Archaeology of both the institutions have come together to jointly present a seminar on the theme Understanding the challenges of world heritage sites and the role of Archaeology in the global context.

Programme Details

Day and Date

Wednesday, 17th November 2021

MoU signing ceremony

08:00 am – 08:20 am UK time

12:30 pm – 12:50 pm IST

Seminar

08:20 am – 10:15 am UK time

12:50 pm – 14:45 pm IST

Topic and Speakers

1. **'The Harappan City of Dholavira and Challenges of UNESCO World Heritage Status'** – Associate Professor V.N. Prabhakar, Archaeological Sciences Center, IIT Gandhinagar, India

2. **'Continuities of Harappan Traditions: Glimpses from Modern Communities'** – Assistant Professor C.V. Sharada, Archaeological Sciences Center, IIT Gandhinagar, India

3. **'Archaeology and Community: Enriching Understanding and Skills through Archaeology and Heritage from the Local to Global'** – Professor Sarah Semple, Head of Department, Department of Archaeology, Durham University, UK

4. **'From Kathmandu's Earthquake to the Bombing of Jaffna Fort: the Role of Archaeology in South Asian Post-Disaster Heritage Responses'** – UNESCO Professor Robin Coningham, Department of Archaeology, Durham University, UK

5. Panel Questions & Answers

Joining Instructions

We cordially invite you to join the webinar by clicking the link below:

[https://iitgn-ac-in.zoom.us/j/91374443579?
pwd=Z2dJbHVZeFc3S0ZmU3daVk5tK2ViZz09](https://iitgn-ac-in.zoom.us/j/91374443579?pwd=Z2dJbHVZeFc3S0ZmU3daVk5tK2ViZz09)

Passcode: 570919

Speakers' Profiles and Abstracts



Associate Professor V.N. Prabhakar

Archaeological Sciences Center, IIT Gandhinagar

Associate Professor (Archaeology), at Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar since September, 2020. Formerly, Director (Exploration & Excavation and Institute of Archaeology) at the Archaeological Survey of India between August 2018 and September 2020. Specializes in Harappan Archaeology, Application of Sciences in Archaeology and Conservation & Heritage Management.

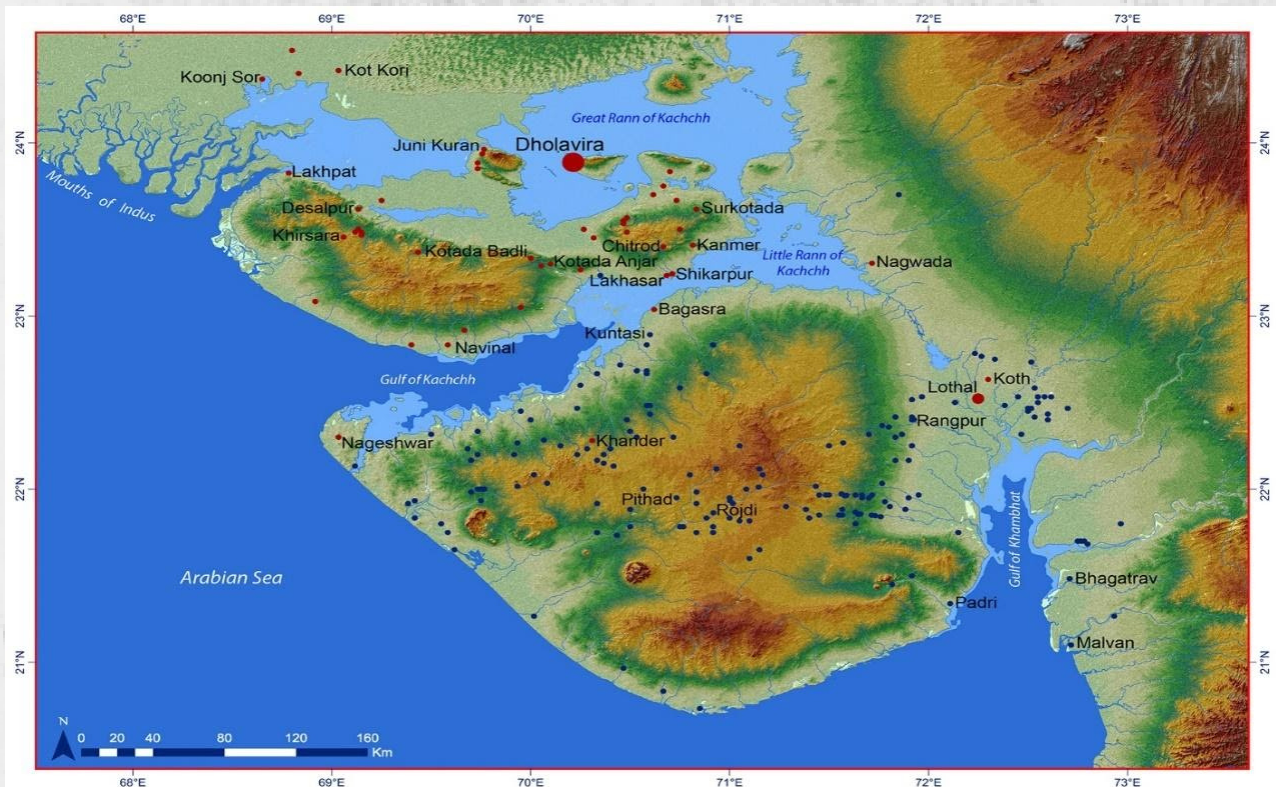
Obtained Degree in Doctor of Philosophy (2013) from the Kurukshetra University, India on the "Burial Practices of the Harappans with Special Reference to Sanauli Excavation".

Published around 40 research articles in Journals, edited books and conference proceedings.

The Harappan City of Dholavira and Challenges of UNESCO World Heritage Status

Dholavira, one among the six largest Harappan cities of third millennium BCE, is located on the Khadir island, Great Rann of Kachchh in Gujarat (India). A long and continuous occupation for nearly 1500 years, starting from 3000 BCE, witnessed the origin, expansion and ultimate decline of the earliest urbanisation of south Asia. The hallmark findings include a well-planned city, sophisticated water harnessing systems, aesthetic architectural members, craft activities like lapidary, shell working, metallurgy, seal carving, and all features of Harappan civilization. The site was inscribed in the World Heritage List in 2021.

The status of World Heritage brings additional responsibilities to the State Party to cater with various challenges related to site management, visitor movement and interpretation, amenities, conservation and preservation. Sustainable development on this remote island with less access to tourism and a fragile eco-system is another challenge. This talk will briefly introduce the Harappan city of Dholavira and the challenges related to World Heritage Status.



Map showing the location of Dholavira on Khadir island, Great Rann of Kachchh, Gujarat (India)



View of Castle from east with East Reservoir in the foreground, Dholavira



View of Castle from northeast with Ceremonial Ground and southern arm of Middle Town fortification in the foreground, Dholavira



East Gate of Castle with the pillar members in situ, Dholavira



Prof C V Sharada
**Assistant Professor, Archaeological Sciences
Centre, IIT Gandhinagar**

Sharada Channarayapatna has found a harmonious convergence of her passions- research, nature, travel, and photography in her chosen profession- archaeology. She has garnered over a decade of experience in reconstructing various aspects of past human-environment interactions in India and southern Europe. She has two Masters and two doctorates- awarded by Deccan College, Pune; and the University of Ferrara, Italy and National Museum of Natural History, Paris, France, respectively, specializing in Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology; European Quaternary and Prehistory. Prior to this, she completed her BA in history, economics and sociology from Mysore University.

She has twice been the recipient of the Erasmus Mundus Scholarship as well as the Nehru Trust small study grant for independent projects, apart from the Indian Council of Historical Research fellowship. She is currently heading multi-disciplinary projects on Dholavira animal remains and artefacts made from animal remains funded by the Indian Council of Historical Research and the Association of Environmental Archaeology. She has published 11 articles, 2 book chapters and 1 book, besides presenting her findings in more than 25 conferences, nationally and internationally.

Continuities of Harappan Traditions: Glimpses from Modern Communities

This talk brings to you some glimpses of the continuities of Harappan traditions in modern day Western & North-Western India, especially in the Kachchh region, which was one of the main cradles of Harappan civilization around five thousand years ago. Also known as South Asia's first complex society, many variations and commonalities underlie its material manifestations. Some of these traditions have persisted even today but their roots or lineage can be traced to the Harappan times.

The pattern of continuity in tangible and intangible elements vary from region to region. An ethnographic study recently conducted on the communities around the UNESCO world Heritage site of Dholavira and in nearby Kachchh villages showed an interesting survival of traditional knowledge systems in aspects like ceramics, inlay work, jewellery, garments and even in some features of domestic architecture. With this background and through this talk, I aim to show that cultures do not completely decline or die and that certain knowledge systems have diffused spatially and through generations into different subsystems of the contemporary society.

It focuses on the importance of studying the present communities for understanding past societies and for taking up more large-scale archeological research in the Kachchh region and in other regions of India. It further voices for utilization of more interdisciplinary tools to research the developmental trajectories of cultural traditions from the past to the present.



Central Broadway with structures of Stage VI and VII castle



Shell ornament



Shell artefacts and inlay work



Professor Sarah Semple
**Head of Department, Department of Archaeology,
Durham University, UK**

Sarah Semple is Professor of Early Medieval Archaeology at Durham University and Head of Department. She researches the landscapes and material culture of Britain and northern Europe, in particular the ways in which the natural and human-altered environments shaped peoples' sense of connection to place, their definitions of identity and religion and how these were mobilised in processes of social and political transformation. These are issues relevant to past and present, and Professor Semple is also engaged in researching how local communities respond to, connect and care for the heritage assets in their immediate locality, and, with colleagues, is developing co-productive projects aimed at strengthening these kinds of local connection.

As well as recent books on Perceptions of the Prehistoric in England (2019) and Negotiating the North (2020) which examine the ways in which local populations used landscape and heritage in the past in the construction of new systems of local governance, she has also co-published on the heritage assets of the North East, reflecting on their meaning and value to local people in One Monastery in Two Places: Wearmouth and Jarrow in their Landscape context (2013). She is currently leading a major-funded project on People and Place. The Making of the Kingdom of Northumbria, and a long-term excavation project at Yeavering in Northumberland, both of which exploring the health, wealth, ethnicity and lifestyles of the early medieval populations of northern Britain, and how landscape and heritage were central to their place-making processes.

Archaeology and Community: Enriching Understanding and Skills through Archaeology and Heritage from the Local to Global

In a rapidly changing world, tangible and intangible cultural and heritage assets and collections are under intense threat. While advances in documentation and protection are key to future curatorship; embedding knowledge, care and ownership of cultural heritage within the community and locality are equally important in the management and care of heritage assets. Connecting people with their heritage, whether landscapes, historic sites and buildings, or collections, can create a sense of ownership and connection, build a sense of place and strengthen local identity and advocacy around care and protection. Creativity, culture and heritage, also offer rich opportunities for knowledge building and knowledge exchange, as well as skills training with communities and organisations.

At Durham, in Archaeology, we have worked intensively within the North East region with local populations and community groups to enable greater connection and access to an understanding of local heritage and archaeology. The global challenges of urban developing, sustainability and education are all directly relevant to our North East region, as well as the world more broadly. Our initiatives since 2010 have aimed to create deeper co-productive involvement with people and communities on our projects in northern England, in Britain and worldwide, using our knowledge, resources and expertise to engage and connect local communities in documenting, researching, presenting and protecting the heritage in their care. By sharing our expertise gathered from projects involving skills-training and community engagement in the South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa with projects on the ground in North East England, we are helping embed and strengthen more structured productive methods for engagement and skills training and strengthening place-making, creating a sense of responsibility for local heritage from the local to the global.



September 2021 - Community Open Day at the Yeavinger Excavation, Northumberland, UK



September 2021 Excavations at Yeavinger, palace site and royal centre for the 7th-century kingdom of Northumbria (Northumberland, UK)



Professor Robin Coningham
**UNESCO Chair on Archaeological Ethics and
Practice in Cultural Heritage, Department of
Archaeology, Durham University**

Robin Coningham is Professor of Early Medieval Archaeology at Durham University and holds UNESCO's 2014 Chair in Archaeological Ethics and Practice in Cultural Heritage. He has worked across South Asia refining chronologies and investigating the region's urbanization, the genesis of Indian Ocean trade and the archaeology of Buddhism. He is committed to the protection of cultural heritage and has co-directed UNESCO's archaeological and community engagement activities within the Greater Lumbini Area of Nepal since 2011.

Professor Coningham has published over 100 academic papers and chapters, as well as 10 books, including 'The Archaeology of South Asia: from the Indus to Asoka' in the Cambridge World Archaeology series in 2015 with Ruth Young, 'Appropriating the Past: Philosophical Perspectives on the Practice of Archaeology' with Cambridge University Press in 2011 with Geoffrey Scarre, and Pivot Palgrave's 'Archaeology, Heritage Protection and Community Engagement in South Asia' in 2019 with Nick Lewer. He has successfully co-designed and led fieldwork, exhibitions and workshops for UNESCO, AHRC, GCRF and the British Academy in Asia for over 25 years.

From Kathmandu's Earthquake to the bombing of Jaffna Fort: the role of archaeology in South Asian post-disaster heritage responses'

Cultural heritage offers us a sense of identity, maintains social diversity, cohesion, and intercultural dialogue, and forms our basic right to participate in cultural life. It plays critical roles in education, conflict mitigation and sustainable development but is threatened by accelerated development, mega-infrastructure, mass tourism, looting, encroachment, neglect, climate change, natural disasters, erosion and targeted destruction.

Following Nepal's devastating earthquake in 2015, the Government of Nepal and UNESCO mobilised Durham's UNESCO Chair in Archaeological Ethics and Practice in Cultural Heritage to assist in the evaluation and assessment of damaged monuments in the Kathmandu Valley's UNESCO World Heritage Site. Establishing new multidisciplinary partnerships with architects, engineers, historians, conservators, heritage managers, first responders and local communities through AHRC-GCRF funding, the team co-designed methodologies to record and safeguard heritage sites after such natural disasters as well as focusing on the recycling of historic building materials. With additional support from the British Academy's GCRF Cities and Infrastructure programme, we then piloted methods to reducing disaster risk to life and livelihoods by evaluating the seismic safety of Kathmandu's historic urban infrastructure in direct support of SDG11.

Committed to capacity strengthening and support of SDG17, we extended our bilateral partnerships across South Asia through the participation of multidisciplinary specialist from Sri Lanka, India and Myanmar in post-disaster field laboratories with the support of the Alliance de Protection du Patrimoine Culturel Asiatique.

In turn, this network initiated a GCRF-funded partnership with the Central Cultural Fund (Government of Sri Lanka) and the University of Jaffna to use our post-disaster experience to co-design new post-conflict methodologies to protect the war-damaged heritage of Jaffna and northern Sri Lanka.



Post-earthquake rescue excavations at the Kasthamandap, Kathmandu, Nepal (Credit: Durham UNESCO Chair)



Post-disaster rescue excavations at the Krys Kerk, Jaffna Fort, Sri Lanka
(Credit: Durham UNESCO Chair)