

YACHAY WASI Sacred Sites Event - Submission 1 – INDIA - Received 9 April 2006

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**Sacred Sites Of Mohen Jo Daro, Harappa, Taxila
 and the Hindu/Indian Perspective**

The Capitalistic or Western perspective, unlike that of indigenous people of the East and the “primitives” of the past, maintains that the earth, space, sky, ocean, nature and living things exist either for profit, personal pleasure or for exercising control and power. The diametrically opposed sacred and capitalistic perspectives have yet to merge into a mutually nurturing relationship. The sacred loathes the capitalistic culture of exploitation and death, yet will not submit to the latter’s ways of violence and destruction. Self-sacrificing describes the sacred; capitalistic exploitation and desecration offers others on its sacrificial altar. Such ways are not limited to capitalism or western culture, but shared by communism and dictatorships as well.

Visualize the earth without being revered as mother, rivers not being worshipped as goddesses, god’s creatures not being nurtured as human extensions, and forests and jungles being unprotected for all future generations. That vision congeals into the reality this paper strives to describe, a too often denied reality of death lying in the wake of greedy exploitation.

Without love, respect, and reverence due the sacred, the earth will turn into desert, oceans into lifeless bodies of water and living things massively killed, shipped, sold and consumed ungratefully and irresponsibly. This contention on a global scale has already manifested in diverse and scattered pockets on earth. Only one of many examples, with which the United Nations are rightfully concerned, is that of global warming, a result of the exploitation of our atmosphere as a garbage dump for the waste produced by the manufacturing industries and production of by-products with which mother earth is unfamiliar and cannot digest.

Hindus were wise in regarding and treating almost everything as sacred: sun, moon, stars, earth, rivers, trees, animals and even the minutest particle of the atom. Oneness is the core of Indian spirituality and cornerstone of the protection and responsible care of the environment. The unspiritual culture of exploitation and death regards the human body as separate from its natural environment. It is blind to the experiential reality that we all breathe the same air, over and over, the same air our ancestors breathed, the same air the dinosaurs breathed. The water in our bodies (and which composes seventy-five percent of them) is the same water that composed the bodies of our ancestors and all ancient life. Water is the blood of the earth; air is its Prana or energy.

The warmth of a campfire or that of our fossil fuel burning heating systems is the releasing of captured star energy, sunlight that bathed our forests. There is nothing new on the earth: same water, same air, and same atoms, lovingly reconstructed and recycled by our mother. Does not this understanding make us want to bow to creation in reverence and gratitude? Does it not move us to embrace the sacredness of life? Only some of us. Only some cultures. Not enough to ensure our children and theirs of untainted sacredness, of life itself.

All of nature manifests the same divinity and nothing can exist outside of that. Control is best achieved by relinquishing all need for it, not by altering, manipulating, and redirecting the natural flow of the creation.

Hindus built places of worship, vast universities of education and, of course, cities, in harmony with nature and the surrounding environment, with materials that did not cause pollution and toxicity. Mohenjodaro, Harappa and Taxila are a few such examples. (Mohenjodaro, the principal Indus Valley Civilization, flourished from ancient times.) These monuments of honor and reverence were built several thousands of years ago, known throughout the world, functioning as the center of culture, art, pottery, trade and world-class education. The Indus/Hindu civilization overshadowed its contemporary counterparts in Mesopotamia, Egypt and surrounding nations. Extending throughout present Pakistan all the way to Kabul and Delhi, this advanced civilization was never known to have attacked any country, converted any populations, enslaved or imprisoned human beings.

Today these centers of exemplary human interaction with the sacred lay in ruins, neglected, forgotten, and sorrowfully abandoned near the cities of Sukkur, Multan and Rawalpindi in Pakistan. A conscious result of self-pride and concealed embarrassment, the Pakistan government is most eager to let crumble any reminder that its own roots are anchored in the Hindu/Indus civilization and the world was civilized long before Islam appeared.

UNESCO's granted funds are diverted away from their intended purposes. For example, monies were provided for the construction of twenty-eight tube wells that would draw underground saltwater to prevent the rapid disintegration of building foundations. During my visit in February of 2006, I learned that only two tube wells are operating. Moreover, the names and spellings are being tempered to make them sound Islamic. For example Mohenjodaro is now spelled "Moen Jo Daro" (Mound of the Dead). Ironically the locals are openly using Harppa as a Muslim cemetery.

Any culture or civilization that fails to hail and care for its vital resources and genuine, life-giving treasures, such as nature, environment, animal life, water ways, and ancient monuments, as sacred entities has chosen a suicidal and genocidal path. Killing history with distortion, tampering with the symbols of our past to their desecration and redefining of meaning, failing to protect our earth's blood, its rivers and oceans, will bury the perpetrators of this culture of death along side of the ruins of the sacred. Even in the graveyards, these perpetrators dishonor the sacred and are not worthy of even sharing the same "mound of the dead" with their victims.