Humanities – Archaeology 2013



"What I've tried to do is to get a sense of the past from what appears on the ground, from artifacts, from monuments, from mounds and related aspects of the material past. Along with this, very crucial to my own work has been understanding how my area of study (archaeology) has actually evolved."

- M.A. in History from the University of Delhi
- · M.Phil. in History from the University of Delhi
- · Ph.D. in History from the University of Delhi

Prof. Nayanjot Lahiri is an exceptional scholar of proto-historic and early India, and her wide-ranging work on the past and present illuminates many aspects even of contemporary Indian life. Her work on resource mobilization and routes of access in proto-historic and early historic India (1992) deals with archaeological and historical data, and their geological dimensions and integration into the ethnographic aspects of their distribution.

Nayanjot Lahiri

Professor, Department of History, University of Delhi

Unearthing the mysteries of ancient India

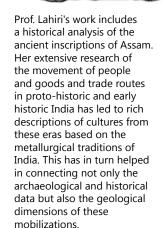


Archaeology is the study of the material remains of the past in order to understand the character and changes in human cultures over time. It is through the knowledge and scientific examination of these remains that we are able to understand the lives of our ancestors and also perhaps the reasons why we are what we are today.



India has a historic and prehistoric past that goes back many centuries. The knowledge we have accumulated so far only begins to scratch the surface of what we know of the past.





Prof. Lahiri made a significant contribution to the study of ancient India by highlighting the interface between the use of copper and its alloys as reflected in the archaeological record, and ancient texts as also modern ethnographic literature. Ancient cultural preferences, through this approach, are shown as being an important factor in understanding the minutiae of metallurgical data.

Prof. Lahiri's archival research into the study of archaeology in India ranges from how India's first cities — Harappa and Mohenjodaro — were discovered to the policies regarding monuments in British and independent India. Through this archival research, she has also highlighted how multi-cultural historic places of worship like Bodh Gava, as reflected in the archaeology of worship there, came to be transformed into sites that were merely rooted in one religious tradition.

