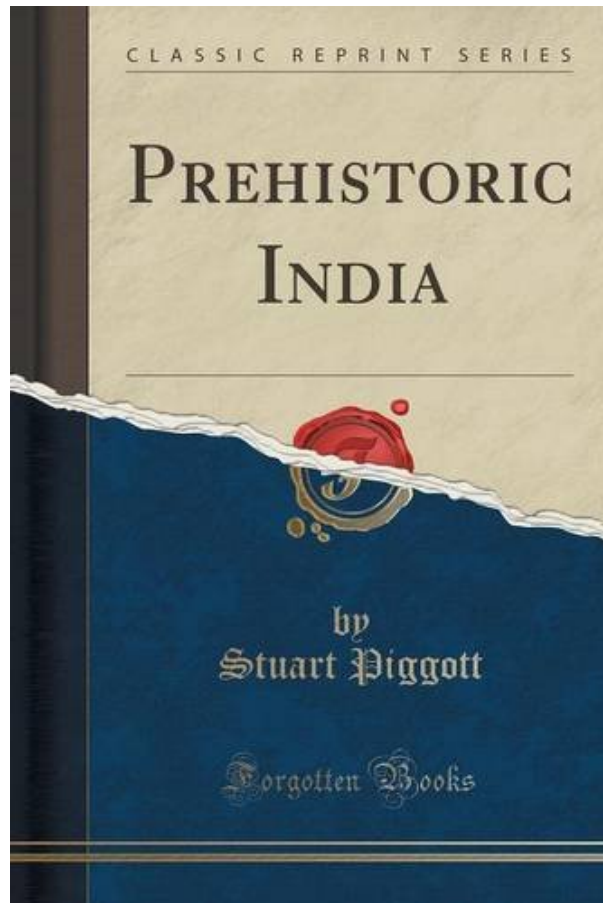


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About the Author

Stuart Piggott (1910-1996) taught later European prehistory to Honors students in Archaeology at the University of Edinburgh, where he held the Abercromy Chair. He retired from the Chair in 1977, and in 1983 he received the gold medal of the Society of Antiquaries of London, as well as the Grahame Clark medal of the British Academy in 1992. He was most known for his work on prehistoric Wessex.

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Excerpt from Prehistoric India

This book renders an account of our knowledge of Indian prehistory from the earliest times to the settlement of the Aryans in the north-west in the second half of the second millennium B.C. It does not pretend to be more than a stocktaking of our incomplete evidence and interpretation, as a preliminary and incentive to further work in the field. Some form of working hypothesis is essential, however drastically it may have to be revised, and I have therefore attempted to indicate what seem to me to be the nature and succession of the various human cultures making up the pattern of the earliest India.

Much of the material presented in the book is either new and hitherto unpublished or is a synthesis made for the first time. It is therefore inevitable that a great deal of technical detail has to be included, and much of the argument addressed to the specialist in oriental archaeology. But despite this, it is hoped that a coherent story of the general course of events in prehistoric India has been presented to the non-specialist reader.

The original work on which Chapters IV to VI are based was carried out in Indian museums (and to a very limited extent in the field) between 1942 and 1945 in the intervals of military intelligence duties. My gratitude is due to my friends on the Archaeological Survey of India who helped and encouraged me, notably the late Rao Bahadur Dikshit, formerly Director-General of the Survey, and Dr K. N. Puri. In 1944 Dr (now Professor) R. E. Mortimer Wheeler was appointed Director-General, and while we were both in India and since my return to Britain he has spared neither time nor trouble in giving me every assistance. It is a pleasant duty to record my gratitude here.

About the Publisher

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the British Academy in 1992. He was most known for his work on prehistoric Wessex.

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By MW

Pre-history. There might be better books to start with if you are not a hardcore history buff, but here are notions related to the work that interest me. The book does not mention Bhimbetka (rediscovered by archaeologists in 1957) and, truth be told, the book should more accurately be entitled "Prehistoric Pakistan". The Harrapan civilization on the Indus River might have been a long-lived, unchanging theocracy dominated by two cities in Punjab and Sind. (N.B. Radiocarbon dating was developed in 1949, too late for this book.)

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prehistoric genius

By Richard I. Pervo

Piggott is well known as a European pre-historian. This work began as a spare-time occupation while serving in military intelligence in India during WWII. A prehistorian needs both synthetic ability and the capacity to grasp minute detail. This book is still worth reading after a good half century. P. is quite judicious and very insightful.

Today many doubt that Indus civilizations (still assigned to prehistory because script cannot be read) were object of Aryan conquest.

P. reflects great irony that, prior to discovery of that civilization, Aryans seemed more civil. Now just another barbarous conquest. P. also did much to popularize view of Indus civilization as gloomy, although he notes exceptions.

This is a methodological classic.

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By Ort

A paperback is hardly ever as good in the hand as a well bound cased book, and this one's no exception to that unfortunate rule; but the book was clean (as advertised), the glue was sound, the paper still holding together, and altogether it's a necessary book for anyone trying to get a good look at the Harappan culture. Arrival was timely, and the price was right.

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