

parivarthana

◆ FOSTERING CHANGE ◆ 2014 - 2015 ◆

KHIRASARA

A New Addition to the Indus Family

ARCHAEOLOGY

Beginnings & Perspectives

KERALA Hills

It's Not Just the

Are Spaceships
the New Age
Vimanas?



- ARCHAEOLOGY ■ EXPLORATION ■ DISCOVERY ■ HERITAGE
- CONSERVATION ■ RESTORATION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. REPORTS

- i) Dr. Sathyabama Badrinath; Historical perspective of our culture
- ii) Ms .Urmila Santhosh; Heritage and conservation
- iii) Trip to Thiruvottriyur
- iv) Trip to Kanchipuram
- v) Dr. M Swaminathan; Sittannavasal Temple

2. ARTICLES

- (vi) Beginnings of Archeology - Annette. C. Barnes.
- vii) Archaeology as a career- Shrishti. S
- viii) Indus Valley Script -Dipthi
- ix) Temples -Priyanka.k
- x) Sree Padmanabha Swamy Temple - Lakshmi Nair .P
- xi) Vandalism - Likha James
- xii) Spaceship v/s Vimanas -Pratheesha
- xiii) Rock cut Mysteries- Mayuri
- xiv) Marine Archaeology -Raveena
- xv) Shroud of Turin - Rebecca
- xvi) Discovering Kirsara -Shan Eugene
- xvii) Kerala-Shruthi Anna
- xviii) Chennai Central-Shwetha Priyanka
- xix) Found yet lost- Meyammai
- xx) Heritage cannot wait - Samreen Wani
- xxi) Pompei -Vaishali.R

3. POEMS

- xxii) A Champion by Sr. Preeti
- xxiii) Who has seen them? by Fatimi
- xxiv) The lost splendor by Likha

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF CULTURE

Report on a Seminar with Dr. Sathyabama Badrinath, Director, Archaeological Survey of India, Southern Region.

‘Understanding and respecting our culture is necessary to save it’ - Dr. Sathyabama Badrinath

Integrating modern societal trends along with the quintessential archaeological methods of preservation of old relics happens to be a new mantra in archaeology. Dr. Sathyabama Badrinath, an elegant-looking woman possibly in her late 50s with her hair tightly tied up in a bun and a crisp sari, seemed to be in charge of the stage from the moment she held the mike. With an eloquence befitting a lecturer Dr. Badrinath spoke about the dilapidation of ancient monuments and how their loss is a considerable loss of our past and our scope to understand and learn from it.

Dr. Badrinath started the session by giving us a short introduction about what Indian culture is and what makes each of the several Indian traditions and customs unique. She then highlighted the significance of archaeological structures in understanding our history, which is more than often negated today and dismissed as spoils from the past. Lack of awareness and complete disregard of these structures have resulted in their further deterioration. Vandalism, theft, and public indifference catalyze their end.

It was however interesting to note the efforts taken up by the Archaeological Survey of India in their efforts to preserve these treasures. Dr. Badrinath brought to the fore laws enacted by the ASI for this purpose, which is otherwise considered supine.

Shifting her focus to south India, Dr. Badrinath spoke of the numerous prehistoric sites and the existing ancient temples that can be considered as engineering marvels given their impressive architecture and construction. Elucidating the immense potential for a tourist market, Dr. Badrinath introduced Kanchipuram as a historian’s delight for the ‘temple inscriptions hold a vivid, articulate and an elaborate account of temple traditions and ceremonies including complete documentation of temple grants unseen before.’

Her last segment was directed towards instilling a sense of belonging in us and to help us relate to these structures as ‘the story of our ancestors’ instead of just edifices of stone. She also listed out the various ways

A Talk on Heritage and Conservation by Ms. Urmila Santosh

On 28th July 2014, the Department of History and Tourism welcomed Ms. Urmila Santosh, an ex-Stella Marian from the batch of 2008-2011, to present a talk on the theme for the year, 'Heritage and Conservation.' The event began with a prayer song followed by a welcome note by the Head of the Department, Prof. Dolly Thomas. A very active student and subsequently the best outgoing student of her batch, Ms. Santosh went on to do her Masters in the field of ethno-archaeology from the Deccan College, Pune. Her talk highlighted the opportunities in the field and also the various methods of conservation.

She began with a definition and an introduction to the field followed by a detailed discussion on archaeology, its methodology and practices:

- *how to locate sites,*
- *excavations,*
- *investigating evidence and*
- *dating methods.*

She talked about how most of the sites are found by chance and how important it is to conserve such sites from degradation. Excavations involve recovering and recording artefacts and remains using experts in various fields and an excavation team ranges from the Director to the illustrators, helping in the work by providing their useful inputs. Among the various methods used for excavating sites, she talked about some of them including the shovel test pit, grid excavation, open area excavation, and stratigraphy.

While talking about investigating the evidence collected, she mentioned the importance of observation, classification, organization and interpretation in the field. She also mentioned the differences between relative and absolute dating methods. Relative or approximate dating includes methods like stratigraphy, typology and seriation, whereas absolute methods involve scientific processes such as radiocarbon dating, dendrochronology, thermo-luminescence, potassium-argon dating, etc.

Continuing with her talk, she spoke about museology, which is a study of all functions involved in the wording of a museum. It also convolves a variety of professions and there are different categories for museums depending upon the objects to be put on display. Ms. Santosh then focused on the importance and the need to conserve using different methods depending on the nature and composition of the artifact to be preserved, some of the important methods being impregnation and drying using chemical agents. Finally, the last stage of conservation is storage which requires preserving the artefacts under optimum conditions.

She then concluded with a 'Q&A' session which was very interactive. The event was an enriching experience for the students of the department, who gained the necessary knowledge for the field of history, archaeology and excavation to pursue their ambitions in the future days to come.

Shrishti Sankaranarayanan
FIRST YEAR

PROJECT SITTANNAVASAL

Dr. *M. Swaminathan*, a retired professor of mechanical engineering, came to our college to deliver a lecture on the Sittannavasal caves on 22 July 2014. Professor Swaminathan worked at the Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi, for more than 30 years. He is also a social activist and participates in socially relevant projects. He has set up a centre for arts and culture called 'Sudharsanam' in Pudukottai, and has suggested a method to preserve the priceless paintings at the Jaina caves in Sittannavasal.

Introduction

The Pudukottai district occupies a significant place as a cultural centre with its wealth of temples, sculptures, and paintings. It is of interest for the historian, the archaeologist and the connoisseur in the field of art. It is famous for its cave temples, the most well-known of which are at Sittannavasal, Kudumiyamalai, Tirugokaryam, and Tirumayam.

These are a few of the small number of Jaina cave temples that survive today. The number of cave temples here is greater than any other district of Tamil Nadu. These cave temples were constructed from the seventh to the ninth century. Pudukottai is one of the most important Jaina centres in Tamil Nadu today, and the district can boast of having the highest number of centrally protected Jaina relics. The cave temple in Sittannavasal is a Jaina cave temple.

Jaina sages came to Tamil Nadu probably around the third century before Christ. They were all monks and lived in places close to nature. Some of them selected out-of-the-way natural caverns and stayed there. The caverns are identifiable by the stone beds that have been made on the floors.

Originally the entire cave temple was plastered and painted except for the floor, but today we can only see patches here and there. There were a number of temples around and many paintings. Now we can see only a few broken temples and around 80% of the paintings are estimated to be lost. In a place nearby called Ezhadipattam, there is a natural cavern where the Jaina monks resided. This has 17 stone beds. They are said to have served as Jaina shelters since the second century BC.

Stone beds and inscriptions

At Sittannavasal, there are 17 stone beds made up of the natural rock. The rock has been polished so well that it has been called 'Mauryan polish.' Most of the stone beds contain inscriptions which are in the Tamil-Brahmi script, one of the earliest scripts of India. These inscriptions mention the names of those who had made these beds. The oldest inscriptions belong to the second century BC, the latest to about the ninth century.

The Brahmi script, the earliest Indian script, is regarded as the script from which all Indian scripts have evolved. Ashoka used Brahmi to carve his edicts. In Tamil Nadu, a variant called the Tamil Brahmi is used. More than half of the inscriptions found in India are found in Tamil Nadu.

One of the inscriptions mentions that the cave temple has been recently renovated.

Other cave temples

A kilometre further down the Sittannavasal hillock, there is a cave temple submerged underneath a lake. There are many pre-historic megalithic burial sites around that are approximately 3000 years old.

All cave temples in Tamil Nadu are excavated out of granite, which is a hard material. Because of this, cave temples in Tamil Nadu are not as large as cave temples in places like Maharashtra. In Maharashtra, there are many more cave temples and they are very big because they are all made up of soft stones.

Paintings

Sittannavasal paintings are next only to the Ajanta paintings in importance. In Tamil Nadu, only the Pallava paintings in Panamalai near Kanchipuram are older. The Sittannavasal paintings are ninth century paintings whereas the paintings in Panamalai are eight century.

The paintings are called 'frescoes'. These Jaina paintings are the earliest frescoes of south India. The colours used in these paintings are natural mineral colours, and that is why they have lasted so long. By the style of the painting, we can identify the region from which they come.

In India all temples are painted except for the flooring. These plasters in Ajanta have survived 2000 years. In Ajanta, the paintings are on the wall and can be seen. When it comes to Sittannavasal, surviving paintings show that they were associated with Jaina mythology and worship, but most of the paintings are gone.

The paintings on the ceilings depict lotus tanks, animals, flowers, birds and fishes. The pillars are also carved with dancing girls, kings and queens. The entire cave temple used to be plastered and painted except for the floor. But today we can only see patches of this - very few paintings are visible now.

Beds of stone and inscriptions

Almost all the stone beds carry marks of inscriptions. But man-made markings have obliterated many of the previous inscriptions. Most of the damage has been done in the past fifty years or so. If such vandalism continues, these priceless treasures will be lost forever within the next few decades.

Discovery

There is a history for the discovery and preservation of the Sittannavasal caves. They were first noticed in 1916 by Radhakrishnan Iyer and the first detailed account of the caves was written by Jouveau Dubreuil and Gopinatha Rao in 1920. They worked together and brought out Monograph on Sittannavasal. There has been a certain amount of preservation or research on these paintings by S. Paranasivan and D. R. Srinivasan.

Method of preservation

Prof. *S. Swaminathan* said that there are so many priceless and stunning works of art going to ruin due to neglect in Tamil Nadu. He stated that one idea for preservation would be to set up a full-scale replica of the cave temple with its paintings recreated. This would offer people an opportunity to appreciate its lost glory. He also said that this would be comparatively easy because it is not a very large cave temple. This has been done in the Ajanta caves with financial help from the Japanese government. In the Brihadeshwara Temple in Tanjore, the original paintings have all been taken away for preservation and replaced by photographs. This is a fine method to preserve monuments and paintings.

We also need to create awareness among people.

Project Sittansavasal

This conservation project aims at building a full-scale replica of the cave temple with its paintings created in their original state. The plan is to build thematic pavilions around the recreated temple that highlight those features of Indian heritage for which the Sittannavasal caves are famous. The complex could also include a centre of Jainology for research, documentation and information. This could be equipped with a library and lecture and meditation halls.

The development of such a heritage complex can hand in hand with the development of other tourist attractions like heritage gardens, picnic and camping areas, and retreat houses for corporates. Heritage tours can be arranged.

The thematic pavilions could include a temple architecture pavilion (*mandiram*), an Indian paintings pavilion (*chithram*), an Indian scripts pavilion (*aksharam*) and a pavilion on Jain contributions to Tamil culture (*gyanam*).

THE BEGINNINGS OF ARCHAEOLOGY IN INDIA

The beginnings of archaeology in India were made in 1784 when Sir William Jones, a judge of the Calcutta Supreme Court, formed the 'Asiatic Society' with a group of antiquarians. Prior to this, Dr. Samuel Johnson in the 18th century had felt the need for a systematic study of India's past and had urged the then Governor General Warren Hastings in 1774 to look into the matter. As a result, the Governor General revived Persian and Sanskrit studies in India.

Sir James coordinated the various efforts being made then and planned further investigations along scientific lines. To disseminate the results, he started a journal, *The Asiatic Researcher*, in 1788. In 1814, a museum was set up to house the antiquities collected. Subsequently, 'Literary Societies' were formed in Bombay and Madras. This was the start of a systematic study of the antiquarian remains of India.

Sir Jones made important discoveries. He noted the synchronism between Chandragupta Maurya and Alexander the Great and provided Indian archaeology with its first positive date. He discovered the location of the classical 'Pathibothra' at the confluence of the Ganga and the Sone, which contributed to ancient Indian geography. He also discovered the affinities between Sanskrit and Persian, on one hand, and Greek, Latin, Celtic and Germanic languages on the other. These efforts inspired other scholars.

Charles Wilkins unlocked the mystery of the Gupta and Kutila scripts, which led to the development of epigraphical studies in India. Captain E. Fell discovered the magnificent stupa at Sanchi. Colonel Todd reported on Rajput antiquities. William Erskine's publication on the Ajanta caves was inspiring. William Chambers visited Mamallapuram in 1772 and 1776, and in 1778 he described them in *The Asiatic Researcher*. Colonel Colin Mackenzie made the first detailed drawings and plans of the Buddhist stupa at Amravati. He also drew attention to the megalithic monuments of South India.

Till then all these efforts were individualistic, but in 1800 Francis Buchanan was entrusted with surveying the entire Mysore territory. His was the first official study and the first to develop systematic archaeological methods. His most important discovery was the solving of the Kharosthi and Brahmi scripts between 1834 and 1837. This opened the gates to sources of ancient Indian history and culture.

In 1847, the Archaeological Society of Delhi was formed. Alexander Cunningham, an army officer known as an archaeologist and numismatic, was appointed as Archaeological Surveyor of India in 1860. From 1862 to 1865, Cunningham worked in the north-western provinces. In 1870 he was appointed as Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India. His activities were confined to the north and he identified the holy places visited by Hiuen Tsang, the Chinese traveller. He published numerous publications on Buddhism, Ashokan inscriptions, Gupta architecture, ancient city sites and places mentioned in ancient texts.

Meanwhile, discoveries of paleoliths and neoliths in South India, in Tosney Valley and Pallavaram and hand axes with fossils in the Narmada Valley, led to the study of prehistoric man in India. In 1874, the activities of the survey were extended to the western and southern parts of India. The ruins of Harappa on the west were first noticed in 1872-73 but their importance was known only several years later.

In 1883, J.F. Fleet was appointed the Government Epigraphist. In 1878, the Treasure Trove Act was passed. In 1881, Major H. H. Cole was appointed the Curator of Ancient Monuments. After Cunningham, James Burgess was appointed as the Director General and the whole of British India was divided into five circles. Burgess insisted on professional archaeological excavation, to prevent art thieves and robbers from destroying sites. In 1886, two directives were issued by the Government: one debarring the public from disposing, without official approval, of antiquities; and the other forbidding the digging of ancient remains of any kind without the previous consent of the Archaeological Survey. Burgess published several volumes on the various monuments and a journal *Epigraphia Indica*.

After Burgess retired in 1889 the post of Director General was kept in abeyance, and dark and gloomy days came on the survey until 1899 when a new scheme was proposed, under which archaeological surveyors were appointed for the five circles. Funds were limited and were to be spent on conservation of existing remains rather than on exploration. As the five circles were under local governments, the survey was left leaderless.

With the providential arrival of Lord Curzon as the Governor General of India in 1899, a new era dawned for the history of Indian archaeology. He found the existing system futile and wrote, 'It is in my judgment equally our duty to dig and discover, to classify, reproduce and describe, to copy and decipher and to cherish and conserve.'

He pointed out to the government the great importance of ancient monuments and its duty towards their preservation. Towards the end of 1901, the post of the Director General was revived.

On 22 February 1902, John Marshall arrived in India at the age of 26 as the Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India. In 1903, state scholarships for training in archaeology led to the introduction of archaeology in the curricula of universities in India.

In 1904, the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act was enacted. For 23 years, John Marshall worked scientifically and published voluminous material. The important discoveries made at the time – especially the Indus Valley Civilization – drew world attention and led to the development of archaeology and its allied sciences like epigraphy, museology, etc.

With these beginnings, archaeology in India has made steady progress and forms an important part of Indian culture today.

Annette C. Barnes
THIRD YEAR

ARCHAEOLOGY AS A CAREER: A PEEK INTO THE REALITY

Many young aspirants look forward to archaeology as a means for heart throbbing adventures with a lot of action – fighting traps and thieves, trying heroics, and achieving a lot of success and fame. Well, I'd like to blame fictitious characters like Indiana Jones and Lara Croft for these misleading perceptions about the profession (personally, my heroes). Though it is adventurous and fun as we undertake the responsibility of discovering the unheard and unseen mysteries of the past (sounds fascinating), it is nothing like its depiction in the movies. Archaeology as a profession, like any other, has its own pros and cons. In this article, I plan to simplify things a bit, to make it clear as to what you might plunge into.

Archaeology, as a profession, helps you gain entry into the world that was once walked upon by our ancestors. We help recover the souls lost in oblivion, try to understand them – their lives, culture, society and religion. It is 'the place' to be for those who want to contribute to the understanding of the past to help create a better future. It is nevertheless adventurous and fascinating – requiring all kinds of survival tactics and endurance. If you choose archaeology, just know that you're one of the few with direction – a sense of purpose to study human evolution and the cultural specimens of the past. And I can assure you that if you are, you're one of the very few who walk the less treaded path.

Archaeology takes a lot of guts, grit, sweat and blood. It is NOT AT ALL an easy profession. It doesn't have a desk job until you join the cultural resource management team. Research is a must. Archaeologists spend days under the hot sun, scrounging in the mud, for gold (please read as knowledge of the past). Also sometimes, you are made to stay in tents just because your site of excavation is too far from the nearest township. You need to love the sun and sand more than you love your skin. As a fresh graduate or a field technician you will be expected to toil. The environment that you will be excavating in could be extremely erratic, ranging from extreme cold to extreme hot temperatures.

Many dream of holding a precious artefact that is priceless to history. Sorry to break it down, but it doesn't work that way. Mostly, all they find are bones, pottery, coins, crafts and fossils (Hey! That's cool too!). It is quite rare to find a precious idol (I know this is always in mind) or a mysterious object. Often you will have to rework your theories and assumptions based on your findings. A lot of study in the area of expertise is required. It is important to understand that our profession requires patience. Results are not easily obtained. 'Patience is a virtue' is a phrase that we could closely associate the field with.

Lara Croft had inherited a vast property from her father – both an industrialist and an archaeologist. Indiana Jones was given rations and he was a professor. That is the only explanation there is to their possession of wealth. Archaeology doesn't make you very rich (as opposed to an MBA graduate).

You will lead a very comfortable life though. Family is a choice to be made. Often archaeologists travel a lot, leaving their family behind at their place of residence. Excavation and research takes months if not years. Archaeology requires a person to make some intensely personal decisions, leaving behind their desire to earn a six-figure sum or to stay close to family. This condition is not necessary, but that's always been the usual case and is highly subjective.

Sometimes, the reality can shake your dreams but let this not discourage your ambition. Archaeology is a beautiful field with an art and taste of its own. It is like a sip of wine – while some find it bitter, others find it lovely. With this, I wish all those who are venturing into the field all the very best because you will become one of the very few to step out and be different.

Srishti Sankaranarayanan

FIRST YEAR

THE INDUS VALLEY SCRIPT: THE DRAVIDIAN CONNECTION

‘The Indus Valley Civilization’ – these words capture the attention of every kind of audience. This ancient civilization is studied by every student.

The Indus Valley Civilization (early period 3300–1300 BCE; mature period 2600–1900 BCE) was a Bronze Age civilization extending from what today is northeast Afghanistan to Pakistan and northwest India, covering an area of 1.25 million km². One cannot simply forget the meticulous planning of this civilization. In fact the well-aligned baked-brick houses, elaborate drainage systems, water supply systems, and clusters of large non-residential buildings are still better planned than most cities today.

It would not be incorrect to say that this semi-urban civilization owes a large part of the interest shown towards it to the fact that the Indus script is the only major script which has still not been deciphered. The mystery of the script has led to many speculations and wild theories.

One of the theories suggests connections between Dravidian languages and the Indus script. It was the Russian scholar, Yuri Knorozov, who first used the Dravidian languages as the base to try and decipher the logo-syllabic script. Using computer analysis, he suggested that an underlying Dravidian language was what people probably spoke in the Indus Valley. He felt that a sign in the Indus script of a man carrying a stick represented the posture of Yama, the god of death, or Bhairava, a form of Shiva, and assumed that the man was a predecessor of the one the gods.

Then Asko Parpola, Professor-Emeritus of Indology, Institute of World Cultures, University of Helsinki, Finland, published a book *Deciphering the Indus Script* which gave a comprehensive description of Parpola’s understanding of the relationship between the Dravidian and Indus valley scripts. On 23 June 2010, at the World Classical Tamil Conference at Coimbatore, he received the ‘Kalaingar M. Karunanidhi Classical Tamil Award for 2009’ from the then President, Pratibha Patil.

Asko Parpola interpreted the crab-like sign of the Indus script as ‘planet’, which others believe to be ‘seize/ grip’. He points out that both Tamil kol and Sanskrit graha mean both ‘planet’ and ‘seize/ grip’, with the Sanskrit word being a calque on the Dravidian, which shows a homonymy with a word kolli, ‘glowing ember’.

According to Walter Fairservis Jr., the Indus script partly employs the rebus principle, meaning essentially that a more abstract word was written with a pictogram depicting a homophonous but more concrete word (as if you would write the English word ‘too’ as two strokes depicting the homophonous word ‘two’). Thus, according to Fairservis, the word for ‘star’ (which could well appear on administrative or commercial seals in the context of calendar data) would have been depicted as a fish, because the Old Tamil words for ‘star and ‘fish’ (mīn) are homophonous.

However these theories were widely discredited as they seemed to stretch out the connection a little too much. While some of the words came easily, the connection between the Dravidian language and Indus script had to be strained to find a connection. A majority believe that the script was totally isolated and is different from any other language. Unless and until a kind of Rosetta stone is found, a bi-lingual text juxtaposing a text in the Indus script and its translation in another, known language, their theory hangs in the air, not susceptible to passing any external test.

What could help the Dravidian theory is a relation with the still un-deciphered Elamite script, which was used in the same period. Trade relations between the Indus area and its immediate neighbour to the west, Elam (southern Iran), were very strong. The script has shown a considerable amount of likeness to the Indus script.

But the lack of any major progress can be justified. The Indus script is very short and has brief texts only. The average number of symbols on the seals is five, and the longest is only 26. The language underlying the script is unknown and a lack of bilingual texts makes it very hard to decipher this lost language. For instance, consider Champollion, who deciphered Egyptian hieroglyphs with all of these three important clues – there were very long Egyptian texts; he knew Coptic, a descendant of Egyptian; and the Rosetta stone, a bilingual text with Greek and two written forms of Egyptian, had been discovered.

The script isn't as bad as undecipherable. For one, even though scholars don't have long texts and bilingual texts, they can still theorize about the language underneath the writing system. There are several competing theories about the language that the Indus script represents. And one of these days one of them will click.

Dipti Golacha
FIRST YEAR

TEMPLES ARE THE CULTURAL CENTRES OF INDIA

Where is our culture, where is our heritage? The heritage and culture of India are most evident in the temples. India is a country famous for its heritage and culture, and its temples are its symbols. India has temples belonging to different religions-Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism.

In this article, I want to show that Indian temples are the centers of our culture by explaining the main features of two important temples of India:

- Brihadeshwara Temple, Thanjavur
- Chariot of the Sun God (Konark Temple), Puri

Brihadeshwara Temple

Shiva is a popular deity, and the Brihadeshwara Temple, built by the great Chola Emperor Rajaraja I (AD 985-1014), is dedicated to him. This is quite evident from the number of exquisitely carved sculptures installed in the complex.

Shiva's iconic symbol, the lingam, representative of strength, dominates the sanctum sanctorum, where it is a massive four metres high, and seven metres in circumference. In fact, because of its height, it became necessary to make two circumambulatory passages inside. Lingams of various sizes, numbering around 250, are found all over the temples complex, in the surrounding walkway and in smaller shrines. On all, flowers placed on top, a dot of turmeric and vermilion or white paste applied on the forehead of the deity express the fervour of worshipping devotees who came in hundreds each day.

Apart from the lingams, Shiva's status as Nataraja, the god of Dance, is made apparent by sculptures of numerous dancing maidens in various positions of the classical Bharatanatyam style. The granite Nandhi, mythical bull mount of Shiva, guards the entrance to the shrine. Weighing over 25 tons, it is reputed to be the largest Nandhi Sculptures in India. This temple is also popularly known as the 'Big Temple', and turned 1000 years old in 2010.

Thanjavur was a prominent Hindu site under the Cholas, and important even later, when it came under Maratha rule in the 16th-17th centuries. Today, the area around it is known as the rice bowl of Tamil Nadu but the Brihadeshwara Temple, piercing the sky with a glided finial donated by King Rajaraja I himself, remains Thanjavur's most brilliant showpiece.

Chariot Temple

Konark, a town in the Puri district of Odisha, derives its name from Konarka, the presiding deity of the Sun Temple. Konarka is actually a combination of two words, kona (corner) and arka (sun). The temple was built by King Narasimhadev I (1238-64) of the Ganga dynasty.

Konark was one of the earliest centres of sun worship in India. The building took 16 years to complete, with the efforts of over 1,200 artisans and 12,000 labourers. Twenty-four wheels (12 pairs representing the months in a year) are carved around the base of the edifice. Eight spokes of each wheel serve as sundials; the shadows thrown by them give the precise time and divide the day into three-hour sections. Seven galloping horses, representing the seven sages who govern the constellations, pull the chariot carrying Surya across the sky.

Three images of the sun god are positioned to catch the rays of the sun at dawn, noon and sunset. Two sculpted lions guard the entrance. A large stone slab in the northeast is carved with divinities representing the nine planets.

It has been declared a world heritage site by UNESCO.

In India, temples are not only places to perform religious ceremonies but also symbols of our culture and heritage.

K. Priyanka
THIRD YEAR

SREE PADMANABHA SWAMY TEMPLE

India never invaded any other country because we already had everything. Numbers, gold, spices, values – everything. We gave the world yoga, spiritual toleration and Ayurveda. When the world prays we meditate. As the writer Gurcharan Das has chronicled, Indian kings and merchants had been accumulating profits from the spice trade for nearly two thousand years. In ancient Rome, senators lamented that local women used too many Indian luxuries, and, in AD 77, Pliny the Elder proclaimed that India had become ‘the sink of the world’s gold.’

Travancore was a kingdom that once encompassed much of southern India. Although it ceased to exist in 1947, when India became independent, the maharajas have continued to preside over the Padmanabha Swamy temple, both as spiritual leaders and as custodians of the deity’s wealth. For centuries, the royal family’s management of the temple received little scrutiny: there were no complete or easily accessible records of what the deity owned. Anizham Thirunal surrendered the kingdom of Travancore to Sree Padmanabha Swamy, the deity at the temple, and pledged that he and his descendants would be vassals or agents of the deity who would serve the kingdom as *Padmanabha Dasas*. Since then, the name of every Travancore king was preceded by the title ‘Padmanabha Dasa’; the female members of the royal family were called ‘Padmanabha Sevinis.’ The donation of the kingdom to Sree Padmanabha Swamy was known as *thrippadi-danam*.

But a lawyer named Ananda Padmanabhan had a hunch. According to legend, treasure was sealed in the temple vaults, and Padmanabhan, who was passionate about history, knew that in centuries past maharajas had performed a ceremony in which they weighed local princes approaching adulthood, then donated to the temple an equivalent weight in gold. Padmanabhan believed that these riches were still hidden in the basement, uncounted and unguarded.

The platforms in front of the *uimanam* and where the deity rests are both carved out of a single massive stone and hence called *ottakkal-mandapam*. In order to perform *darshan* and *puja*, one has to ascend this to the *mandapam*.

The deity is visible through three doors. The visage of the reclining Lord and Siva Linga underneath the hand is seen through the first door in the sanctum sanctorum. Sree Padmanabha reclines on the serpent Anantha or Adi Sesha. The serpent has five hoods facing inwards, signifying contemplation. Sridevi and Divakara Muni in *katusarkara*, Brahma seated on a lotus emanating from the Lord’s navel (hence the name ‘Padmanabha’), gold *abhishheka moorthies* of Lord *Padmanabha*, Sridevi and Bhudevi, and silver utsava moorthi of Padmanabha are seen through the second door. The Lord’s feet, and Bhudevi and Kaundinya Muni in *katusarkara* are seen through the third door. The idol contains twelve thousand and eight sacred stones that were collected centuries ago from the Gandaki River, in Nepal, and carried to Trivandrum by elephant. The deity Sree Padmanabha is covered with *katusarkara yogam*, a special ayurvedic mix, which forms a plaster that keeps the deity clean. Only the King of Travancore may perform *sashitanga namaskaram*, or prostrate on the *ottakkal mandapam*.

One of the most popular books was written on the royals by a member of the royal family, Princess Lakshmi Bayi; it makes no mention of a treasury, or of underground kallaras. However there is a tantalizing account, from 1870, of life in Trivandrum by a British missionary named Samuel Mateer. He wrote, ‘It is said that there is a deep well inside the temple, into which immense riches are thrown year by year; and in another place, in a hollow covered by a stone, is a great golden lamp,

which was lit over 120 years ago and still continues burning.’

The temple has six vaults (*kallaras*), labeled A to F for book keeping purpose by the Court. Among the six kallaras or chambers in the temple, the ‘Bharatakkon’ kallara is very closely associated with Sree Padmanabha Swamy. It is not a part of the temple treasury. The holy chamber houses a srichakram, an idol of Sree Padmanabha, and many valuables meant to enhance the potency of the principal deity. While vaults A and B have been unopened over the past many years, vaults C to F have been opened from time to time. Several 18th century Napoleonic era coins were found as well as a three-and-a-half feet tall gold idol of Mahavishnu studded with rubies and emeralds, and ceremonial attire for adorning the deity in the form of 16-part gold anki weighing almost 30 kilograms (66 lb) together with gold coconut shells, one studded with rubies and emeralds. It is estimated that the value of the monumental items is close to INR 1.2 trillion (USD 22.68 billion), making it the richest temple in the world

The sixth vault is named B. Because the steel door of vault B has two big cobra portraits on it and this door has no nuts, bolts or other latches, it is considered traditionally to be fixed to the secret chamber with the naga bandham or naga paasam mantras by the siddha purashas who lived during the reign of King Martandavarma in the 16th century. According to tradition, a door of such a secret vault can be opened by a highly erudite sadhu or mantrika who is familiar with the knowledge of extricating naga bandham or naga paasam by chanting a garuda mantra. If any human attempts are made with man-made technology to open the mysterious vault B catastrophes are likely to occur. If garuda mantra is chanted by any powerful sadhu or yogi or *mantrika* the door proceeds to automatically open

It was alleged that an ivory flute and an ancient ring with nine precious stones went missing and were replaced by cheap replicas. This ring adorns the deity’s finger. The amicus curae told the court that the *kallaras* or the place where the temple gold has been stored has to be sealed and the keys have to be in the custody of a district judge.

Whatever be the state of affairs of the temple, the number of devotees who come to the temple to pray bears testimony to the fact that rich or not, Padmanabha Swamy temple is a treasure trove of history.

Lakshmi Nair P
THIRD YEAR

VANDALISM AT HISTORICAL SITES

India is a country well known for its architectural splendors. The palaces, forts, tombs, mosques, temples, cities, everything has its own story to tell. But these splendors lose their shine because of our carelessness.

One of the major reasons for this loss is the youth of our country who visit these monuments and end up scribbling on the walls of these monuments. People don't even think once before they do such activities: 'Vimesh loves Rani', 'Raj-9556856231' etc. The walls of most of our monuments are filled with such scribbling. Is this how we show how responsible the citizens of our country are? Is this what is called protection and conservation? Is this the way we project our country and ourselves to others? Even when this happens in front of our eyes we tend to ignore what is happening without even thinking. What if someone comes and does something like this on the walls of our house? Will we then ignore it too? This is our country, our nation, and we need to protect our treasures. When we see people doing this – even if it's our boyfriend/girlfriend, sibling, friend or even stranger – it is our responsibility to stop them and tell them what they are doing is wrong.

What can be done to stop this?

There are a few laws passed to stop such activities according to which a person who is found to be responsible for causing damage to the monuments by scribbling, spitting etc. is asked to pay a fine of a certain amount.

But the rules and laws do not seem to have an effect on the people of our country. People do not seem to be bothered probably because they are not really aware of the impact of their actions. The current generation of youth thinks it's cool and fashionable to do such activities. Today's generation must understand that these monuments are the assets of our country which we have to be proud of. They must be made to understand that when they do such things they portray what standard of thinking they have and what kind of education and knowledge they have achieved in their life so far. Students should be encouraged to visit such places, learn about them, and admire their own history and culture. When the current generation of students sees and learns about these monuments they will be able to understand the value and need to protect and conserve the historical monuments of our country.

One of the projects taken up by the Archaeological Survey of India is called the 'Gray Revolution'. The revolution aims to create awareness among the youth of the country about heritage monuments, their protection and conservation. Under this project the Bhopal Circle of the ASI has introduced the sanskrithi stamba – a to-scale model of the Ashokan pillar at Sarnath, at all the heritage sites under the Bhopal Circle. The inscription on the model Ashokan pillar exhorts the younger generation not to scribble and deface the monuments. Students, in turn, take a solemn pledge under the sanskrithi stamba that they will neither deface nor scribble on the monuments.

- The New Ashokan Edict
- Thus speaks the soul of the Emperor Ashoka
- I am the sinner who started the horrifying and bloody Kalinga war
- When I saw thousands of human beings injured and killed at the Kalinga battlefield,
- I realized it and my soul started crying.

- From a blood thirsty tyrant, I changed into a protector of all living and nonliving things and their environment
- My monuments and edicts are living testimonies of it.

But, today, I am pained and grief stricken when I see people encroaching, injuring and scribbling their names on my monuments and the monuments of my predecessors and successors without realizing that it is a part of their prestigious heritage.

Filled with remorse, today I wish to propound and propagate a new religion of nonviolence towards monuments and heritage. I request all people to adopt the new religion by pledging the following principles:-

I will not scribble, deface or encroach upon any monument.

I will respect the monuments and heritage like my parents and teachers.

I will render all possible help to conserve and preserve our heritage.

These are the wordings written on the scale model of the Ashokan pillars placed at the heritage sites under the Bhopal Circle. The students who visit the place are requested to repeat the principles aloud and take the oath not to do such activities.

The Archeological Survey of India conducts many other activities under the project 'Grey Revolution' project to create awareness and encourage students to protect and conserve the heritage and monuments of our country, like street plays, exhibitions, seminars, and awareness campaigns in collaboration with schools and colleges.

The monuments of our country speak of our past which led to the present and will lead to the future. As citizens of this country it is our responsibility to promote and encourage the protection and conservation of our monuments. These are the reasons for the prestige and beauty of our country; it is for these that our country is famous for all around the world.

Our country: the way we present it to others is the way others see it.

JAGO INDIA JAGO!

Likha James Mattam

SECOND YEAR

SPACESHIPS VS. VIMANAS

Aliens! You thought that they only knew the route to America and Europe? Well, think again ... they were very much fascinated by India. Who can't be, right?

The Times of India on 15 July 2014 reported that Indian archaeologists have discovered 10,000-year-old paintings of aliens and UFOs (Unidentified Flying Objects) in an ancient cave, situated in tribal Bastar region of the Indian state of Chattisgarh.

What were these aliens doing in Charma, a remote village in Chattisgarh? Apparently India not only attracted people from around the world but also aliens from universe. As our Indians were well known for their hospitality, they became alien-friendly and called their alien buddies 'Rohelka people.' Good for us they didn't intend to linger and rule over us. Otherwise we have to study chapters and chapters of alien invasion in India.

The ancestral legend goes around like this: some small sized people would land in the village and take the villagers with them in a round shaped flying object.

An archaeologist also claims that the paintings are of natural colour and have strange pictures depicting people in space suit like attire. He told TOI, 'The paintings are done in a natural colours that have hardly faded despite the years. The strangely carved figures are seen holding weapon-like objects and do not have the clear features the nose and mouth are missing. In few pictures ,they are even shown wearing space suits. We can't refute the possibility of imagination by prehistoric men but humans usually do not fancy such things.'

Aren't our ancestors awesome? As there was no such thing as cameras they captured them with inks on the walls of caves ... smile please.

By squeezing their grey matter this theory on Ancient Alien Vimanas was formed. Yes - the same vimana used by the sun god and other gods for their annual trips to earth. Historians suggest that the ancient literature is the first form of science fiction.

One of the most amazing evidence for ancient alien theorists is the actual description of the construction of the vimanas contained in the Sanskrit Samarangana Sutradhara: 'Strong and durable must of the body of the vimana be made, like a great flying bird of light material. Inside one must put the mercury engine with its iron heating apparatus underneath. By means of the power latent in the mercury which sets the driving whirlwind in motion, a man sitting inside may travel a great distance in the sky. The movements of the vimana are such it can vertically ascend/vertically descend, move slanting forwards and backwards ...'

Theories aside, the Chattisgarh State Department of Archaeology and Culture is planning to ask NASA and ISRO to study the rare alien paintings from the prehistoric period. Why should we seek help from Superman and Batman when we have our own Chotta Bheem here. Sure he is young but we should fight our own battles ... Hooray! Load the vimanas! Shoot for the stars.

John Angel Pratheesha G
THIRD YEAR

ROCK-CUT MYSTERY IN HISTORY

Namakkal is a district of Tamil Nadu known for its fort and two rock-cut cave temples. It is situated about 50 kilometres from Salem. Namakkal became a separate district on 1 January 1997.

In the middle of district, there is a giant cliff of about 200 metres. The fort is built on a rounded mass of white gneiss on this cliff. From the Sangam Age, this area was called by many names – Kollikootram, Ollikootram, Kurumporaiyur and Malakongam. During that time, it was ruled by Adiyamaan and his successors. They were friendly with the Pallavas. Adiyamaan's dynasty was defeated by the Pandiyans, and they later constructed some temples in the Pandiyan style. The rock-cut cave was called athiyenth ravivishnu kraham. The meaning of this term is, 'Lord Vishnu's temple built by Adiyamaan.'

During the 12th century, this region was under the rule of the Pandiyans and later the Cholas. At that time, the whole Kongu Nilam was divided into 24 parts. During the 16th century, it came under the Vijayanagar and Madurai Nayaks rule. Later it came under Jamindar Mukthiyalamal's land. In 1786 it was ruled by Hyder Ali. Because of a British military officer, Colonel Wood, this region came under British East India Company. In 1910 it was included in the Trichinopoly (today Tiruchirappalli) district and later in Salem district. As mentioned, Namakkal is known for its temples and fort. Anjaneyar Temple, Trichengode Arthanaareswar Temple, Kollihills Arapleeswar Temple are some famous temples in Namakkal. The fort was strategically used by Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan of Mysore, but it belongs to the Nayaks period.

The fort is accessible from the southwest on which side narrow steps have been hewn in the rock. On the lower slope of the hill to the south and southwest are remains of the first line of fortifications. The outer fortification walls are made of well-cut blocks and are secured with mortar. The ramparts have loopholes for the use of musketry. The fort contains a small temple called Vardharaja Perumal and other old buildings. On both the east and west sides of the cliff there are temples. Down the cliff there is a pond called 'Kamalayakulam'. The rock-cut cave temple on the western side is dedicated to Narasimha. The central figure in bold relief is that of Vishnu as Narasimha and he is flanked by both Brahma and Siva. On the side walls are carved the figures of Vishnu seated on Anantha, Trivikrama, Varaha, and Narasimha killing Hiranyakasipu. The cave temple is also attributed to the Adiyamaan kings. The temple has a shrine for the goddess and additional mandapas were added during the time of the Nayaks.

On the eastern side there is a rock-cut cave temple known as Anantasayi (Ranganathaswami) Temple. In the sanctum of this temple, on a raised platform, is a large figure of Vishnu reclining on Anantha, with Brahma seated on a lotus. The sculptures of Trivikrama, Sankarnarayanan and Balanarasimha are carved on the south wall. However the sculptures are more subdued here. Inscriptions dated to the 9th century mention that these two grand temples were designed in such a way that all the people in the town could stay in them. They serve as the identity of the district.

Much research is being done in and around the area. We can't build such majestic things today but at least we can keep them safe as our own wealth and pride.

MARITIME ARCHAEOLOGY

Maritime archaeology is otherwise known as underwater archaeology. Maritime Archaeology is the study of past human interaction with the marine environment through the material remains of past activities.

A wide range of evidence is studied by maritime archaeologists and includes underwater sites, such as shipwrecks and submerged prehistoric landscapes. These are the areas that were formerly dry land but submerged by rising sea-levels at the end of the last ice age.

Coastal and intertidal sites such as ports, mills and fish traps are also studied by marine archaeologists. In many cases, these studies can provide a unique perspective on our maritime history and heritage which cannot be obtained from land-based sources.

Excavation

Where intrusive underwater excavation is appropriate, silts and sediments can be removed from an area of investigation using a water dredge. (A water dredge is an eductor-jet pump-based tool used by underwater archaeologists to remove sediments from an underwater archaeological site.) When used correctly, this device has an additional benefit in tending to improve the visibility in the immediate vicinity of the investigation. It is also important to note that for very deep sea excavation submarines are sometimes used to view sites. Underwater photography can also be conducted from these submarines which assists the recording process.

Archaeological sciences

A variety of archaeological sciences are used in underwater archaeology. Dendrochronology is an important technique especially for dating the timbers of wooden ships. It may also provide additional information, including the area where the timber was harvested (i.e. likely to be where the ship was built) and whether or not there are later repairs or reuse of salvaged materials. Because plant and animal material can be preserved underwater, archaeobotany and archaeozoology have roles in underwater archaeology. For example, for submerged terrestrial sites or inland water, identification of pollen samples from sedimentary or silt layers can provide information on the plants growing on surrounding land and hence on the nature of the landscape. Information about metal artifacts can be obtained through X-ray of concretions. Geology can provide insight into how the site evolved, including changes in sea-level, erosion by rivers and deposition by rivers or in the sea.

There are several archaeological sites which have been submerged in the sea. For example, the Pharos (Alexandria, Egypt), Baiae (Bay of Naples, Italy), Herakleion and Canopus (Abu Qir Bay, Egypt), the Shore Temple (Mamallapuram, India), etc.

Mamallapuram Shore Temple

The famous Mamallapuram temple has always been encased in folklore. The legends spoke of seven temples that were so dazzling; the gods grew envious and sent a flood that submerged all but one of them, leaving the Shore Temple companionless. After the tsunami of December 2004, a collapsed temple as well as several other structures and primordial rock sculptures used in the same era to decorate walls and religious shrines were exposed. It revived theories that Mamallapuram formed part of the Seven Pagodas the first Europeans wrote about.

Underwater sites are often dynamic, that is they are subject to movement by currents, surf, storm damage or tidal flows. Structures may be unexpectedly uncovered, or buried beneath sediments. Over time, exposed structures will be eroded, broken up and scattered. The dynamic nature of the environment may make in-situ conservation infeasible, especially as exposed organics, such as the wood of a shipwreck, are likely to be consumed by marine organisms such as piddocks.

In addition, underwater sites can be chemically active, with the result that iron can be leached from metal structures to form concretions. The original metal will then be left in a fragile state. Underwater sites do not provide good outreach possibilities and access for the general public.

With all these limitations, maritime archaeology remains an important and fascinating sub-field in archaeology.

Raveena

FIRST YEAR

THE SHROUD OF TURIN

The Shroud of Turin, a 14-foot cloth in which many believe Jesus Christ was buried, may be the most studied artefact in history — and the most controversial. For centuries, scientists and historians have pored over this blood-stained piece of linen that bears the faint outline of a crucified man, hoping to uncover what the image represents and how it was created.

The first documented reference to the shroud dates back to the 14th century. Historical records suggest it changed hands many times until 1578, when it wound up in its current home—the Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist in Turin, Italy. The Catholic Church has never taken an official position on the cloth's authenticity, but the Vatican has made statements attesting to its value and arranged for public viewings.

The advent of photography in the late 19th century forever altered the course of the shroud's history. In 1898, a lawyer named Secondo Pia took the first known photograph of the cloth, and his negative revealed new details — including strikingly clear facial features — that could not be observed with the naked eye. Scientific interest in the relic immediately picked up. In 1902, the French anatomist Yves Delage, an agnostic, inspected the photographs and pronounced that the figure on the shroud was indeed Jesus Christ.

The first direct examinations of the cloth were conducted in the 1970s, most famously by the Shroud of Turin Research Project (STURP), a team of scientists led by physicist John P. Jackson of the University of Colorado. The group found that the markings on the cloth were consistent with a crucified body and that the stains were real human blood; they also suggested that the image's shading patterns contained three-dimensional information. They could not explain how the imprint ended up on the fabric in the first place.

In 1988, scientists removed a swatch of the shroud for radiocarbon testing. Three independent laboratories concluded that the material originated between 1260 and 1390, leading some to deem it inauthentic. Since then, however, further studies have cast doubt on those results, suggesting that the shroud may indeed date back to the time of Jesus Christ's life and death.

In March 2010, researchers unveiled a revolutionary radiocarbon dating method that could allow scientists to safely establish accurate ages for precious artefacts like the Shroud of Turin. Unlike traditional carbon dating, the new process does not require samples; instead, the entire object is exposed to an electrically charged gas that gently oxidizes its surface without causing damage. This means that, someday soon, the world may have a more precise estimate of the Shroud of Turin's real age.

Rebecca Rodrigues

THIRD YEAR

DISCOVERING KIRSARA

The Indus Valley Civilization has fascinated not just historians and archaeologists, but also experts from diverse areas like architecture, linguistics, geology, and urban planning. What fascinated them was the greatness of this ancient civilization, its vast extent, its trade links to other countries and its great achievements in the field of architecture, fine arts, manufacturing, trading etc. Mohenjo-Daro, Harappa and Ganweriwala (in Pakistan), Rakhigarhi and Dholavira (in India) are ranked as the first to the fifth biggest Harappan sites. Many more Harappan sites have been discovered, and still more are to be excavated. The Harappan civilization had three phases:

- The Early Harappan from c.3500 BCE to c.2600 BCE
- The Mature Harappan from c.2600 BCE to c.2000 BCE
- The Late Harappan from c.2000 BCE to c.1600 BCE

Most of the sites that have been excavated are in the northern and eastern Kutch region. Not many excavations have been made in the western Kutch area. The Superintending Archaeologist of the ASI (Vadodara) made an attempt to discover something valuable and thereby stumbled up the site 'Khirsara', which was an ancient industrial hub of the Harappan civilization.

The Khirsara village is located 85 kilometres from Bhuj town, Gujarat. Nearly 30 trenches were dug, each ten metres by ten metres. The excavations at Khirsara since December 2009 have established Khirsara as a 'major industrial hub' that belonged to the mature Harappan period. Khirsara overlooks the dry Khari River and may have flourished for 400 years from c. 2600 to 2200 BCE. Khirsara has all the features of a 'mature Harappan' site. These are:

- systematic town planning,
- a citadel complex,
- a factory complex,
- habitation annexes,
- a warehouse,
- drainage system,
- massive fortification walls, and
- circular seals.

All these structures were built of sandstone blocks set in mud mortar.

More than 4200 years ago, Khirsara was an important trading outpost in Western Kutch in Gujarat. Its 'factory' manufactured enormous quantities of beads from cornelian, agate, jasper, lapis lazuli; bangles and inlays from conch shells; copper artefacts such as rings, beads, needles, arrowheads and weights; and terracotta rattles, toy carts and gamesmen. The factory site excavation has yielded a number of Harappan ceramics – painted pottery, reserve slipware (called slip because a coloured coating is done over the pot after it is finished and dried), globular pots, perforated jars and dish bowls.

A furnace and a tandoor also have been found. An extraordinary feature about Khirsara's Harappan settlement is that it not only had an outer fortification wall, but every complex inside had its own fortification wall. The purpose of these fortification walls were to ensure the safety of its residents and the goods that were manufactured.

The houses in the 'citadel' where the elite lived had verandahs, interconnected rooms, floors paved with multi-coloured bricks, rock-cut wells and a good drainage system. A five-metre paved lane separated the citadel from the factory. The citadel was purposefully built very near to the warehouse, so that the residents could keep a watch on the trading activities.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. Khirsara still needs to be excavated for more finds and resourceful information for the complete picture of Indus Valley civilization.

Dr. Shan Eugene
(FACULTY)

KERALA: A SNEAK PEEK THROUGH ITS HERITAGE SITES

Kerala: God's own Country is one of the richest states in India today in almost every field, be it art, culture or heritage.

There are a lot of heritage monuments of great historical importance in Kerala. Some of the monuments which are officially recognized and protected by the Archaeological Survey of India (A.S.I.) are: Mattancherry Palace, St. Francis Church, St. Angelo Fort, Bekal fort, Yakkara Desam, etc.

Mattancherry Place is a Portuguese palace popularly known as the Dutch Palace in Mattancherry, Kochi. It depicts Hindu temple art, portraits and exhibits of the Rajas who ruled Kochi. In 1951, Mattancherry palace was restored and declared a centrally protected monument. It also underwent a second restoration by the A.S.I. This place is truly an architectural masterpiece.

The St. Francis church was built in 1503 in Fort Kochi. It is the oldest European church in India. This church is of great historical importance as the body of the great Portuguese explorer Vasco Da Gama was buried here.

St. Angelo fort was built in 1505 by Dom Francisco de Almeida. The Dutch modernized the fort and made a few changes. It is a major tourist attraction and the fort is now under the supervision of the A.S.I.

Bekal Fort is the largest fort in Kerala, spreading over 40 acres. In 1992, the government of India declared Bekal Fort as a special tourism area. The view from the fort is breath-taking. Presently the A.S.I. is in charge of the protection and preservation of the Bekal Fort.

But there are several others which are less well known. The number of monuments which have been left neglected is not few in our country. So the need of the hour is to revert the attention of the government and the public towards these monuments and to preserve these pristine glories.

Shruthi Anna
FIRST YEAR

THE CHENNAI CENTRAL

Here comes the most awaited, the most popular, and the oldest railway station in Chennai: 'The Central'. The Chennai Central Station was opened in 1873 with only four platforms. George Harding designed the building. Presently, Chennai Central has 12 platforms.

Marking the initial days of the railways in the Indian sub-continent, the Madras Railway Company began to network southern India in 1856. The first station was built at Royapuram, which remained the main station at that time.

Madras Central was built in 1873 at Park Town as a second terminus to decongest the Royapuram harbour station, which was being utilized for port movements. The station was built on the open grounds that had once been called John Pereira's gardens.

In 1907, Madras Central was made the Madras Railway Company's main station. The station gained prominence after the beach line was extended further south in the same year, and Royapuram was no longer a terminus for Madras. The Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway Company was formed in 1908 and took over the Central Station from the Madras Railway Company. Madras Central was a part of the South Indian Railway Company during the British rule. The company was established in 1890 and was initially head quartered in Tiruchirappalli. It was then shifted to Madurai and later to Madras Central. The company operated a suburban electric train service for Madras city from May 1931 onwards in the Madras beach. Electrification of the lines in the Tambaram section began in 1979. In 1985, when the market building caught fire and was destroyed, the structure was transferred to the railways by the government. The land in front of the building was made into a car park. Following the renaming of the city of Madras in 1996, the station became known as Chennai Central.

In 2005, the buildings were painted a light brown colour, but concurring with the views of a campaign by the citizens of Chennai and also to retain the old nostalgic charm, they were repainted in their original brick-red colour. The station is the first in India to be placed on the cyber map.

Shwetha M.

FIRST YEAR

POMPEII: DESTRUCTION AND REVIVAL

Mount Vesuvius is a volcano in Italy near the Bay of Naples that has erupted more than 50 times. The most famous eruption of this volcano took place in A.D. 79, when the ancient Roman city of Pompeii was buried under volcanic lava. Around two thousands lives were lost in the eruption and the city was abandoned until it was rediscovered by a group of explorers in 1748. The surprising thing about the discovery was that all the things buried under the debris were intact.

The ancient Greeks had settled in the area in the eighth century before Christ. The region around Mount Vesuvius and the Bay of Naples attracted wealthy vacationers. By first century A.D., the town of Pompeii, located about five miles from the mountain, was a flourishing resort for Rome's most distinguished citizens. Elegant houses and elaborate villas were built. Tourists, townspeople and slaves bustled in and out of small factories and artisans' shops, taverns and cafes, and brothels and bath houses. It is estimated that there were about 20,000 people living in Pompeii and the surrounding region on the eve of that fateful eruption in A.D. 79.

"One of the ironies of volcanoes is that they tend to produce very fertile soils, and that tends to lure people to live around them," Philip Janney.

The key to Pompeii's prosperity was the region's rich black earth. Olive groves supported many farmers in Pompeii. Pompeian wine was shipped throughout Italy.

When Mount Vesuvius erupted in 79 A.D, the blast sent a plume of ashes, pumice and other rocks, and scorching-hot volcanic gases so high into the sky that people who were hundreds of miles away could see it. Buildings collapsed. A 'pyroclastic surge' (superheated poison gas) and pulverized rock poured down the side of the mountain and swallowed everything and everyone in its path. By the time the eruption came to an end, Pompeii was buried under millions of tons of volcanic ash. Pompeii, along with the smaller neighboring towns of Stabiae and Herculaneum, was abandoned for centuries.

Pompeii was found in 1748 by explorers who had arrived in Campania to dig. They discovered that the lava had acted as a preservative as underneath all the dust Pompeii was exactly like it had been thousands of years ago, the buildings still intact and the skeletons frozen exactly where they had fallen. The archaeologists are said to have even discovered preserved jam and loaves of bread.

The destruction of Pompeii is undoubtedly history's most storied natural disaster. Europe's wealthiest families displayed art and reproductions of objects from the ruins of Pompeii. According to scholars, the excavation of Pompeii played an important role in the neo-classical revival of the eighth century. Pompeii's very destruction is what has kept it so alive, as millions tour in and around this disaster site.

R. Vaishali
THIRD YEAR

POEM

*Never stop listening to the tales that are recorded in the walls.
Stories trapped in brick that ache to be told,
Epics that slither out from gates and guild halls
All past kisses and their hopes gathered in,
Conserve every detail as though sweeping off dust from jewels,
Building can be demolished like love pacts scrubbed away,
One day strong like the ground beneath then – scratched from the view, without a slap to see
Look up at edifices till the sky bleeds into every aspect,
Bring to light – the possibilities that even beat from within,
Understand that even hollow spaces are not empty just uncharted prospects,
Look down and you will not see the same old street.
Instead a platform where markets bustle and brim
With traders and town subjects,
Look closer and there are master classes where lions fight unicorns,
And kings from centuries sit above, watching
Treat the heart of the city as though it was indeed your own, crystallized, appreciate its jag-
ged curves and doors,
Delight in its finery, the nuts and bolts
Which make it peculiar and prized,
There is poetry in the walls and you must listen harder to hear it,
Stare closer to see it, become aware
The building that surround you
Need a champion to stop and recognize.*

Sr. Preethi
THIRD YEAR

WHO HAS SEEN THEM?

*There was once a temple here
Now a ten storeyed mall
There was once a stupa here
Now a cloud touching sky scraper
Where have they gone?
Who has seen them?
Did they ever exist?
Or maybe they appeared just in dreams.
The remains of their presence – covered
With trashes of chocolate ice-cream.*

*To the splendid castles that once stood
Representing the valour of powerful kings
All covered up now in dust
With a few treasures of stone and ring.
Where have they gone?
Who has seen them?
Did they ever exist?
Or maybe they appeared just in dreams.
The remains of their presence – dumped
With junks of vanilla ice-cream.*

*The books that talk of glory and might
With pictures of splendidly carved walls
Those walls that once were snowy white
And now cracked and dirty.
Where have they gone?
Who has seen them?
Did they ever exist?
Or maybe they appeared just in dreams.
The remains of their presence – veiled
With garbage of caramel ice-cream*

THE LOST SPLENDOR

*India, a country of splendor,
Built on cultures and traditions,
Love, War and Peace – a long history,
The splendor found everywhere.*

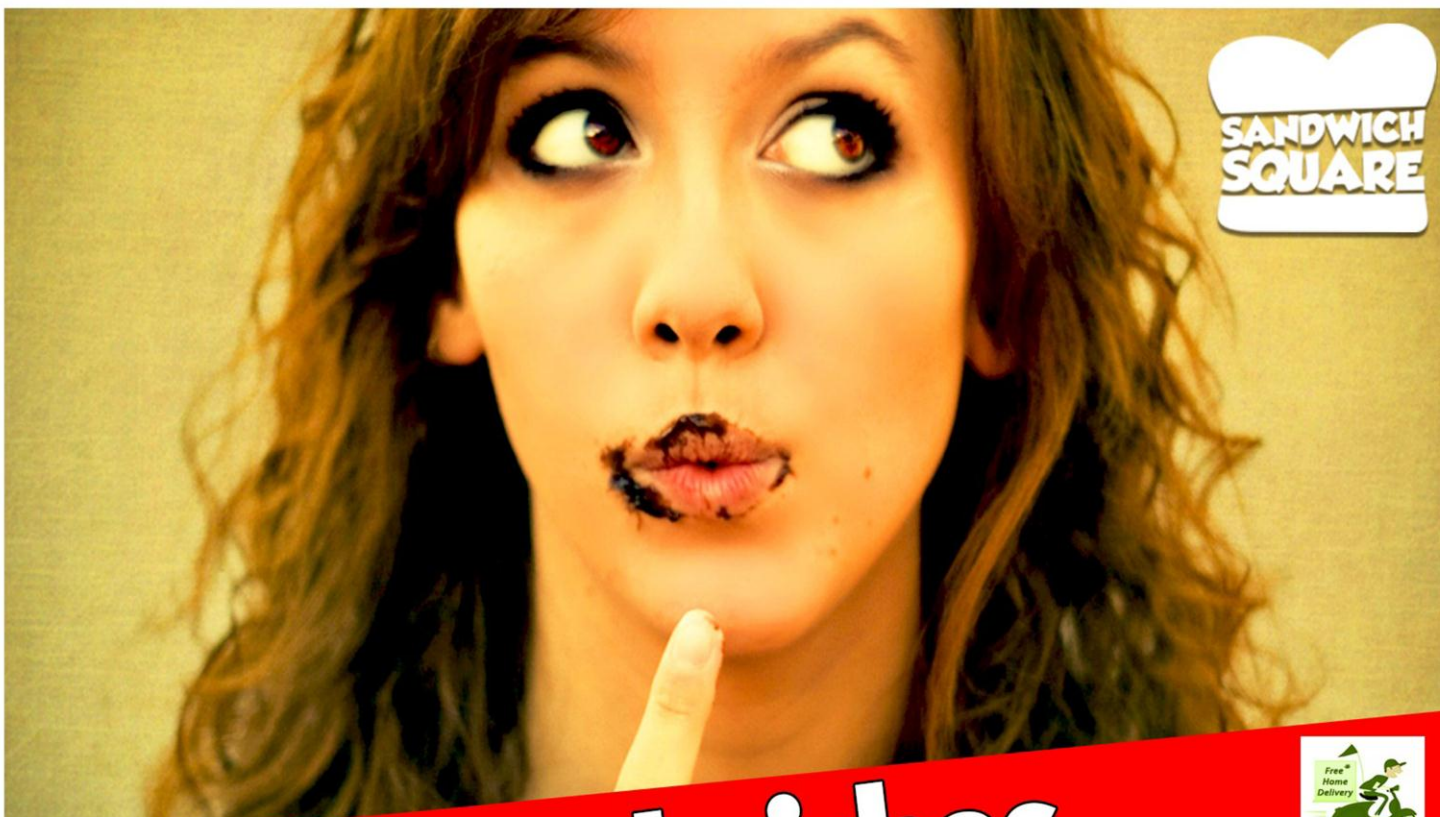
*Wait! Was found everywhere,
Where are those beautiful palaces?
Those walls and floors that spoke,
Of splendor and might?*

*Now scribbled and spat upon,
The beautiful carved temple walls,
Now have oil blots and patches,*

*Conserve, protect - our heritage.
Easy to say, but think...*

*Do we ever try,
These splendors we see,
Will future ones even glimpse?*

*Our heritage, our culture,
The way, might and power,
Of our forefathers,
Might just be stories of fancy
For the ones to come.
At least now – take a step
Just to show the future ones
And say,
Yes we had a splendid past.*



Sandwiches
Starting from

₹29

143*
Yummy
Sandwiches



 /sandwichsquareindia



Spencer Plaza - Anna Salai

Prince Arcade - Cathedral Rd

Prince Manor - Purasai

Karapakkam - OMR

Burkit Rd - T. Nagar

For Franchise Enquiries : +91 97103 46474 / 044 42621234