



DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR UNIVERSITY DELHI
SCHOOL OF HERITAGE RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT

DHAROHAR

BELONGING AND PRACTICES



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E-MAGAZINE

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Rock Cut Carving Of The Horse Drawn Chariot Onto The Mandapam In The Airavatesvara Temple, Darasuram, India,

Message from Vice Chancellor

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University Delhi



School of Heritage Research and Management (SHRM), located at Qutub campus of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University Delhi is the youngest School of the University. Erstwhile Delhi Institute of Heritage Research and Management merged with Dr B R Ambedkar University Delhi in June 2021. The School offers two Masters programmes on Archaeology and Heritage Management and Conservation, Preservation and Heritage Management. Within a very short time, the School has made its mark in the heritage landscape of city of Delhi.

SHRM is one among the active Schools in the University—involved with various field based activities, curating heritage walks and also conducting outreach programmes on heritage appreciation for the citizens of Delhi. SHRM has made the celebration of Heritage Week a part of its annual calendar of events. This year, the celebration is even more special since the first student-run E-magazine of the University will be launched. **Dharohar: Belonging and Practices**, this student initiated magazine, is the result of their research, creativity and commitment to the cultural diversity of India. In this first issue select master dissertations, assignments and creative compositions of SHRM students are included. I hope that in course of time, this magazine becomes a sought after space, on heritage, tourism, and culture, promoting young talent from our higher education institutions.

I would like to congratulate the student Editorial team, faculty Editors, all faculty and staff of the School and Dean SHRM for this wonderful initiative. I hope that this E-Magazine, Dharohar: Belonging and Practices, dawn newer horizon and perspectives on heritage issues in India and the world since as much as it is important to preserve and be proud of our heritage, it is equally important to explore more.

My best wishes to SHRM.

Professor Anu Singh Lather
November 2023

Message from the Registrar

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University Delhi



School of Heritage Research and Management (SHRM) of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University aims to establish itself as a premier school devoted to interdisciplinary heritage studies through its post-graduate teaching programmes, research and training facilities for its students and to take up the evolving opportunities in heritage research and management in our country.

I am glad that SHRM is providing comprehensive development to its students by sharpening both their knowledge skills as well nurturing creative potential. The E-magazine that SHRM is publishing, Dharohar: Belonging and Practices, the first student-run magazine of Dr B R Ambedkar University Delhi, will go a long way in building conversations with current students, alumni of SHRM (erstwhile Delhi Institute of Heritage Research and Management), placed in different heritage organisations across the country and a broader student and professional community pursuing heritage, tourism, archaeology, conservation, anthropology, in different higher education institutions of India.

I hope that this E-magazine, 'Dharohar: Belonging and Practices', brings together comprehensive information about the activities of the SHRM and contributions from the young, curious minds of our students. The E-magazine should address pertinent issues on all matters related to the rich heritage of this country and the way it contributes to world heritage.

Students are our most important ambassadors, and a magazine run by and for students, with able faculty advice, is a good example of teamwork and cooperation. I wish the editorial team, faculty, staff and students of SHRM a great success with this e-Magazine.

Dr. Nitin Malik

November 2023

Message from Dean Student Services

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University Delhi



It gives me great happiness to see the first student e-magazine of Dr B R Ambedkar University Delhi being launched by the School of Heritage Research and Management. Student Services division supports various creative initiatives of students across all campuses of the University. I am aware that SHRM students are equally enthusiastic about NSS activities. There is a strong volunteer strength of NSS students at SHRM many of whom had visited the border area exposure visit that was organized last year.

For this e-magazine, I have been told that the six students' editorial team members have worked very hard. It is this collective spirit, students and faculty creating something together which is the backbone of the success of our university. The themes covered in the first issue deal with various aspects of the diverse and rich heritage of this country. It is refreshing to see students of archeology and conservation engaging with different material and cultural aspects of our heritage ensuring that heritage is not only about the past, but also about the present—to be in conversation with.

I congratulate the team and wish the SHRM student e-magazine **Dharohar: Belonging and Practices** success.

Dr Santosh Singh
November 2023

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Editor Speak

Prof Rukmini Sen,
Dean School of Heritage Research and Management
Dr. B R Ambedkar University Delhi



It is with great pleasure that I present before all of you the first e-magazine of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University Delhi from the students of School of Heritage Research and Management (SHRM). This e-magazine, titled 'Dharohar: Belonging and Practices', would not have been possible without the immediate support and motivation from the Vice Chancellor, Prof Anu Singh Lather. Registrar, Dr Nitin Malik; Controller of Finance Shri Rajeev Talwar ji were extremely helpful and encouraging. Dean Student Services, Dr Santosh Singh has always been appreciative of the SHRM enthusiasm in SHRM students.

SHRM is the newest School at Dr B R Ambedkar University Delhi offering two Masters programme—Archeaology and Heritage Management and Conservation, Preservation and Heritage Management. The idea of starting a Heritage Society *Santati* and a student e-magazine *Dharohar* came from the students when they submitted a proposal to their Vice Chancellor Madam on the inaugural of 2022 Heritage Week celebrations. That the first issue of the magazine is releasing on the Inauguration of 2023 Heritage Week celebrations by the Vice Chancellor herself is an honour for the faculty and students of SHRM and a demonstration of their hard work and commitment.

In this first issue, the editorial team has attempted to be as inclusive as possible. Best Masters Dissertations from 2021-23 batch of students graded by all seven SHRM faculty have been selected for this issue. Students were asked to write the research objectives, main arguments, description of the site or the object/artifact of heritage enquiry and the main findings. Best written assignments and pedagogically creative assignments done by students of 2022-24 batch selected by their course co-ordinators were selected for this issue. A total of 23 SHRM students' contributions are included in the first issue from two batches. All contributions are divided into the themes Cultural Heritage (including tangible and intangible heritage), Built Heritage, Material Heritage, Applied Conservation and Museology and Heritage Tourism. The length and breadth of the plural heritage of India is covered through these contributions—from *Brata Katha* of Bengal, fragrance from Kanauj (Uttar Pradesh), *pahari* paintings of Kangra (Uttarakhand), tourist site of *Rani ka Vav* (Gujarat), conservation techniques used by *Khudabaksh* Library (Patna) to name a few. The student editors belong to both the batches and they have copy edited, page designed, selected motifs for the cover page and the symbols that are used in the themes under which the essays are arranged. This issue also has an essay on the pedagogic practice of heritage walk that SHRM uses to cultivate interest, understanding and passion among students towards their commitment for upholding the value of diverse heritage and knowing how community, ecology and history co-construct a heritage site.

As we release the first issue of **Dharohar: Belonging and Practices**, we celebrate that the 45th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia inscribed Santiniketan (West Bengal) and the Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysalas into the list of World Heritage Sites. We hope that this e-magazine will become a space for young researchers both within and outside of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University Delhi, a space which will be interdisciplinary and bring together different social science perspectives and knowledge in conversation with heritage research and practice.

Please read, share and connect with us!

Concept and Introduction

E-Magazine **Dharohar: Belonging and Practices**

Heritage studies is a multidisciplinary and internationally growing field of research studying how the past is used, valued and institutionalised in the present. SHRM (erstwhile Delhi Institute of Heritage Research and Management) is a premier school at Dr B. R. Ambedkar University Delhi in Heritage Studies. The strength of SHRM lies in its two pillars, i.e., our two master's programmes in Archaeology and Heritage Management: Conservation, Preservation and Heritage Management. Aspiring archaeologists, conservationists, museum experts and heritage managers become our brand ambassadors in leading organisations.

Our course structure is unique in that it realises the significance and need for developing a multi-disciplinarian approach, as subjects pertaining to heritage studies are widely interconnected. The various courses provide diverse avenues through which our faculty experiments with different pedagogy in theory and practice, developing and inculcating aesthetically sound knowledge of Indian Heritage. We engage our students in reviving and focusing on lost Heritage and encourage them to explore and identify their niche areas.

I am happy to write on behalf of our faculty, staff and students that SHRM is publishing its maiden E-Magazine by students- '**Dharohar: Belonging and Practices**'. Our students planned and explored the concept and idea of e-magazine over the year. The E-Magazine '**Dharohar**' **Belonging and practices** from students' creativity, research and collective work and their commitment to attending the classroom, participating in field visits and pushing their teachers for more knowledge and interactions. The best part about this E-magazine is that faculty and students simultaneously share and exchange their ideas and expertise.

The student editorial team of this e-magazine comprises those who have just completed their two years of Masters (2021-23 batch) and those who are currently in their 3rd semester (2022-24 batch). Editorial team faculty acted as advisors handheld students and provided all kinds of ideas on the choice of essays in this issue. In the first issue, the faculty chose the best Masters dissertation from the 2021-23 batch. At least one student's essay, who worked under each faculty supervising dissertation, has found space in this issue. For the batch 2022-24, best assignments were selected by faculty. Together with written assignments, creative assignments have also been made part of this magazine to demonstrate how academic rigour and creative pursuits with an objective for innovatively engaging with heritage is instilled in our students.

SHRM through its Masters programmes, encourages students to engage with Epigraphy, Numismatics, Museology, Heritage Tourism, Archaeology, Conservation and Preservation of Heritage. Our conservation laboratory facility has specialised equipment to support and enhance their skill in handling artefacts, antiquities and the treatment or repair of materials through chemical or physical treatments.

Heritage walks are the best way to learn and recognise our culture, tradition, philosophy, myths and associated rituals. The walk makes us look back and reminds us of our rich culture and history, provoking us to think about the existence of every historical structure and place. The write-up on heritage walks on the natural and plural Heritage of Delhi from our faculty covers the diverse areas and perspectives for heritage lovers.

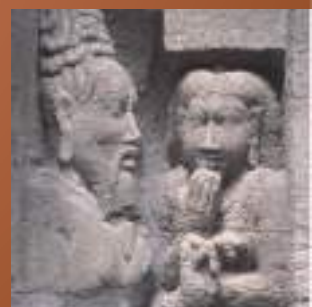
Some people are interested in learning about history, while others are interested in knowing where they are going or would like to enjoy culture and history. Museums and monuments

are fantastic places to meet new people, learn about our ancestors' lives, and broaden our horizons. An essential function of a museum is to collect objects of Heritage since it is a custodian of the Heritage of society or country. Delhi is a city of monuments and museums, providing our students with hands-on training and knowledge; a big city canvas is open to explore.

With these wide ranges of themes around Indian heritage, we celebrate and reshape some of the ideas through the first issue. As heritage practitioners, we take pride in creating this E-Magazine, Dharohar Belonging and Practices, so that people and heritage lovers enjoy reading and embracing it wholeheartedly. We look forward to the best wishes of our readers.

Dr Sima Yadav
Faculty member of Editorial Team, SHRM
November 2023

REFLECTIONS FROM FACULTY



Heritage Walks: An Experiential Pedagogy in Heritage Studies

- Dr. Anand Burdhan

To cultivate cultural awareness, the School of Heritage Research and Management organised three 'Heritage Walks' between 2021-23 that covered a very significant part of the historic and biospheric landscape of the National Capital Territory of Delhi. The schemata of the programmes were designed under the supervision of the Dean SHRM who intended participation of the students and faculty members of Dr B.R. Ambedkar University Delhi. It was an endeavour to provide the participants with an opportunity for empirical study and experiential knowledge by visualising both the natural and cultural landscapes and the changing facets of urban space in Delhi.

The 'Heritage Walks' marked the beginning of a new approach to heritage interpretation and cultural analysis and received an overwhelming response from the learned participants. The methods practised as part of the discussion were based on a participatory approach that proved highly beneficial for students who took a keen interest in understanding the cultural continuum of Delhi and the historic events that took place from ancient to modern times. Participants also had an opportunity to discuss elaborately the mechanism, methods, materials and human resources that were used for the construction of the grand structures that formed a magnificent architectural scape within the city.

Apart from the 'city-history' participants showed their inquisitiveness in understanding the methods of cultural conservation that were applied to protect and preserve the historic structures and their heritologically significant designs.

Heritage Walk with the Souls of Martyrs

(26.11.2022)



forces.

The heritage walk in the Kamala Devi Ridge Delhi was organized as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsava and Heritage Week celebration organised by the School of Heritage Research & Management. It covered the vast tract of the ridge of north Delhi where monuments related to the great revaluation of 1857 were discussed in the context of the nature, vegetation and physiography of the ridge. The main purpose, however, was to understand the substantial contribution of the unsung martyrs who sacrificed their lives in ferocious battles fought in the Delhi ridge before the British penetrated Delhi after facing tough resistance by the revolutionary

As the 'Heritage Walk' is an appropriate method for cultivating cultural awareness and disseminating adequate historical information, this programme was organised for onsite discussion.

We are aware of the fact that Delhi witnessed the most ferocious battle during the first war of independence in 1857. Revolutionary armies from different parts of India marched to Delhi where battle against the British forces



continued for more than three months. The monuments of the Delhi Ridge are associated with the uprising and battles in many ways. The place known as Ajitgarh/Jeetgarh; a hilly outcrop where the British forces received serious setbacks and their important commanders lost their lives is remarkably significant. Since Delhi Ridge was having thick vegetation, the invading British forces made it their stronghold. They used the monuments like Bara Hindu Rao, Chauburja, etc., as their garrisons.



The revolutionary forces from Bareilly, Nizamuddin and Nasirabad supported by the local populace attacked the British batteries and exhibited utmost courage. Revolutionaries like Heera Singh, Sudharni Singh, Gajja Rai, and countless unsung heroes sacrificed their lives between Delhi Ridge and Red Fort. The British reoccupied Delhi after great difficulty and behaved as barbarians in suppressing the rebellion. They even killed innocent people without trial. After the suppression of the movement the British government erected the

Mutiny Memorial as a symbol of the sacrifice made by the British, however, the Govt. of India on the eve of the 25th anniversary of its independence declared it as a monument that signified the spirit of martyrdom by the Indian revolutionary forces". Heritage Walk with Souls of Martyrs was an endeavour to cultivate awareness among students and faculty members of Dr B.R. Ambedkar University about the ferocious battle of 1857 fought in Delhi Ridge. It covered all important spots of battle like the Mutiny Memorial, Hindu Rao, Baoli, Chauburja and Flag Staff Tower.



This heritage walk was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor Prof (Dr.) Anu Singh Lather. It was followed by a group discussion. The Registrar, of the University extended a Vote of Thanks to all the participants.



Diverse Religious Monuments around Kashmere Gate (26.04.2023)



This heritage walk was organised to commemorate World Heritage Day with the specific purpose of understanding the architectural and religious landscape of Delhi from the period of the Mughal emperor Shahjahan to the pre-independence era. It covered colossal monuments like Jama Masjid, Jain temple, Sishganj Gurudwara, Hindu

temples and early European Churches made in north Delhi.

As part of the guided tour, discussion commenced at the main gate of the massive Mughal mosque with a focus on the exquisite beauty of the triple dome pattern that surmounts the main structure. The Shahjahani features like bulbous domes, engrailed arches, fluted columns, *pietra dura* work and adaptation of vernacular. Indian architectonic designs were elaborately discussed. It was an occasion of cognitive learning too. The participants experienced the reverberations of a historic environment that has around five hundred years of history.

After that participants moved to the Digambar Jain temple, a structure made of red sandstone in typical Rajasthani style. The interior of the temple has beautiful fresco paintings that are reminiscent of the Shekhavati style of Rajasthan. Here, the discussion was made on motifs related to Jainism and the iconology of Trikhankaras. The third important monument covered elaborately as part of the group discussion was Sishganj Gurudwara, a marvel of late-Mughal architecture that is known for its sacred continuum and religious practices.



The sacrifice of Guru Tegh Bahadur & Bhai Mati Das was the kernel of the efficacious discussion that participants took very sincerely as the subject matter dealt with the religio-patriotic feelings of the reformist Sikh warriors. Along with the monumental Gurudwara the adjacent shrine made by the Marathas was visited and extensively discussed.

The next destination was the Central Baptist Church which is an unpretentious structure with a gabled façade. It has a collonaded porch with memorial tablets on side walls. It gave prolific ideas about the early Christian architecture of 19th-century India.

The Saint James Church was the last monument that was visited by the participant group. The church was under renovation. There was presented an 'interpretative brief' on the Florentine-ribbed dome and pinnacle that revealed the revival of the Renaissance architectural designs and motifs by this grand structure based on a cruciform plan.



Biospheric Heritage Walk: Sanjay Van (21.09.2023)



The Sanjay Van is a natural kaleidoscope that sprawls over a large part of south Delhi covering the geographic terrain from Qutub Institutional Area to Vasant Kunj. Originally a part of the old Aravalli mountain range which is now divided by the urban settlements forming a clustered extension of the Kota-Bundi range of Aravalli. This ridge consists of elevated tracks of Quartzite rock. It is also called Delhi quartzite and has been invariably used in various medieval monuments of Delhi.

This physiographic structure protects Delhi from hot winds that come from the Rajasthan region. As far as the eco-history of the Sanjay Van is concerned it was like a wildlife sanctuary in medieval times, especially since it was a natural habitat for many wild animals including leopards. Apart from leopards, there are found nilgai, monkeys, wild cats, golden jackals, and many other animals and birds. It is very rich in bio-diversity and it makes Delhi the second most bird-rich capital of the world after Nairobi of Kenya.

The government notified the Sanjay Van area as a protected natural zone in 1996 considering its history from Archaeozoic times to contemporary areas. The present Sanjay Van encompasses 784 hectares which is a good example of a lower palaeolithic and microlithic archaeological zone.



For archaeologists and historians, it is an ideal place for exploration work where pre-historic tools can be noticed. For naturalists, there are some significant examples of paleo-channels and natural lakes. The concentration of debitage and tools may be seen in the area of water channels and lakes.

Apart from lower Palaeolithic deposits, this ridge has revealed historic objects, antiquities and walled constructions belonging to the Tomar period. The Lal Kot excavation conducted under Dr B.R. Mani has brought to the fore many finds of the pre-Islamic period including sculptures related to Hinduism.

Significantly, the place was later occupied by some mystics of the Nath Panth who was very popular in the area of Haryana.

There are a few sites and constructions of the later period including a few cenotaphs that are still worshipped as ‘Pirs,’ graves of holy men.

In the recent past, Sanjay Van has become famous among ornithologists due to the presence of white-throated Kingfisher, Indian pea-fowl, Brahminy starling, Indian silver bill and an African migrant Jacobin cuckoo. Some rare birds like Golden Orioles, crested pied cuckoos, Asin paradise flycatchers and Eurasian sparrow Hawks are also noticed.

Therefore, Sanjay Van has been selected as a place for bio-spheric conservation by the Delhi Development Authority and a group of enlightened citizens who are trying to plant more and more plants of Indian origin to counter the repercussions of the colonial plantation scheme.



From 2010 onwards, the Delhi Development Authority has launched a massive drive to revive Sanjay Van into its pristine form and make an Aravalli city forest and a medicinal forest. A local organisation in the name of Working with Nature (WWN) is working actively to restore the pristine nature of this forest area. As a part of this initiative, to increase the number of indigenous plant species, more than one lakh native trees have been planted in recent years. Some of the extinct species are also reintroduced.

Some of the common native trees found here are, Ronjh (*Acacia leucophloea*), Hingot (*Balanites roxburghii*), Bistendu (*Diospyro scordifolia*), *Jal* (*Salvadoran oleoides*), *Desi Keekar* (*Acacia nilotica*), Khair (*Acacia catechu*), *Khejdi/Jhand* (*Prosopis cineraria*), *Heens* (*Capparis sepiaria*), *Taint/Kareel* (*Capparis deciduas*), *Jungli Karonda* (*Carissa spinarum*), and *Ber* (*Zizyphus mauritiana*).

The diversity of medicinal plants is very rich in Delhi. To preserve that, a medicinal forest is being set up inside the Sanjay Van area which is guided under the recommendation of the Central Council for Research in Ayurveda and Siddha (CCRAS).

Another notable feature of Sanjay Van is the water management system and the lake area. More than five water bodies were interconnected by recent restorations which were once polluted and clogged with garbage and industrial wastes. This water management has regained the groundwater level of the area and has helped the greenery and filled the water bodies inside the Sanjay Van premises, due to which seasonal birds are attracted.

The themes discussed during the Heritage Walk were as follows:

- | Physiographic structure and eco-history of the South Delhi ridge
- | Archaeological finds and typology of tools
- | The Lal Kot excavation and the history of Delhi before the Chauhan
- | Water bodies, plants, animals, and birds
- | Decolonization of vegetation patterns, indigenous plants, and conservation of biodiversity
- | Biospheric conservation: challenges, methods, and prospects.

The heritage walk was a successful endeavour. It was enthusiastically participated by the students of the Heritage Appreciation Course, SHRM students of the first semester and third semester.

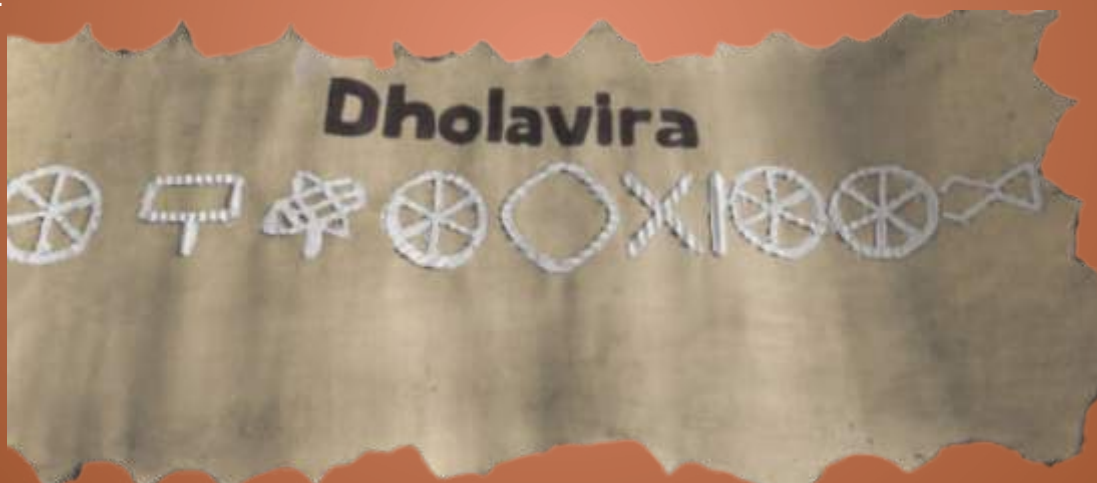
All three heritage walks, conducted by SHRM provided them with an opportunity for objective learning through multisensory engagement. It offered them an ideal visual and aesthetic experience that created an indelible mark on their memory.

About the Author: Dr Anand Burdhan is faculty at the School of Heritage Research and Management

An Unsolved MYSTERY: Dholavira Signboard

One of the earliest urban civilisations in history was the Indus Valley Civilization, sometimes called the Harappan Civilization. We get archaeological evidence of many urban cities such as Harappa, Mohenjo-Daro, and others there. Dholavira, regarded as the port city, was one of the three major port towns of the Indus Civilization and the biggest port town during the Harappan era. It is on Khadir Bet Island in the Great Rann of Kutch Desert Wildlife Sanctuary Gujrat. Many things make Dholavira a fascinating site, such as dividing the town into three parts. We could not find such a thing in other Harappan sites. An advanced water management system shows how resourceful the Dholavira people were in their fight to endure and prosper in a hostile environment. Another fascinating discovery was the finding of a SIGNBOARD. The signboard is found in the northern gateway of the city. Prof. R. S. Bisht's team at ASI is credited with discovering this sign board with ten inscriptions in 1991. The original plan for the board involved using pre-cut bits of the material gypsum to create ten sizable symbols on a massive oak board. The board eventually collapsed upon its face. The etched symbols' order endured despite the degradation of the wood. The signboard's symbols are the same size as the massive bricks used in the surrounding walls. The board the letters were etched on was roughly 3 m (9.8 ft) long, and each sign was roughly 37 cm (15 in) high (cavescript.org). It is assumed to be a signboard since the letters are large enough to be seen from a distance and the board's width matches the width of the Dholavira citadel's northern entryway. The board is lengthy, with four round symbols and ten Indus symbols. It is a crucial piece of evidence mentioned by scholars who believe the Indus symbols represent a different kind of communication because of their scale and public character. This location also yielded the discovery of a fourth, larger-than-life four-sign writing on sandstone, which is thought to be the first of its kind discovered at any Harappan site.

About the Artist: Pawan Kumar is currently pursuing a Master's in Archaeology and Heritage Management from the School of Heritage Research and Management, Dr B.R. Ambedkar University, Delhi.



Student Activities Batch of 2022-2024

Visit to Mehrauli Archaeological Park and Railway Museum

The beginning of the academic year for the batch 2022- 2024, started with two field visits in December as a part of the orientation. The students got the opportunity to visit Mehrauli archaeological park. They explored a few of its structures in great detail, such as Metcalfe's house, Jamali Kamali, horse stable, etc., where the professors briefed the students regarding conservation, architecture, and possible threats to the monuments. The last leg of the orientation week involved a visit to the Railway Museum, where the students got to travel back in time through.



Visit to Jharna, Mehrauli

Keeping in view the theme for National Cleanliness Day 2023, "Swachh Bharat: Swasth Bharat", the students in January played an active and responsible role in the cleanliness drive of the Jharna monument, which comes under Project Mehrauli.

The students also got the opportunity to engage with officials who are actively involved with the monument's upkeep and learn about its historical significance.

Workshop on Sustainable and Ethical Travel: Practices and Prospects

The university had organised a workshop which involved a series of lectures delivered by scholars and professors hailing from different disciplines and various walks of life. This workshop was part of G-20 programmes being organised by the university. Sustainable travel, eco-tourism, ways in which mass travel to tourist destinations ecologically affects the places, methods through which local communities are involved in any travel venture, and the ethics of travelling in an age of climate change were some of the guiding thoughts behind the workshop. The first set of sessions focussed on Delhi as a site and involved engaging sessions such as Monuments as Archives of a city's Metamorphosis, Havelis in Delhi, and Sustainable Cycle Tour in a Megacity. The second session had some engrossing lectures such as Development and Planning for Rural Tourism in Raghurajpur, Odisha and understanding the urban political ecology of mass tourism with a case study of Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh.



Akshardham Visit

In March, a visit to Akshardham was organised as part of an assessment, and the art and architecture were explored in great detail. Similarities and departures concerning the architectural intricacies were studied, with special reference to temple architecture. The students were then expected to submit an assessment based on their observations and learning from the visit.

Heritage Walk- Plural Heritage around Kashmere Gate

The lanes and by-lanes of Old Delhi were brought to life as the students of SHRM followed a heritage trail spanning across the plural heritage of Old Delhi. During the walk, the students visited Jama Masjid, Shri Digamber Jain Mandir, Gurudwara Sis Ganj Sahib, and St. James Church, which is located next to Ambedkar University Delhi's Kashmere Gate campus.



The walk celebrated the diversity and vivid character of India. The students visited the inner premises of the monuments as well, ensuring an in-depth and closer look.

Visit to Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya

An immersive visit to a one-of-a-kind museum dedicated to the Prime Minister of the Nation was held in May, which showcased the illustrious journey of India after Independence. The students witnessed innovative museum technologies spread across 43 galleries, creating a deeply engaging narrative of the lives and times of India's prime ministers. The new-age mediums of displays and life-like manifestations of the Pradhanmantris were the major attractions.



Training with the Department of Archaeology, GNCTD



The students from both programs, MAHM and MPCHM, join hands to participate in workshops, as the fields are interconnected, to provide a more comprehensive overview. For instance, in May, a 10-day conservation-cum training workshop was organised by the Department of Archaeology, GNCTD. These 10 days were filled with days incorporating a range of practical-based learning for us. The training program proved to be a memorable engagement, which involved a lot of first-time adventures and learning.

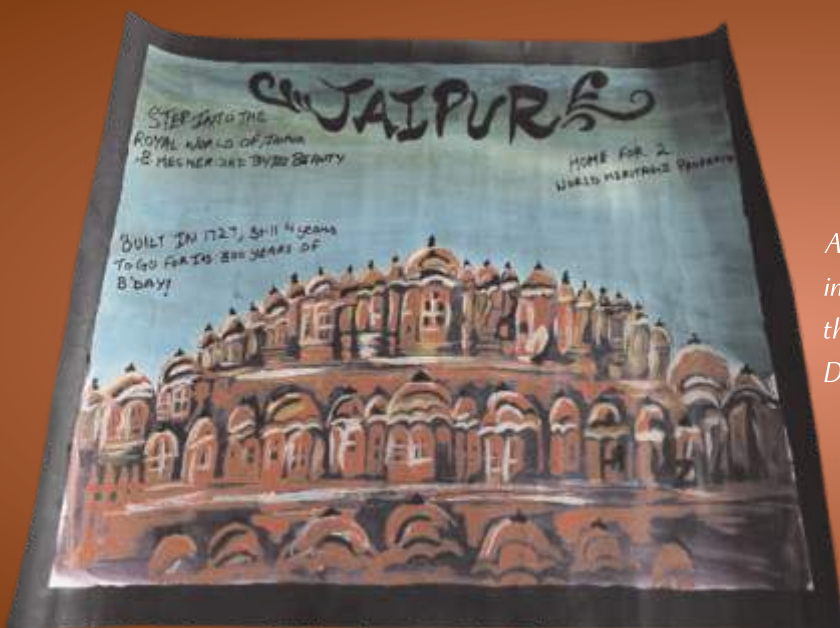
From getting access to working on the chemical cleaning of a monument for the first time at Mutiny Memorial, getting access to special access areas, exploring the ancient gates of the old city of Mehrauli, covering forested trails, working with cross-sectional drawings, learning about



photography, and being a part of an archaeological inquiry, these were all experiences that turned out to be extremely promising for the students. The training experience was promising as it also gave the students direction in terms of thinking like a conservator and an archaeologist. Following the successful conclusion of the training program, certificates were distributed to the students.



A Water Colour Painting showcasing the Hawa Mahal of Jaipur



About the Artist: Purba is currently pursuing a Master's in Conservation Preservation and Heritage Management from the School of Heritage Research and Management, Dr B.R. Ambedkar University, Delhi.

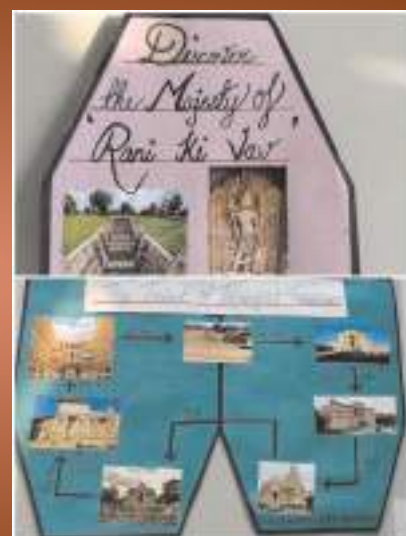
International Museum Expo 2023

From the 18th to the 20th of May, a three-day International Museum Expo was held at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi. A first-of-its-kind event was held in the country to celebrate International Museum Day. The students were given the wonderful opportunity to participate as active volunteers in the Expo. From meeting a range of reputable scholars in their respective fields to witnessing new-age technologies in the field of museum displays, the Expo was a one-of-a-kind opportunity and experience for the students and practitioners of the field, who were then awarded certificates by the end of the event. The students were also exposed to many lectures and classroom sessions taken by professors from all around the world, which gave an insight towards the new innovative ideas concerning this field.



Discover the Majesty of Rani Ki Vav': A Brochure

About the Artist: Saumya is currently pursuing a Master's in Archaeology and Heritage Management from the School of Heritage Research and Management, Dr B.R. Ambedkar University, Delhi.



Farewell

The month of June marked the completion month of the degree for the senior batch. To bid goodbye with a beautiful memory, the juniors organised a farewell with the support of professors. Enthusiastic performances and a celebration of music, dance, and emotions made the day extremely memorable for everyone present.



Summer Internship at Crafts Museum, NGMA, and City Palace, Jaipur

In July, the students interned at varied institutions, such as the Crafts Museum and the National Gallery of Modern Art. In the crafts museum, the interns undertook conservation practices, worked on materials such as textiles, and were also involved in research work. The interns working at NGMA worked on original masterpieces of Indian art and were trained in art conservation. One of the students also interned at City Palace, where she was trained in mural painting.

Plantation Drive

Celebrating the occasion of the 76th Independence Day, 14th August, 2023 was celebrated as the plantation drive for the university. Every campus was enrolled with the task of tree planting, forming a tree plantation drive and joining hands towards a greener environment. The first lot of the plants were planted by the respectable dean and the faculty members of our college, and later the students planted the other plants in the college garden itself.



Teachers' Day

The day called for a celebration, this was a day to celebrate the respectable bond between a student and the teachers. The students presented a skit with a blend of dance and music. It was a beautiful event, and the students and professors enjoyed it to their heart's content. The day ended with an



afternoon of Antakshari, where the teams were divided as teachers versus students, and the day ended with some soulful melodies. It was a beautiful, joyful and memorable experience for both the teachers and the students.

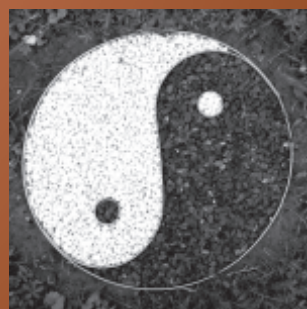
Heritage Appreciation Week

A two-week program on heritage appreciation and conservation, "Living with Heritage", was held in September. The program was open to all individuals hailing from manifold disciplines. At its heart, the week aimed at equipping the participants with a greater knowledge of the significance of our heritage and related practices for its conservation. Eminent stalwarts, the likes of Dr. B. R. Mani, Prof. Seema Bawa, Dr Swarnakar,



Prof. Sudha Dhingra, etc., delivered lectures on a fascinating range of topics, such as the textile heritage of India, monument documentation, and the journey of how Nalanda was finally given the much- delayed title of World Heritage Site, followed by an interactive round of questions and answers. The students also got the chance to listen to their in-house professors giving and reading out their research works in various fields. A paper conservation workshop, a visit to the National Museum, a heritage walk to Mehrauli Archaeological Park, a visit to Delhi Archives, and a biospheric heritage walk in Sanjay Van were also part of the heritage week and constituted the promising field visits. The week also brought together the fresh batch and the senior batch, as it was also a part of their orientation week.

CULTURAL HERITAGE



Khesh- A Study on the Vernacular Textile of West Bengal

- **Ritwika Basak**

The title of my dissertation is 'Khesh- A Study on the Vernacular Textile of West Bengal.' This was submitted to the School of Heritage Research and Management in June 2023 under the guidance of Dr Shalini Awasthi. This research's objectives were one, to establish Khesh as a sustainable, community-led, and intangible practice, and two, to analyse why its mention is restricted to only a particular geographical location. The study site was conducted in the towns of Labhpur and Shantiniketan in the district of Birbhum, West Bengal. Both primary and secondary sources were used to carry out the study, with personal interviews, theme-based books, online journals, websites, and articles.

Textiles have a profound ability to tell people's stories and convey a sense of identity. They are an intrinsic part of life, deeply woven into the cultural fabric of communities universally. They are a testament to human creativity, skill, and ingenuity passed down through generations, reflecting societies' diverse traditions and customs. The fabrics, the weaves, the threads, the patches, the motifs- all serve as tangible manifestations of cultural identities and convey messages about a community's values, rituals, and heritage. Preserving living traditions transmitted from generation to generation is the foundation of the 2003 UNESCO Convention

for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. It defines 'Intangible Cultural Heritage' with four pillars: Traditional, contemporary living simultaneously, Inclusive, Representative, and Community-based. Hence, textile plays an essential role in being an intangible cultural heritage, promoting community identities, and sustaining their ways of life as not just an art but also their bread and butter.



Image 1: Woman spinning the Khesh yarn; Source: Self © Ritwika Basak]

This study was conducted on the vernacular textile of West Bengal, named 'Khesh'. Khesh is a traditional weaving technique in the Birbhum district of West Bengal, India. It involves recycling old cotton sarees and repurposing them into new fabrics. The word "Khesh" means "to tear" in Bengali, referring to the tearing of old sarees into thin strips. These strips are then woven with new cotton threads to create unique and vibrant fabrics. Various themes, such as cultural preservation, artistic and community expression, economic empowerment, and sustainable

practices, have been explored in this study. Studying Khesh is about more than just examining it as a tangible textile. It goes beyond that, delving into the historical, social, and cultural aspects that shape its existence. Recognising this textile as a timeless tradition of the community, its significance is appreciated and ensures its continued practice for generations.

Bengal has a long-standing cotton cultivation and textile production tradition dating back to the ancient kingdom of Banga, the earliest records of which date back to the first millennium BC. The region's favourable climate and fertile soil made it conducive for cotton cultivation, and cotton weaving became a vital craft practised by the local communities. With the Mughal patronage, the already practising weaving communities, the Tantis, witnessed a change they had not experienced before. There was an increase in the circulation of income and an exchange of cultures and ideas. Now, textile was equated with status, and the Tantis, too, became a strong and powerful community since weaving was the next occupation after agriculture.

However, all this warped with the advent of the British and the introduction of the Industrial Revolution. The British had already started controlling the Tanti community and their money

flow after the Battle of Plassey in 1757. The handlooms were soon getting abandoned by the communities since the patronage had stopped, and they were forced to do odd jobs to sustain themselves. Factory-made cotton started flooding the markets, and soon, the cottage industry collapsed. In Birbhum, West Bengal, a similar pattern followed. This area was naturally abundant with cotton, and the communities weaved their own clothes for generations. The cotton textiles of Birbhum were known for their intricate designs, vibrant colours, and durability. The weavers in the region employed various weaving techniques, which gained popularity. To sustain themselves after the British exploitation, the community (now reduced to penury) sought different ways of making clothes without purchasing new yarn. They already knew about weaving, and with this new 'sustainable' technique, the local communities of Birbhum survived the British wrath. This technique was none other than Khesh.



Image 2: Making of the khesh cloth; Source: Self © Ritwika Basak

In the 1920s, when Rabindranath Tagore set out to establish his University, the Visva Bharati University in Shantiniketan, his 'abode of peace', he came across the local communities- the prevalent Tantis and the Santhals. He was heavily influenced and intrigued by the village life,

their ways of life, and their crafts. Tagore eventually set up his University and established the Shilpa Sadan in Sriniketan- where he promoted rural reconstruction of the village life and the various handicrafts made by them. The Tanti community's weaving traditions, as well as the numerous craft traditions of the Santhals, were absorbed into the University's curriculum as a skill development course and, hence, started getting absorbed in the cultural lives of the people of Shantiniketan. Another essential aspect is the era of the 1920s. The Swadeshi Movement of the Indian Freedom Struggle was at its peak in this phase. The slogans of 'self-reliance' and 'self-rule' echoed in the streets and hearts of the population. The concept of making things on our own or using materials made indigenously was heavily promoted against the rising British-made goods which exploited the Indian markets. Rabindranath Tagore himself was one of the followers and promoters of this movement and, henceforth, was inspired by Birbhum's local community's resilience in times of British exploitation. This is how Khesh was introduced in Shantiniketan- as a way of life first and then as a cultural craft.



Image 3: The completed Khesh Saree;
Source: Self © Ritwika Basak

Each piece of Khesh is unique, as it depends on the availability of old sarees and the weaver's creative choices during the weaving process. Khesh embodies the spirit of sustainable practices by repurposing old textiles and represents the ingenuity and artistic expression of the communities involved. It continues to be cherished as a significant textile tradition, preserving the cultural heritage of Birbhum and contributing to the diversity of Indian textiles.

While it continues to be a cherished and significant textile tradition in Birbhum, the representation of Khesh in classical and modern literature is still being found. It has also been observed that only two categories of people know about its existence- the vernacular communities themselves and a niche crowd of people who appreciate the urban sustainability tags like 'pre-worn,' 'pre-loved,' 'upcycled,' 'pre-washed and breathable,' 'Everyday cotton' to name a few. A significant population avoids and dismisses the idea of an old textile that has been used before. For them, investing in textiles is equated with buying a brand-new, elaborately designed fabric that is either a high-end fabric or weave (like silk) or synthetic materials like polyester and viscose. This is also not justified since Khesh is one of the most economically friendly textiles in the market, along with its ideal environmental benefits. Thus, while the intangible cultural aspects and the roles of communities are being acknowledged- in a concentrated area, the subjective ideas of sustainable practices are the boon and bane of the life of the Khesh tradition.

The contribution of textile sustainability to intangible cultural heritage (ICH) and conservation is multifaceted and plays a vital role in preserving the traditions, skills, and knowledge associated with textiles. Sustainable textile practices often involve the use of traditional techniques and craftsmanship passed down through generations. This helps preserve the intangible cultural heritage of textile production, such as weaving, dyeing, and embroidery. They ensure the continuity of cultural traditions related to textiles. By supporting traditional methods, communities can maintain their cultural identity and pass down knowledge to younger generations. These practices also emphasise ethical sourcing of materials and fair labour practices. This contributes to the preservation of cultural heritage by respecting the rights and traditions of indigenous communities and protecting traditional practices. Efforts to promote textile sustainability encourage the documentation and research of traditional textiles and their cultural significance. This documentation helps ensure that the intangible aspects of cultural heritage are not lost.

Sustainable textile initiatives often involve local communities in the production and preservation of textiles. This empowers communities to take an active role in safeguarding their intangible cultural heritage. Textiles can serve as a medium for promoting intangible cultural heritage. Traditional patterns, designs, and motifs in textiles often carry cultural stories and symbolism that can be shared with a broader audience. Textiles with cultural significance can attract tourists interested in intangible cultural heritage. This can provide economic support for communities engaged in textile production.

The intersection of textile sustainability with intangible cultural heritage and conservation not only supports environmentally responsible practices but also contributes to the preservation and promotion of cultural traditions and knowledge. It highlights the interconnectedness of the tangible and intangible aspects of cultural heritage, demonstrating that sustainable textile practices are not just about materials and processes but are deeply rooted in cultural identity and heritage.

In conclusion, Khesh exemplifies the importance of transforming indigenous, vernacular knowledge systems into tangible textiles. It showcases sustainable practices, community engagement, and the preservation of intangible cultural heritage. To maintain its raw nature, it is important to recognise its existence, document its evolution and study its characteristics. Only then can its significant contributions be appreciated, acknowledged, and enjoyed by society. No textile, regardless of size or prominence, should be forgotten, as each contributes to the rich tapestry of human culture and heritage.

Ritwika Basak completed her Master's in Conservation, Preservation and Heritage Management from the School of Heritage Research and Management, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar University, Delhi in 2023. She works as a Research Associate for STAMBH Heritage and is an aspiring art conservation professional.

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Kanauj: The Forgotten City of Fragrances

- Rashi Karir

This is a home of fragrances, where roses are plucked before sunrise, their petals collected in a vessel and filled with water for distillation. Here, the magic begins, slowly, laboriously, employing the artisanal method of *deg-bhapka*, using copper stills fuelled by wood and cow dung, and finally making a perfect *attar*. This is Kanauj, the 'Perfume Capital of India.'

The historic city of Kanauj is a district of Uttar Pradesh. It lies between 27° 5' north latitude and 79° 55' east longitude and has geographical advantages in favour of being situated on the river Ganges' banks. This geographical location has benefited Kanauj because the perfume industry is agro-based. Perfumes and perfumeries have been omnipresent in Kanauj



since time immemorial. For Kanauj, the history of this aromatic culture is rooted in the secret techniques of the families who have been designing these products for centuries. Each family has had a unique formula maintained as a well-guarded secret.

Image 1: Women collecting rose petals for making attar.

Source: How Did Kannauj Become the Perfume Capital of India? 2020

This research work attempts to get back to where it all began, i.e., revisit Kanauj and revive the craft of making *attars*. Though the artisans continue to make *attar* in Kanauj, the industry has suffered a setback because of the French perfume industry, which has established a stronghold in Indian markets. Apart from this, Korean aromatic products and *attars* from Saudi Arabia have also played a role in diminishing the indigenous perfume industry of India. This paper aims to highlight the challenges faced by perfume makers, manufacturers, and distillery labourers and what steps should be taken to create consciousness among the masses regarding this slow-fading art of making perfumes.

In India, perfumes and scented articles were used from pre-Vedic and Vedic periods for religious practices, social customs, and domestic rituals. They later gradually became part and parcel of human life. Perfumes were also used in cosmetics and beauty aids. The medicinal values of many perfumes were well known to ancient Indians and were used in both rituals and to treat diseases. *Dhupan* (Medicated fumigation) was an advanced method for medicinal purposes. Medicated oils, collyriums, and powders were prepared from perfumes for external use for many diseases. Perfumes were also anointed in various body parts (*Anulepan*). Chewing betel leaves and fragrant material like nutmeg, mace, etc.

(*Tambulam*) were used to render the mouth clean and fragrant. Usage of scented oils to massage the body (*Abhyanga*), which keeps the skin smooth, healthy, and refreshing; *Udvartanam*, massaging various body parts; *Udgarshanam*, scrubbing; *Utsadanam* rubbing with scented powders, etc., were some of the health protection and disease eliminating procedures. Scented drugs and perfumes enhance these processes' quality, activity, and pleasantness.



Image 2: Perfume craftsmen pour petals into the large copper deg.
Source: (How Did Kannauj Become the Perfume Capital of India? 2020)

The art of making *attars* (concentrated) and floral waters (distilled) was established during the Gupta period. In fact, '*Jalyeaya Aaswan*,' meaning water distillation, finds mention in *Charaka Samhita*. Kanauj became the centre of perfumery, evidenced by the fact that during the reign of Harshawardhan, Hindu art and culture were at their zenith, and perfumery took firm rooting with his patronage.

Under the Mughals (16th century), centres developed at Ghazipur, Jaunpur, and particularly Kanauj, *attars* manufactured at the '*Gandh-e-Mohalla*' of Kanauj, used to be sent to Delhi for the Emperor's use. The *deg-bhapka* distillation process of making *attars* was introduced during this period.

Today, Kanauj reminisces the history of aromatics in its produce called '*attars*' manufactured by materials from plant and animal origins. This knowledge results from a progressive understanding of the effect of heat on plants, which resulted in aromatic pastes and unguents used by man for cooling the body, decorating it, or camouflaging the human body smell. There are hundreds of aroma distilleries running throughout the year in Kanauj. Even after easy access to modern equipment, the artisan communities still prefer to use traditional distillation for making perfumes because they believe that is the only way to get the true essence of the plant and animal materials.

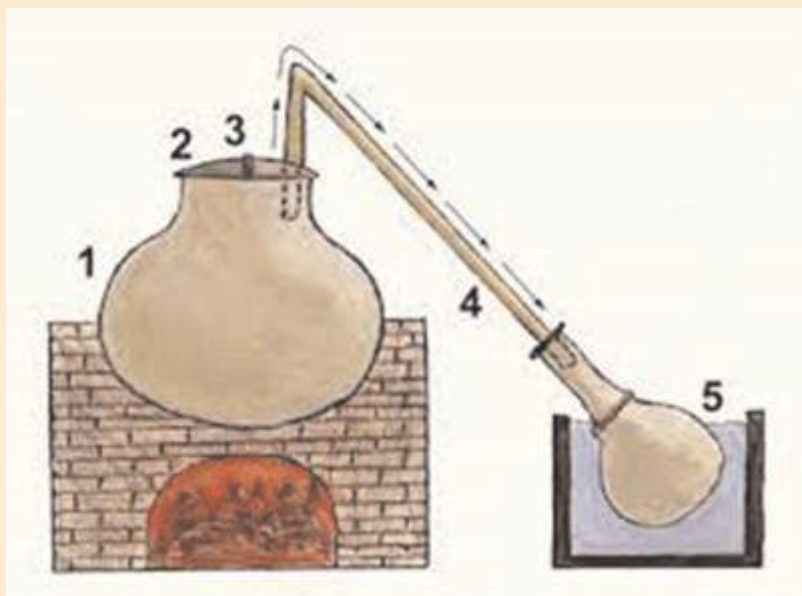
Studies have shown that the brain integrates smell with knowledge about space and time to form incidental memories. Researchers hypothesised that the exceptional ability of odours to trigger memories is known as the Proust effect. Perfume brings back specific memories related to sensory and emotional expressions. Therefore, various Hindu scripture writes about the importance of bathing with flowers and other fragrant herbal paste-like sandalwood, and rosewater paste with a pinch of Turmeric, also known as "*Ubtan*" Perfume, to evoke an emotional response through the senses.

Various kinds and types of ingredients are used to make *attar*. Some *attars* are flower-basing such as roses, jasmine, and marigold. Some *attars* are plant-tree-basing such as khus and oudh. Some are animal-based, like musk. Some are natural herbs-spices-based like saffron, sandalwood, and clove. Base oils or carriers like sesame, peanut, and almond oil are used to dilute the essential oils. These *attars* are used as fragrances and have therapeutic and disease-curing qualities.

The apparatus and equipment used to manufacture *attar* or Indian perfumes are pretty flexible with a certain degree of efficiency. The traditional *Deg* and *Bhapka* process has been used for centuries in Kanauj and is in use even now with the following standard equipment.

1. *Deg*: Deg is a copper still in which the floral, herbal roots, etc., are put. The *deg* can hold between 10 kilograms to 160 kilograms of materials.
2. *Sarpos*: It is the lid at the top of the *deg*. It has openings to connect to receivers. There is usually one *bhapka*, but sometimes, there are two *bhapka*.
3. *Bhapka*: It is the receiver, which is also made of copper. It is connected to the *deg* by the

chonga, i.e., to the still by a hollow bamboo pipe, which acts as a condenser.



4. *Gachchi*: It is a cooling water tank. It is in the *gachchi* where *bhapka* is kept to cool the distillate from the *deg*.

5. *Kuppi*: A puppy is a leather bottle into which the *attar* is poured for sedimentation. The leather in the *kuppi* absorbs moisture and allows water to evaporate, thus leaving behind only the *attar*.

Image 3: Deg and Bhapka Hydro-distillation Method

Source: (Guide & Attar, 2022)

6. *Bhatti*: This traditional furnace is heated by wood or cow dung cakes.

Hundreds of aroma distilleries run annually in Kanauj and its nearby areas. Even after easy access to modern equipment, they still prefer to use traditional distillation for making perfumes because they still believe it is the only way to collect the true essence of plant materials.

Kanauj is considered the perfume capital of India because it is a traditional Indian perfume manufacturer, and it is still known for its conventional perfume-making by using the *deg* and *bhapka* methods. But now people are more into modern perfume, so the distilleries in Kanauj are decreasing daily. The government has taken various steps to protect the Kanauj perfume industry. It has been protected under the (GI) tag, i.e., the Geographical Indication

Tag of the agreement. It is related to trade-related aspects of the intellectual property rights agreement, and it is listed in item 157 as “Kanauj perfume.” Secondly, the Uttar Pradesh government has taken “*attar*” under ODOP (One District One Product) to foster balanced development and enable the region's socio-economic growth. So far, 3 Tehsils, 8 Blocks, 693 Villages, and 1687 Units have been registered under the ODOP scheme.

The best *attar* walks down from the narrow lanes of Kanauj, but this industry is facing a major setback today. It is gut-wrenching to see the Indian masses tempted and attracted to French perfumes, Arabian *attar*, and others, becoming “Brand-conscious” consumers. Western perfumes are becoming a marker of exceptional taste and status symbols, and because of this, traditional art is dying and facing losses. Since 2017, there has been a continuous depletion of distilleries in Kanauj. Also, COVID-19 drastically impacted the distilleries, leading the producers to shut down their work and look for other avenues to sustain themselves.

To overcome these challenges, the Indian *attar* industry can emphasise its unique selling points, such as the authenticity of natural ingredients, the cultural heritage and traditional craftsmanship associated with *attar* production, and the exoticism and distinctiveness of Indian fragrances. Targeting niche markets, leveraging e-commerce platforms, and promoting *attars*’ sustainable and eco-friendly aspects can also help the Indian *attar* industry carve out its market segment and differentiate itself from the mass-produced Arabian *attars* and French perfumes. Collaboration with international partners, participation in global fragrance exhibitions, and investment in research and development can further enhance the competitiveness of Indian *attars* worldwide.

It is our responsibility as stakeholders of our intangible cultural practice to promote it, value it, support it, and be the voice of the local artisans who put their sweat and blood into the distillery so that we get the benefits. With the combined efforts, this soon-to-be-forgotten art could be saved. Let us aim this together to bring Kanauj perfumery to the world map and give Kanauj its due recognition.

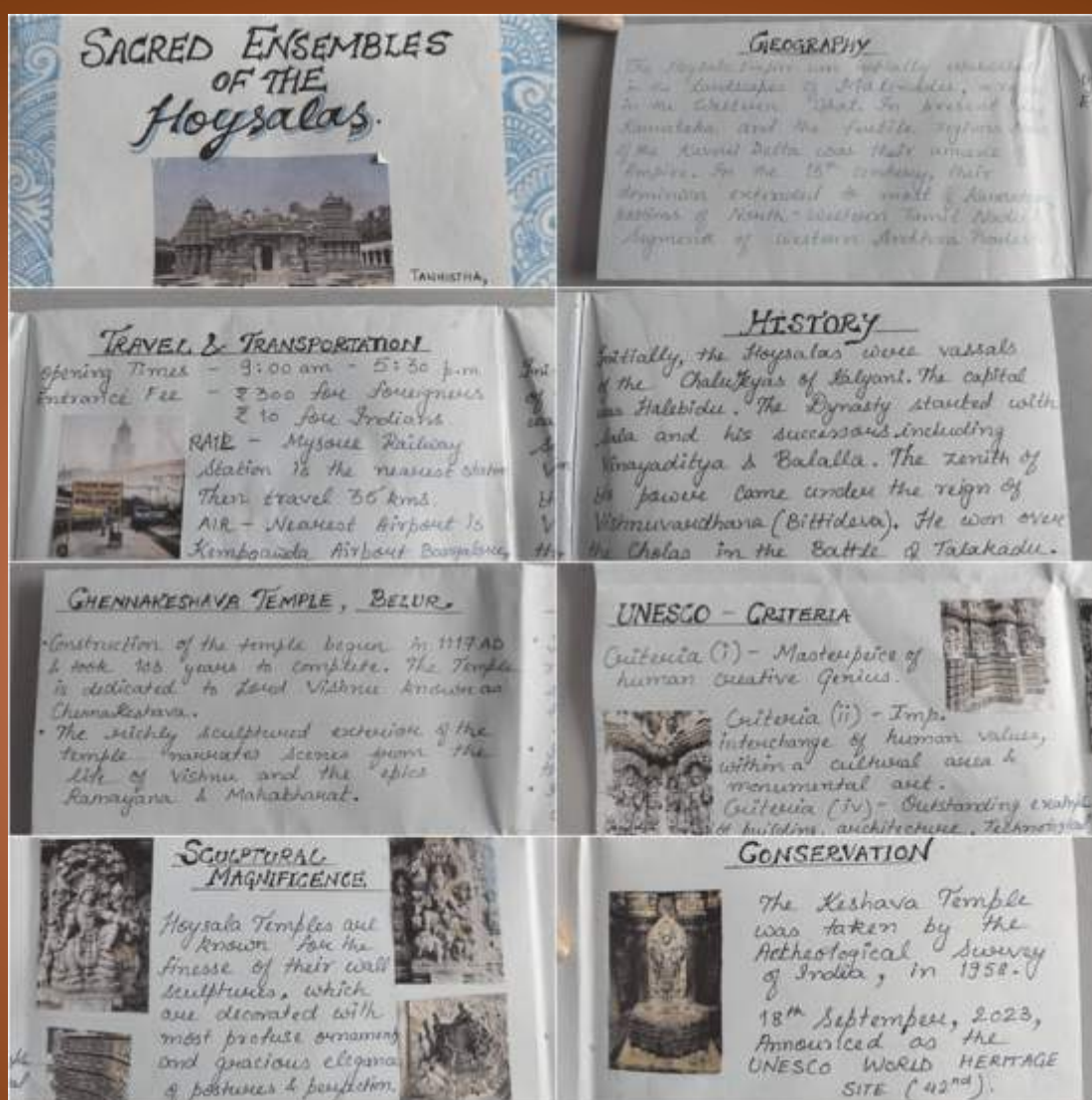
Rashi Karir completed her Master's in Archaeology and Heritage Management from the School of Heritage Research and Management, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar University, Delhi in 2023. She is an Archive Associate at Past Perfect Heritage Management, Mumbai. She's also pursuing a diploma course in Preventive Conservation from The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi.

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Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysalas: A Brochure



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An Analysis of Dietary and Culinary Practices of the Harappans: with reference to the sites in Haryana

- Pratishtha Bhatnagar

This study aims to analyse the dietary and culinary practices of the Harappans by interpreting the dietary practices of Harappans by understanding the domestication of plants and animals and by analysing various shreds of evidence of charred and carbonised grains and seeds of cultivated plants that directly reconstruct the Harappan people's dietary practices. Another important factor is to understand the culinary aspect of the Harappan people, tracing the practices through the tools and implements such as chert blades, pestle, and grinder, evidence of fire hearths and ovens alongside the ceramics used for cooking and serving. Studying and exploring prehistoric foodways allows us to peek into the traditions of ancient civilisations and understand if and how these traditions have survived to the present day.

Introduction

The Harappan Civilization was one of the great early complex societies of the bronze age. It dominated a large area, covering much of today's northeast Afghanistan to Pakistan and northwest India. The civilisation flourished around the Indus River basin, primarily along the same river, and in the Punjab region, the civilisation extended into the *Ghaggar-Hakra* River valley. Between 3200 and 1400 BCE, it was the most widespread of three early cradles of civilization of the Old World.

The knowledge of Harappan culture is enormous and is studied based on extensive explorations and on-site excavations. The first site unearthed of this culture is Harappa in the 1920s by Daya Ram Sahni. Over the years, archaeologists have uncovered several other sites in different parts of the subcontinent. As part of the study, to trace the dietary and culinary practices, the material culture of two Harappan sites of Haryana i.e., Farmana, and Rakhigarhi, is analysed.

The food economy of the Harappans is an important area of study for understanding the strategies for agricultural systems and reconstructions of diet. The study of flora and fauna involves the classification of plants and animals on the basis of a certain region, time period, or environment. The indigenous plants and wildlife of a geographical region are often referred to as that region's flora and fauna. The Indus and Saraswati basins are covered by alluvial land, that are the most important fertile units of the subcontinent, providing a solid agricultural base for the Harappans, where they could raise not only sufficient food grains for the Harappan population but also surplus. Such varied ecological conditions that the Harappans occupied gave them a lot of subsistence advantages.

Dietary Practices: Floral & Faunal Remains in Archaeological Context

Agriculture was the main occupation and, perhaps, also the chief mainstay of Harappan prosperity. It was practised on a wide scale, with hundreds of rural settlements cultivating numerous crops, including wheat, barley, peas, sesame seed, rice, a number of vegetables, and cotton. They produced sufficient to feed themselves. Due to the very extensive distribution area of the civilisation, and the multiplicity of agricultural techniques, there could have been a great deal of diversity in Harappan agrarian traditions. (Kumar, 2014)

Archaeological remains of ancient plants are found embedded in cultural materials like mud plaster, potsherds, sealing, hearth peelers, and terracotta objects or are found depicted on seals, sealings, paintings, etc., are the traditional sources. Seeds are the most common evidence of archaeobotanical remains and can be preserved by numerous means, including mineralisation, water logging, or as an impression on pottery. But most of the seeds are often encountered as charred remains. Seeds once they have been carbonised are like coal, and although they are fragile and easily crushed and abraded. The well-preserved carbonised grains are studied through the flotation technique to better analyse their properties and features.



Figure1: Left: Perforated Jar, Right: Carinated Handi; Source: Sharma, D.P. (2010) Harappan potteries. Delhi: Bhartiya Kala Prakashan.

The cultivated wheat had three varieties namely Indian dwarf wheat (*Triticum Sphaerococcum*), club wheat (*Triticum compactum*), and common wheat (*Triticum aestivum*). Hulled wheat appears to be present amongst impressions from Kalibangan. The barley found at all places was of both the two-rowed and six-rowed cultivated types, *Hordeum vulgare*, var. *distichum*, and var. *hexastichum*, mostly the latter. Barley and Wheat are the main crops taken by the Harappan farmers at Rakhigarhi. (Nath, 2012)

Domestication of animals also contributed greatly to the subsistence economy, and the Harappans domesticated a wide range of animals which included cattle, dogs, and the water buffalo, which remains essential to intensive agricultural production throughout Asia even today. The faunal remains include mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, and molluscan species. Among the domestic animals, cattle, buffalo, sheep, goats, pigs, and horses were identified. More than a dozen wild animals were identified in the collection, including the nilgai, antelopes, deer, carnivores, rodents, and elephants. (Kumar, 2014).

The collection and the fragments of bones provide information about the food economy. The bones bear the clear mark of cutting, splitting, and chopping. Sometimes it is charred and represents the debris of meals.

Goat/sheep was the most important food item in the Harappan economy, Cattle were raised as livestock for meat (beef) and as dairy animals for milk and other dairy products.

The ample sources for tracing the floral and faunal assemblage clearly indicate that the diet of Harappans was an amalgamation of a variety of cereals that were probably used to make flatbread and lentils were a source of protein supplemented with various vegetables, along with the heavy meat diet. The dietary practices are largely similar to the ones followed today and showcase development and continuity with the present-day practices.

Culinary Practices: Preparation, Cooking and Serving

Culinary practices refer to the activities, techniques, and traditions related to the preparation, cooking, and consumption of food within a particular culture or society.

Since the prehistoric living spaces were designed for community living, cooking was done out in the open, and the cooking pots were designed to feed many people. Whereas the towns of the civilisation were very well planned, and the residential areas were built with kitchens inside the housing complex. This important urban feature is the base for understanding the development of the culinary practices of the people of the Indus Valley civilisation.

The research on understanding culinary practices in archaeology is followed through by analysing and examining the preparation, cooking, and serving.



Preparation: Tools and Implements

Pestle and Grind Stones: they were grinding stones commonly used for grinding grains and other food items. These were large, flat stones used with a smaller handheld stone to grind and crush. Concave-shaped mortar and pestle have been excavated out of Mohenjo-Daro. There have been different types of querns reported from Rakhigarhi, footed quern, saddle quern, circular quern, and muller. (Nath, 2012)

Figure 2: Saddle and Quern for Grinding;

Source: Randhawa, M.S. (1980) A history of agriculture in India. New Delhi: Indian Council of Agricultural Research.

Cutting and Chopping Tools: the people using sharp-edged stone blades or tools made from bone, horn, or other available materials. The stone blades that have been used to cut grass developed a shine, called 'sickle sheen' that is not actually burnishing, but a deposit of silica that comes from the stalk of the plant. It is believed that the sharp edges might have been used for cutting meat and vegetables. (Banerjee et al., 2018)

Fire Hearths and Ovens: In ancient Harappan kitchens, fire hearths and ovens were used for cooking and baking. The fire hearths were likely simple constructions where food could be roasted or boiled. Ovens are signified with clay pots with one side open and mud-plastered ovens with side openings were found at various sites.

Cooking and Serving: Utensils and Vessels – Ceramics



Ceramic utensils offer several advantages for cooking and serving food, including heat retention and even heat distribution. Harappan pottery is made out of good quality clay and comprises several types of wares, the most common one is black and red ware.

Figure 3: Circular HearthSource: Sharma, D.P. (2010) Harappan potteries. Delhi: Bharatiya Kala Prakashan.

The ceramics used by the people for culinary practices came in various shapes and forms, catering to their cooking, serving, and storage needs. While specific shapes may have varied across different sites and time periods, the size of the pot and the shape of its mouth provide a clue to its function. There have been reported finds of Cylindrical perforated jars, dish-on-stands, beakers, and basins from Rakhigarhi, Haryana. The functions of globular vases could be to keeping cereals, basins for cooking or soaking grains, goblet and miniature pots for curd, honey, and juices and beaker for serving liquids, dish-on-stand and bowl-on-stand were probably useful table wares. (Nath, 2012)

In recent years starch grain analysis has been used to study the use of plants in food preparation, ceramic residue analysis, and the use of tools and implements.

Residue analysis is one technique used to learn about food processing and identify what foods were cooked inside a vessel. Analyses of absorbed plant or animal residues left behind on tools/ceramics are an important way for archaeologists to study food preparation and cooking practices. (Kashyap, 2010)

The technique of Starch grain analysis was used at the site of Farmana in Haryana, by Steven A. Weber and Arunima Kashyap to better understand the diet of the people living in the Harappan site of Farmana. The research provided the first direct evidence of what plants were being used, processed, and consumed at the site.

Starches of lentils and large and small-grained cereals were recovered from the interior surface of storage jars. Also, the starch of *Solanum* (cf. eggplant), *zingiber* (cf. ginger), and *curcuma* (cf. turmeric) starches were extracted from a cooking pot or handi (a deep narrow-mouthed cooking vessel). (Kashyap, 2010)

Conclusion

The study of cooking and food preparation helps us identify ways in which everyday practice changes and/or continues in the political, economic, and sociocultural realms. Meals structure the lives of those who prepare food and those who consume food, creating a foundation for social life. Cooking and food preparation and what they can tell us about society and the economy in the past is part of the new domain of archaeology of food that is a budding space contributing to better analyses of how the culturally complex societies evolved.

While tracing the continuity in the kinds of implements, ceramics, and other cooking tools that the Harappan people were using, a number of rolling pins of pottery and stone have been found at Chanhudaro, probably used to make flatbread. Similarly, the Sil and Vatta are the descendants of the saddle quern and are used for grinding spices in Indian homes, the kinds of hearths that the Harappan people made are still continuing and can be still seen in the present-day village of Rakhigarhi, Haryana. All these elements showcase a cultural continuity of dietary and culinary practices to modern times.

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From Central Vista to Kartavya Path

- Srishti Kureel

"Istanbul was Constantinople, now it's Istanbul, not Constantinople, been a long time gone, Constantinople...even old New York was once New Amsterdam, why they changed it, I can't say people just liked it better that way." The song "Istanbul (Not Constantinople)" by Jimmy Kennedy and Nat Simon, performed by The Four Lads on the 500th anniversary of the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople, commemorates the official renaming of the city from Constantinople to Istanbul. The city was renamed in 1930 as part of the Republic of Turkey's efforts to adopt a new national identity. Similarly, New Amsterdam was renamed New York by the British after the Duke of York took over the colony in Newfoundland. This article explores the phenomenon of naming and renaming places, why it is a perpetual phenomenon that lacks terminology, and how it relates to the conservation and preservation of cultural heritage. In this article, we trace historical examples to our topic, the Kartavya Path, to better understand this phenomenon.

The renaming of places is a common occurrence throughout history. It can be done for various reasons, such as cultural, populist, social or communal reasons. In some cases, the renaming of a place can be controversial, as it can be seen as a way of erasing or rewriting history. However, the renaming of places can also be seen as a way of acknowledging and celebrating the diversity of cultures and languages worldwide. The conservation and preservation of cultural heritage is important because it helps to ensure that our shared history is not lost. When places are renamed, it is important to remember the history of the place and the reasons for the renaming.

The phenomenon of naming and renaming places is a complex one. No single term adequately describes it, and the reasons for renaming places can vary widely. However, the renaming of places can have a significant impact on the cultural heritage of a place. It is important to remember the history of a place and the reasons for its renaming when considering the conservation and preservation of its cultural heritage.

The renaming of places, streets, cities, and even nations has been a practice since time immemorial. This process is driven by various factors, including political, cultural, and social influences. Changes in nomenclature often seem like a minor detail in the history of any structure. However, it is only when these changes occur that we realise that every tangible piece of heritage has multiple layers of intangible heritage, which gives us culture, identity, and origin. The Deschambault Declaration captures the idea perfectly: *"We use the heritage of yesterday to build the heritage of tomorrow because culture is by its very nature dynamic and is constantly being renewed and enriched."*

To better understand this phenomenon, we can examine the recently inaugurated and much-discussed Kartavya Path, formerly the Rajpath. The newly "revamped" and "renamed" Kartavya Path is a part of the larger Central Vista Redevelopment Project. We can use this example to understand the ever-evolving perspectives, symbols, and heritage of the nation's

capital. It is important to understand that heritage is *"our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations"*, making it a dynamic marvel.

For this paper, we have taken the example of Kartavya Path, New Delhi. The announcement of a new capital at the 1911 Delhi Durbar led to the construction of the new capital in this famous capital of the subcontinent. Announced at the height of Imperial rule in India, the city was supposed to symbolise English Hegemony in the subcontinent. Even before its completion, the city transformed into a place that symbolised the transition from colonisation and monarchy to independence and democracy. The city has continued to evolve and change over the years, reflecting the changing times and the people who live there. It is a living, breathing testament to the power of history and the resilience of the human spirit.

New Delhi, the capital of India, was designed in the early 20th century in the City Beautiful and Garden City styles, emphasising wide streets, green spaces, and Indian architectural elements by Sirs Edwin Lutyens and Herbert Baker. The city is now governed by the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) and has a special status as the country's capital and a heritage city. The NDMC region includes Lutyens' Delhi, home to important landmarks such as Parliament House, Rashtrapati Bhawan, and the North and South Blocks. The central government of India protects this area under a special status due to its importance and historical significance.

The Central Vista, the central administrative district in New Delhi, is undergoing a major redevelopment project expected to take six years. The project, which was inaugurated in September 2019, includes several initiatives, such as the construction of a new triangular Parliament building, Central Vista Avenue, the official residence of the Prime Minister and Vice President, an executive area with the Prime Minister's Office and the Cabinet Session, and the relocation of the National Museum to the South and North Blocks.



Image 1: Gupta, N. India's Presidential Palace (Rashtrapati Bhavan) at Sunset stock photo. - Wiktionary.

The redevelopment project has raised concerns about the sustainable conservation of this vital heritage, the maintenance of the integrity of the original landscape, and the changes to the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the landscape. The redevelopment of Rajpath and its renaming to Kartavya Path is a part of this larger project.

The Kingsway, conceived by Lutyens as a "*ceremonial axis*" for the imperial capital, was named after the Emperor of India, George V, who visited Delhi for the Durbar of 1911 and announced the decision to transfer the capital. Following independence, the axis was translated into Hindi and named Rajpath to mark the symbol of the Sovereign State. It is here that the Republic Day parades have been held for decades. Today, it is seen as a celebration of patriotism due to the Republic Day celebrations hosted on this street and the seat of the government.

Adrija Roy Chowdhury, in her book *Delhi, in Thy Name*, asks, "What does the name of a city, place, or street carry with it?" She answers, "An identity, collective memories and nostalgia, traditions and histories". When a name changes, it writes a new history and, by extension, a new heritage, culture, and meaning. This is precisely what happened with Rajpath. The name change was met with agreement and celebration, while others grappled with the dichotomy between the past and the future. As history has shown, such mixed reactions are inevitable. Not everyone was happy when Bombay was renamed Mumbai, and not everyone was sad when Notre Dame Church was renamed the Temple of Reason during the French Revolution. The renaming of Rajpath is a significant event in India's history. It is a symbol of the country's progress and its desire to move forward. It is also a reminder of the country's colonial past and the need to overcome it.

Image 2: Kartavya Path | INDIAN CULTURE. (n.d.), from <https://indianculture.gov.in/kartavya-path>

The ethics and guidelines of conservation and preservation are rigid and often left for interpretation regarding Intangible Cultural Heritage. The “ICOMOS Charter For The Preservation Of Quebec's Heritage, The Deschambault Declaration”, says: “*We use the heritage of yesterday to build the heritage of tomorrow, for culture is by its very nature dynamic and is constantly being renewed and enriched*”, which means our culture and heritage are constantly evolving. The meaning of heritage is ever-changing as new layers of history and culture are added. These practices, traditions, and collective memories eventually give rise to a heritage, whether tangible or intangible. As a result, deciding what needs to be preserved and what can be changed, especially in the case of intangible cultural heritage, is often very challenging.

Heritage is a complex concept with a variety of definitions. It can be defined as the legacy passed down from one generation to the next, including tangible items such as buildings and monuments and intangible items such as traditions, customs, and beliefs. Heritage is often seen as a source of pride and identity and can play an important role in developing communities and nations. Despite the challenges, it is important to preserve heritage. Heritage can provide us with a sense of identity and belonging and help us understand the past. By preserving heritage, we can ensure it is passed down to future generations.

When renaming or altering the name of a place, street, or city, it is essential to consider the collective memories, traditions, and ideologies associated with it. It is also important to balance these factors and the need to preserve heritage, it necessitates careful thought. It is critical to approach the process with an understanding of the historical context and the diverse perspectives of different communities. Heritage and culture constantly evolve, and adapting them to the present is necessary. Thus, all tangible cultural heritage has layers of intangible cultural heritage that should be conserved, preserved, and documented.

To conclude, it is high time that the world adopts proper terminology for a process with such a long history and is a universal phenomenon. The name of a city, a place, or a street carries a wealth of history and meaning. It can be a reminder of the past, a symbol of the present, or a hope for the future. It can be a source of pride, a source of conflict, or a source of unity. It can be a place of joy, a place of sorrow, or a place of both. The name of a city, a place, or a street is a powerful thing. It reminds us of who we are, where we come from, and where we are going.

In closing, what, according to you, does the name of your city, place, or street carry with itself?

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Theme: Waste to Wonder
Colosseum, Rome

Model of Colosseum, Rome made by Yogesh Singh. The theme is Waste to Wonder, and here he tried to create the Model by using cardboard and glue. It was a laborious task to design the Colosseum since it carries intricate patterns. But the end result showcases refinement of the model.



About the Artist: Yogesh Singh is currently pursuing Master's in Archaeology and Heritage Management from the School of Heritage Research and Management, Dr B.R. Ambedkar University, Delhi.

Reflection of Gitagovinda over the Pahari Miniature Paintings

- Tannistha Ghosh

Introduction

The friendly and dear nature of Lord Krishna attracted everyone towards him. People worshipped him as a child, as a friend, and as a guide and developed an emotional bond with him. This crystalised the Krishna Cult within the *Bhakti* Movement and was accelerated by the advent of the *Gitagovinda* written by Jayadeva in the 12th century. People chose to depict Krishna in their paintings because he was seen as a personality who had an extensive earthly biography very close to people's hearts and emerged quite clearly, thus is much more approachable to people. This became the reason he was very frequently admitted in the art and culture of people and daily routines of worship. *Gitagovinda* inspired the artists to become visual poets for this divine poem. These facts inspired this study. On visiting the National Museum, amazed to see many miniature paintings of the Pahari School decorated with the title of *Gitagovinda*; this is where this study found its passion. The creativity level of the Indian artists; how a literary work can be portrayed so delicately on paper with brush and paints became an objective to read the text of *Gitagovinda*, understand every single bit, and try finding it in the paintings of the Pahari Miniatures. The site of the National Museum was picked for this research.

Gitagovind: A Throughout

The *Gitagovinda* was an astonishing work of literature, which brought out the greatest love story of the Dark lord and his beloved Radha encircled with their *gopis*. The text symbolises the love of a *Bhakt* for his God, envisaging the *Bhakti* Movement; it was also considered the fountain source of the Krishna cult in the country. *Gitagovinda* of Jayadeva is acknowledged as one of the best literary evidence which reflects this divine relation. It is decorated with the virtue of the excellence of its poetry, its mystic and its devotional fervour. "It constituted a landmark in the art of the composition of devotional lyrics in this country and had a tremendous impact on the imagination of devotional poets." (R.P.N, Sinha: 2022) The aesthetic beauty of *Gitagovinda* had surpassed the boundaries of just being a text; it reached people's hearts and became a source of inspiration and fascination for them. The popularity of this poetry became so prominent that it travelled outside the boundaries of the subcontinent. It was loved by scholars outside India, especially Europeans, who took the greatest initiative of translating it into various languages such as Latin, English, German and French. The German rendering of the book is *Goethe*, written by F.H Dalberg. It was translated into English by William Jones, but the widely accepted English translation of the text was done by Barbara Stoller Miller in 1977.

The structure of the poetic text is written in such a delightful way that one easily gets involved within the rhythmic lines and the sensuous poetic attributes. The text reflects the 8 varied moods of a heroine, suffering while she awaits her beloved, till finally when she meets him. The work beautifully yet symbolically delineates the love of Krishna for Radha. They are divine lovers and shine back the purest form of love, yet one more perspective decorates the text, which symbolises the human soul's straying from its true allegiance but returning at length to the god who created it. The engaging characteristic of the text drew upon the inspiration for the artists of India to bring out this literary work into the full glory of the miniature paintings. It is quoted in many books that if there is one art form that captures the many nuances of the textures, the beauty and sensitivity, the depths and heights of the many moods and meanings of the love of Krishna, it must be the miniature paintings of Rajasthani and Pahari schools." (Dehejia: 2002) It is an astonishing experience to witness the miniature

paintings of Rajasthani and Pahari paintings, which reflect the beauty and magnificence of the strong poetic lines of our literature, the real emotion of love and sensuality of Krishna.

Manifesting Gitagovinda

The mystic love of Radha and Krishna has been described herein in worldly imagery. The poet has touched every emotion of this story, where there is immense love accompanied by sorrow, anger, jealousy, insecurity and finally, the union, the joy and excitement in the beating hearts. The miniature paintings of the mountain valleys carried up all these elements within them and shined out all the small aspects to bring forth the divine nature and emotions. The text surrounds three characters, and the paintings majorly depict these three characters. These three characters are Radha Krishna and the *gopis*, who play different roles throughout the story. The depictions of all three characters are very different; each carries their dignity and spirituality, yet entangled together with threads.

“Radha is depicted as a proud feminine beauty who is full of longing, playful, jealous, passionate and despondent.”(Sanskrit document.org: 3rd July 2023) She is the one who showers her pure love on Krishna, submits herself to him in every form one can imagine, loses herself in his affectionate memory, decorates herself, and bide her time to see him, meet him and embrace him in her arms. But she finds him with other girls, roaming around in the forests of Vrindavan. She is devastated; she sulks and despairs in the lonely corners of the forest. But Krishna is the lord of different, variant shades; on one hand, he is a carefree boy, but immediately on the other, he is the best lover focused only on one person, his beloved Radha. As he realises Radha has seen him in this situation covered with other girls, He feels the ultimate pain in his heart for hurting her and feels sorry for her situation while believing in his wantons. He now longs for Radha, waits for Radha in the bower, and calls her friends, asking them and urging them to bring her to him; he pleads forgiveness and even tries to make her jealous so that she runs and comes to him; he now tries every bit to make her happy. Krishna’s personality is of a joyous, carefree young boy who is the hero of Vrindavan, and everyone is fond of him.

Gopis or *sakhis* are an integral part of Radha Krishna's love story; without them their story always remains incomplete. Gopis were wonderful devotees of the lord. They totally surrendered themselves unto the lord and submerged themselves within him. Here in this text, they are the messengers. They are the intermediaries of Radha Krishna when they could not pass on the messages within themselves. They carried their messages and conditions wants to each other and became the ships for joining the two far-apart lands. They try their best to unite the two lovers through their presence throughout the text.

The literary poetic lines and the brush strokes of the paintings just beautifully merge, that they don’t seem separate; they seem as if they complete each other and are written and made for contemplating each other. We can feel the echo of the poetry in the visual gallery of the miniature paintings of the Kangra and Basohli Valley of Pahari Miniatures. The text goes hand in hand with the depiction of the painting. like one of the examples is from the 11th part, the “blissful Krishna”, where the poet suggests –

Reflection Of Gitagovinda

“Soothing Radha with his pleas
Kesava dressed elaborately
And went to lie in his thicket bed.
As night fell to blind prying eyes
Radha dressed in gleaming
ornaments
And one woman urged her to move
quickly....”

Krishna eagerly waiting for Radha in
a Bower, Kangra, Pahari, 1810 A.D,
Paper, National Museum, New Delhi
© The author, Tannistha Ghosh



These lines of the poetic essence are clearly shown and reflected in the “Krishna Eagerly Waiting for Radha in a bower” from the collection of the National Museum and belonging to the Kangra school. The poetic lines suggest that Krishna is dressed elaborately and is waiting for Radha while sitting on the thicket bed. The painting depicts the scene where Krishna eagerly waits for her Radhika to come to him, Interestingly, the painting shows two depictions of Krishna, which reflects his eagerness within this painting. The artist tried to capture the animity in this scene where he feels his beloved Radha through her tinkling anklets and mesmerising smell but can’t see her; she is taking too much time to reach him, thus he cannot keep calm at this moment. He cannot fix himself in one area, he is moving here and there just to get a glimpse of his Sri. The next lines suggest that Radha is also well decorated and ornamented in her glooming clothes for meeting her lover, while one of her friends urges her to move quickly. The central portion of the painting is captured by the two beautiful women, Radha and her friend, who urges her to move faster to meet Lord. Radha is adorned with a beautiful orange-coloured lehenga, and the jewellery springs upon her body, The moment is captured at midnight, when the sky is dark, and the stars twinkle at a far distance.

Another example that moves us towards beautiful text is from the 5th song of Gitagovinda-



“Sweet notes from his alluring flute echo nectar from
his lips.
His restless eyes glance, his head sways, earrings play
at his cheeks
My heart recalls Hari here in his love dance,
Playing seductively mocking me
A circle of peacock plumes caressed by moonlight
crowns his hair
rainbow colours the fine cloth on his dark cloud
body....
Kissing mouths of round hipped cowherd girls whets
his lust
Brilliant smiles flash from the ruby red buds of his
sweet lips....”

The painting is depicted within the green meadows and dreamy lands of Vrindavan, where Krishna meets with his Gopis. Krishna, being the hero of the theme, occupies the central position, standing in his Tribhanga posture while playing his flute and attracting all the maidens towards him. As per the beautiful poetic lines, Krishna is decorated with tinkling earrings, a plumed headdress and a heavy garland. Maidens stand surrounding him, mesmerised with melody which flows out his flute. They are awestruck with the environment and offer small offerings to their love lord. The painting brings out the echo of the sweet nectar of his flute through this depiction because the artists depicts the moment in such a way that the time has come to a standstill; everyone's expression, even the innocent cows are drawn towards the melody. Their expressions reveal the sweetness they are experiencing while they devote their minds towards the Lord.

The classical texts and the miniature paintings of India are an integral part of the Indian heritage, we need to understand them thoroughly to understand the deep routes of the Indian culture. If we understand the symbolic meanings hidden within these texts and can visualise these reflections over the miniature painting while understanding the perspective of the artist to make them, we will be able to understand the cultural heritage of India and this will help us towards conserving this heritage which is on the verge of decline.

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Bratakatha Tradition in Bengal as a source of History as seen through Sri Sri Laxmi Devi's Bratakatha or Panchali

- Brishti Mitra

Panchali or *Bratakatha* is an oral tradition followed during the worship or *puja* of specifically female deities or goddesses in the region of Bengal. The precise time of origin of the tradition is not exactly known. However, it has been going on for a long time, since before the thirteenth century. This tradition has been used to please certain goddesses like Laxmi, Sitala, Bipadtarini and so on. Etymologically, '*Brata*' is the ritual and '*katha*' is the story. The rituals were "weaved around the domestic span of a closed agrarian society" (Debnath in RJELAL 2022). The ritual in itself includes the narrating of and listening to the stories of the Goddess. Hence, the '*Brata*' is never complete without the '*Katha*' (Debnath in RJELAL 2022). This article focuses more on the '*Katha*' part to interpret the socio-economic and political scenario of the time and its comparison with the modern times.

At the beginning of the thirteenth century, the otherwise peaceful society of Bengal was hit by the wave of Turkish invasion. It was at this time that a special type of literature came to prominence, namely, the *Mangalkavyas* (Lala 2016). This special stream of literature was somewhat a reaction to the change in the religious scenario. The *Mangalkavyas* were mainly oral literature which described the greatness of a particular goddess through a story of struggle and the ultimate propagation of her cult or worship. It was much later that these texts started to be written down.

Mangalkavyas came into prominence during the early thirteenth century, only after the Turkish invasion. They were huge in size and variation. Surprisingly, these texts were not composed in Sanskrit but in the folk language of the region. The reason why the story of the origin of Mangalkavyas is important is that before the invasion, these texts were present in the society in the form of *Panchali* (Lala 2016). *Panchali* served the same purpose of propagating the greatness and the cult of the goddess in a story format in regional language, orally but through much smaller corpus of literature. Gradually, the *Mangalkavyas* came to the fore, and *Panchalis* got pushed back. Nevertheless, they continued to be practised in the households, specifically by women of the community.

The common practice of worshipping Goddess Laxmi is on the day of Deepavali. In Bengal, however, the elaborate *puja* is done on the full moon night in the month of Ashwin, which comes after Dussehra (*Sharad Purnima*). This is often colloquially referred to as '*Kojagori Purnima*'. Other than the elaborate ritualistic *puja*, the Hindu women in Bengal worship the Goddess on a regular basis, specifically on Thursdays. The *Bratakatha* text has a separate narrative dedicated to the Thursday worship. This regular practice does not require elaborate rituals or special recipes. Hence, the simplistic style of worship has made her the common household Goddess.

Before the Turkish Invasion of Bengal, the society was divided into two classes like parallel lines, never supposed to meet or match. The upper-aristocratic class, which included the *Brahmins* and the *Kshatriyas* or the kings, was the one who knew pure Sanskrit and were well versed in it. Just as they had all the privilege, their language did too. It was used in the courts and was supposed to be the language of culture. The other section of the society did not know pure Sanskrit and were the underprivileged section. Their language, though derived from Sanskrit itself, fell in the same category of underprivileged. After the Turkish

invasion, the ruler now spoke neither of the two languages but spoke in a third language. Hence the privilege of Sanskrit got lost as a language (Lala 2016). Hence the Turkish invasion somehow created a thread of connectivity between the two sections of the society and brought the colloquial language in vogue. This phenomenon brought with itself an opportunity to the people to examine more about the folk rituals and texts and their roots. Therefore, such texts and rituals started gaining popularity in every household (Lala 2016).

The Bratakatha of Thursdays is supposed to be read and heard on every Thursday. This particular episode shows how the bratakatha was spread amongst the mortal beings. We see that a context is set where the world seems to need wealth, fortune and prosperity.

“Bolo Ma go kripa kori ki paper phole,

Martya basi nara-nari dukkhe sada jwale”

-meaning that Narada asks the Goddess why is the world of humans facing difficulties. To this will the Goddess react and solve the problems thus propagating her greatness and the benefits of worshipping her. Throughout the story, we find one medium, who is a human being, and is facing distress, is saved by the Goddess. The medium then spreads the words to others so that others can also have access to the same benefits. This is the basic formula of the Thursday text.

However, what is important here, are the reasons given for the problems faced by the human beings.

“Lokkhirupa nari sriji pathanu martye te

Amare bhuleche tara poriya mohete;

Lajja adi gun jato ramonir ache

Khonik sukher lagi barjon koreche;

Swamire na mane tara na sune bachan

Ichha moto hetha setha koriche gaman;”

Proti grihe eirup paper agar,

Achala hoiya setha thaki ki prokar”

-meaning that women have become outspoken, disobedient to their husbands and in-laws, and move around freely out of their homes. Most of them have forgotten their qualities of obedience and meekness that were like the Goddess herself. These qualities are necessary for the prosperity and piousness of a household. Since these qualities are no longer present in the households, the blessings of the goddess and the goddess herself have left those impure spaces. Importantly, the homes are called “*pap er agar*” meaning centres of sins. In the beginning of the text itself, it shows that this is more of a ‘Code of Conduct’ for women than a simple religious text for inviting good luck. The entire burden of the family’s wellbeing is in the hands of the women and how she behaves. Of course, her behaviour was supposed to be the one mentioned above. This is quite a point of debate for the feminists and equal-rights activists. This also shows how Hinduism let patriarchy engulf its religious texts as well in its

later forms in contrast to the Rig Vedic period when women evidently enjoyed almost equal or at least equivalent rights. The biggest hook in the entire narrative is that the Goddess, in spite of being a divine being, had to be subservient to her male counterpart. Women, even if divine, were typically subservient to their male relations during the time of the composition of the text.

The next part of the text mentions the stories of the *bhakts* of the goddess and how the goddess protects her devotees at the time of crisis. This effectively shows that the goddess protects only the ones who follow a particular decorum or code of conduct for living. She does not discriminate based on caste or family of the *bhakt*. The codes are moral bindings in fact, the maintenance of which can keep them out of all kinds of crisis. In this section, the theme of patriarchy is continuing throughout.

The first thing that comes to notice is an excellent understanding of the geography of the land in the text. Nine out of the twelve *Bratakathas* and the *Bratakatha* for Thursday have a geographical setting to the stories. Cities and regions like Magadha, Vidarbha, Biratnagar, banks of river Ajay in Bengal, Birsingha, Dilli, Kaundilya and Avanti have found mention in the different tales throughout the narrative. The landscape in question also seems to have been drained by a lot of rivers. This is evident as we find in different sources that Bengal has always been a land of rivers and rivulets. It is often called '*Nadimatrik desh*' in Bengali. This is evident from the stories where the merchants often go for trade via water routes in boats or ships. There has rarely been any mention of land routes for the merchants. The presence of forests is also common, as is evident from the numerous scenes set in there.

From an infrastructural point of view, it seems that villages were the basic units of residence. It is not uncommon of nagars or cities to appear in the tales but most common areas of residence of the majority of people are the villages.

The economy of the time seems to be based mostly on agriculture. Such an agrarian society can be inferred from the stories of *Binanada Rakhal (Ashad)* and *Dinanath (Agrahayan)* where the blessing of the Goddess comes in the form of seeds which need to be sowed and reaped. In some of the stories and the above two as well, it is often seen that the ruler levies taxes in the form of grains itself. This is evident when in the story of *Binanda*, the cruel king takes away his reaps and in *Dinanath's* story, the king understands the importance of grains and marries his daughter to the protagonist. Nevertheless, cattle rearing and livestock management was also not uncommon economic activities as we see in the story of *Rata Kathuriya (Baisakh)*, where there is a horseman and *Binanda Rakhal* is a shepherd managing cows. Other occupations like traders, florists, lumberjacks, *Brahmin Bhikshus*, military men under the ruler and so on were also not absent. These occupations also appear in the stories at various points.

The political scenario seems to be quite simple. The political system of the time was a monarchy. A full-fledged monarchy with a taxation system and military had already developed before the Turks arrived. Almost each story has a king, malevolent or benevolent. The malevolent kings however turn benevolent by the end of the story with the blessings of the Goddess. A very common tendency of every story seems to be the ultimate goal of a comparatively poorer person to become a king. Hence, it might be inferred that the Kings of the time were owners of great wealth and led a luxurious life. What is important to notice here is that words like Badshah and Dewan appear in the stories along with Raja. This might mean that the popular oral tradition was adapting to the situations created after the Turks

invaded Bengal. Whatever may have been the rulers addressed as, clearly, the system was monarchical.

The society of the time was definitely patriarchal. As we have noticed earlier that this text is more of a Code of Conduct for woman than a simple religious text. However, in spite of being patriarchal in nature, many of the stories have female protagonists. Although the protagonist is a female, the benefits of her wit and piousness is enjoyed by her son, husband or father. She never becomes a ruler. Another important aspect is that the women of aristocratic class also had not much choice in the decisions of their lives. They were often married to someone by the king as a gift or *Bhiksha*. Thus, the position of women in the society seems to be quite low even as compared to men of lower classes as well. The society otherwise seems to be quite peaceful and tolerant. It was highly categorised but people do not seem to have been hostile. The Goddess does not discriminate among her devotees on the basis of caste. Except for a few examples, like the *Bratakatha* for the month of *Chaitra*, where only a Brahmin woman could cook for the Brahmin, we do not find very vivid examples of untouchability or similar practices. However, widowed women were very subtly kept out of these rituals. Most of the rituals included use of vermillion, which was not allowed for the widows to touch.

There might be various other interpretations of the text but what this section mentions is a very basic understanding that can be drawn from a cultural text that has not been much worked upon.

Although the relevance of the text has been confined only to rituals in the modern context, it holds an important position in the religious sphere of Bengal. The beauty of such cultural traditions lie in the fact that it continues to be a part of popular memory through which one can remember where we have come from and what we have achieved. Keeping traditions of this kind alive is also important because there is not much documentation of these texts which can be a potential source of popular history.

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Aravan the God of Transgenders

- Deepali

Iravan also known as Aravan is a figure from Hindu mythology and a minor character of Mahabharata. The aravan is often associated with the transgender community. While there is limited literature specifically dedicated to Iravan as the god of transgender individuals, his story and symbolism have been explored in the context of gender diversity. Iravan's most famous myth revolves around his sacrifice, which he willingly offers to ensure the success of the Pandavas in the war. He desires to be married before his sacrifice, but finding no willing bride, Lord Krishna assumes a female form as Mohini and marries him. This story is sometimes cited as an early reference to transgender or gender-diverse themes. Iravan stories have been revisited in modern times in the theatre, dance and plays etc. we can find most of the evidence of Iravan story in south Indian Mahabharata and its local folklore. There are some other stories like the rebirth of aravan and his story of how he is known as Kuttantavar etc. There is a similar story in north India in which Barbarik the son of Ghatotkatch, who is the son of Bhīma is the main character who watches the whole war of Kurukshetra like Aravan. He is known as Khatushyam gee in Rajasthan and Gujarat region. Aravan is not limited the India but he is also known in foreign. Java (Indonesia) also celebrate the Aravan festival but there the story is changed.

The earliest source of mention regarding Aravan is found in *Peruntevanar's Parata Venpa*, a 9th-century Tamil version of the Mahabharata. Aravan is often described as born “parakshetra”, which means born in a region belonging to another person. The Hildebrandt interpreted this as being born to the wife of another man as Ulupi was a widow before she met Arjuna.

Aravan was born with the association of Arjun and Ulupi (the naga princess) when Arjuna was exiled for breaking the rule and he entered the palace when the Draupadi served his brother as wife. Aravan grew up in Nagaloka well protected by his mother. Being the son of two great warriors, Aravan grew up to be a great warrior himself. At the age of maturity, aravan wanted to reunite with his father Arjuna. On meeting with his adult son, Arjuna requests his assistance in the Kurukshetra war.

Aravan sacrifices himself in the war of Kurukshetra to confirm the victory in front of goddess Kali. Before the sacrifice, Aravan requests lord Krishna to grant him three boons.

As his first wish, he requested Krishna to grant him the boon of a heroic death on the battlefield, at the hands of a great hero. Aravan will not get to participate in the war and he did not want to deprive himself of the title of Veergati meaning heroic death.

The second wish was to see the full Kurukshetra war even after his death.

The third wish was that he did not want to die before getting married.

Krishna agreed to all the three wishes of Aravan but was unable to find a woman who wanted to marry aravan just to lead the rest of her life as a widow. But Krishna solves this dilemma by taking the form of Mohini the enchantress, Krishna as Mohini marries Aravan spending the night with him. While some people believe this marriage was consummated others lay a strong contradiction that Mohini abruptly departed after the marriage thus signifying the marriage was not consummated.

After aravan requested and he was granted his boons he was ready for the sacrifice. He

proceeds to the Kurukshetra battlefield, while Yudhishtira is worshipping goddess Kali in his hall of weapons aravan removes his chest plates and ornaments. He then cuts his body into 32 pieces. Aravan after being stripped of his flash has only his head and skeleton remaining. Krishna advised him to pray to the Naga king “*Adi Shesha*” his grandfather and father of *ulupi*. *Adi-shisha* coils himself around aravan, becomes his flesh and restores his body to fulfil his first wish. Alambusha was who defeated and killed aravan. Alambusha prays to lord Garuda (the eagle of Vishnu) and defeats Adi-Shesha naga. Adi- Shesha escapes in the fear of Garuda thus leaving aravan unprotected and ultimately leading Alambusha to behead the weekend aravan.

To fulfill his second wish, lord Krishna kept the head of Aravan alive now aravan was able to watch the entire war through his severed head. It is mentioned that lord Krishna also mourns as a widow after the death of aravan.

It is from Aravan’s lineage after his association with Krishna’s female form Mohini that the transgender is said to have been born and that’s why transgender or Kinnaras are also called Aravanis in Tamil. That is why in certain parts of southern India there is an 18-day Aravani festival which is mostly held by the transgender community.

The Aravan Festival is celebrated by the Kuttantavar cult and the Draupadi cult of south India. Both the cults are originated in South India. The Kuttantavar cult might represent the original Tamil tradition regarding Aravan and the Draupadi cult has developed traditions and rituals of its own. The aravan festival is an eighteen-day-long festival and the Mahabharata forms the central theme of the festival. The highlight of the festival happens to be the marriage of aravan. The transgenders who gather here are the self-proclaimed brides of the Aravan. They claim themselves to be the incarnation of Krishna, who was a man trapped inside a woman’s body. When he seduced aravan. The first fifteen days of the festival pass in dancing, singing and merry-making the transgender putting up colorful and lively performances. All through the eighteen days a gigantic head of aravan is made and painted with the greatest care within the temple precincts. On the seventeenth day, the priest does special poojas to the idol of Aravan and he ties the mangalsutra around the neck of all the transgenders present there. They are now the wives of Aravan just for the night. A gala feast I organized which is followed by a night full of merrymaking, laughter and dance. The gigantic head of aravan is mounted on a chariot and taken around the village. At the dawn of the eighteenth day, the air is ripped by sharp wails as aravan is beheaded, widowing all his one-day old wives. Following the tradition, the widows of Aravan rip the mangalsutra from their necks, tear flowers out of their hair, throw away ornaments and remove all cosmetics from their faces, wailing loudly, beating their chests, just like Krishna mourned for aravan. They drag themselves behind the separated head of aravan which is later cremated, bringing the festival to an official end.

The Aravan Festival has gained recognition in recent years as a cultural event that highlights the rights and identities of transgender individuals. It draws attention to the struggles faced by this community and serves as a platform for raising awareness about their issues. The festival's celebration may vary from region to region, but its core theme of celebrating the marriage of Aravan remains consistent.

The *Kuttantavar* Cult is mainly focused on the two boons, one he does not want to die Virgin as he wants the glorious death of the warrior. Krishna solves this dilemma by taking the form of Mohini and marrying the aravan. The second boon, he wants to witness the entire war and Krishna allows to him witness the entire war through his severed head. He is also known as Kuttantavar the slayer of *Kuttacuran* and the temple is dedicated to him in Koovagam, Tamil Nadu.

The Draupadi cult focus on the Draupadi the very important and crucial character of Mahabharata. Festivals in Draupadi temples always involve two points of rituals, the Recital or Acting of a part of the Mahabharata story and the fire walking ceremony. Themes like Arjuna's penance, Draupadi's marriage, the killing of Bakasura and Duryodhana and Aravan's sacrifice are often enacted as a part of the festival. The aravan festival is also a part of Draupadi festival. The "*Terukkuttu*" is a folk drama and street play performed on the Sacrifice of Aravan. This play happens at night in the local language and their aim and inspiration are as much religious as literary or artistic. During this festival aravan's wedding and death are performed.



Aravan's story is unique because it involves a gender transformation. When faced with the prospect of imminent death in battle, he desires to experience material love before his sacrifice. To fulfil this wish lord Krishna transforms into the female form of Mohini and marries him. This act of gender transformation is a central element of the story and is often celebrated for its depiction of fluidity in gender identity.

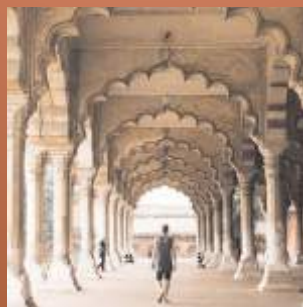
The Aravan festival serves as a cultural and religious expression of identity, acceptance, and unity within the transgender community. It's important to note the interpretations of the Aravan story and its significance may vary among different communities and individuals. While some view it as a positive symbol of acceptance and inclusivity, others may not attach the same significance to the story. Cultural, religious and regional variations play a significant role in shaping how this myth is understood and celebrated.

Deepali is pursuing a Master's in Conservation Preservation and Heritage Management from the School of Heritage Research and Management, Dr B.R. Ambedkar University, Delhi.

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BUILT HERITAGE



Public Archaeology: A Case Study of Purana Qila, New Delhi

- Aditi Thakur

The term 'Public Archaeology' is a relatively new concept. It was coined by Dr. C.R. McGimsey in his Book 'Public Archaeology' in 1972. Public Archaeology is "concerned with any area of archaeological activity that interacted or had the potential to interact with the public – the vast majority of which, for a variety of reasons, know little about archaeology as an academic subject" (Hall,1999: 147). Describing that the use of the term 'public archaeology' was inclusive, Thomas F. King (1983) writes that 'there is no such thing as "private archaeology." Knowledge of (the) past is essential to our survival, and the right to that knowledge is a human birthright.... It follows that no individual may act in a manner such that the public right to knowledge of the past is unduly endangered or destroyed. In summarising the meaning of public archaeology, Matsuda and Okamara (2011) say, 'It primarily meant archaeologists' efforts to record and preserve archaeological remains that were being threatened by development works, on behalf and with the support of the public .'The scope of public archaeology is enormous in terms of laying down policies for the conservation, preservation, documentation, and management of archaeological heritage, education, and dissemination of the general information of the public and scholars at large, spreading awareness among the public on the necessities of preserving the past and their importance, managing the various activities related to the enormous public opinion emerge out of certain excavations and thoughts of our past (e-pathsala: Indian Culture).

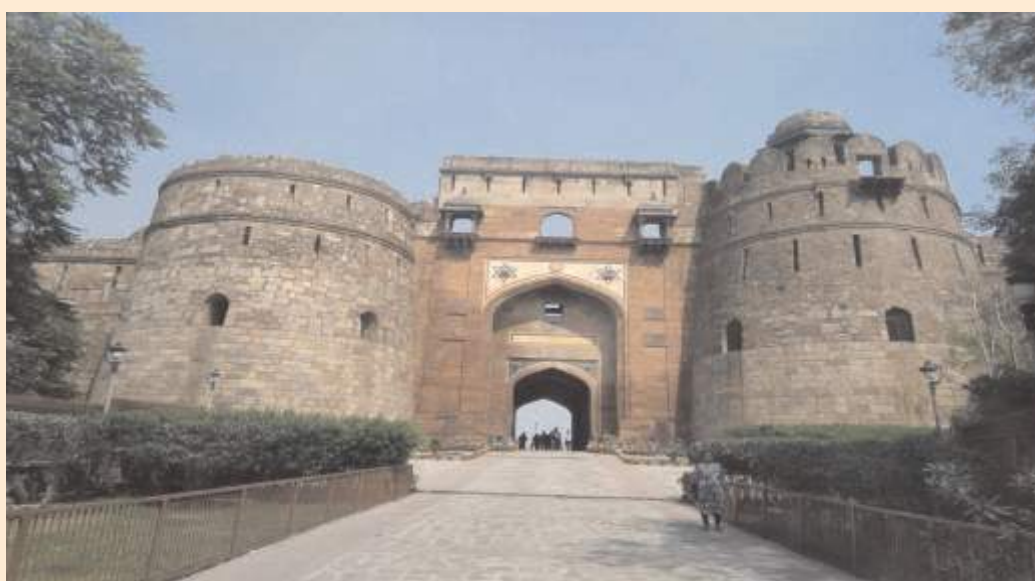


Image 1: Bada Darwaza, Purana Qila, New Delhi; Source: Self © Aditi Thakur

Public Archaeology aims to create a link between academic research and fieldwork while also assisting in developing a public connection to their past. In the process, it also encourages the preservation of archaeological sites and ruins. It also aims to pique the public's interest by disseminating what archaeologists have discovered through books, brochures, catalogues, museum exhibitions, seminars and workshops, TV shows, Internet websites, and publicly accessible excavations, among other things. In other words, Public Archaeology's job is to bridge

the gap between the public and the field of archaeology (Oldham, 2018) by means of wider outreach and involvement of the public in the archaeological exploration, excavation, conservation, preservation, restoration, interpretation and communication processes.

This topic was chosen due to the fact that Archaeology, in general, and Public Archaeology, in particular, have the need and potential to involve the public in the field of archaeology because archaeology unearths human pasts, and the general public must know their past through material remains either in situ overground or underground or even underwater.

The present topic, 'Public's Archaeology: A Case Study of Purana Qila, New Delhi,' is intended to understand public archaeology. It also tries to explore the relationship between archaeology and, more specifically, field archaeology with the larger public. In other words, an effort will be made here to understand the ordinary person's perception of archaeology. Also, an attempt is made here to evaluate the role of popular media in the spread of public awareness about archaeology.

Through the present case study, i.e., the latest excavations at Purana Qila, New Delhi, the purpose is to learn more about the relevance of Public Archaeology in contemporary times with the help of common people who visited the site during the time of Purana Qila's latest excavation in 2023.

Archaeology at Purana Qila

Purana Qila is located in southeast Delhi on the Mathura Road near Delhi Zoo. In the mid-16th century, Sher Shah Sur seems to have razed to the ground the city of Dinpanah, built by Mughal Emperor Humayun, and on the same site, he raised the citadel of Purana-Qila. Humayun's library, Sher Manadal, is also located there. In the year 1540, Sher Shah Suri defeated Humayun and renamed it Shergarh Fort. He built many more buildings, such as the Qila-I-Kuhna Mosque, in the fort complex. Thus, Purana Qila and its environs are considered the 6th city of Delhi.

As per local legends, the region where Purana Qila currently stands was the site of Indraprastha, the capital of the Pandavas in the Great Epic Mahabharata. The epic initially referred to the region as that of Khandavprastha, a remote and undiscovered land granted to the Pandavas on the western bank of the Yamuna River. Based on the Mahabharata and oral tradition, the Pandavas are believed to have changed the wilderness into a flourishing city and called it Indraprastha. That is why Purana Qila is often called 'Pandavon ka Qila.' Archaeologists tried to confirm this claim based on the local traditions, epics, and legends.

Under the aegis of the Archaeological Survey of India, Prof. B.B Lal excavated the area in 1954-55 and 1969-1973. Lal had set out at the time to excavate numerous sites associated with the Mahabharata, and excavations at Purana Qila were part of that exercise. During excavations, archaeologists have revealed the existence of a stratigraphy belonging to 8 different periods, which is believed to be from the 4th century BCE onwards to the 19th and 20th centuries CE, confirming the archaeological site's long and uninterrupted existence for centuries.

Dr. Vasant Swarnkar of the Archaeological Survey of India carried out the current excavation in Purana Qila. He also led the previous two excavations in 2013-14 and 2017-18 and found artefacts from the Mauryas, Shunga, Kushanna, Gupta, Rajput, Delhi Sultanate, and Mughal eras. The goal of the latest excavations was to extend and protect the trench excavated in previous years (2013-14 and 2017-18). Finds include Painted Gray Ware dating to 900 BC, as

well as the Mauryas to Shunga, Kushana, Gupta, Rajput, Sultanate, and Mughal Pottery. The other finds include sickles, knives, terracotta objects, kiln bricks, beads, seals, and other antiquities that are now displayed in the archaeological museum in the fortress complex.

Further excavations also unearthed the remains of a 900-year-old 'Vaikuntha Vishnu' that date back to the Rajput period, a terracotta plaque of 'Goddess Gaja Lakshmi' coming from the Gupta period, 'the structural remains' from a 2,500-year-old terracotta ring well from the Mauryan period, and a clearly established four-room complex from the Sunga-Kushan period that dates back to 2,300 years ago, along with beads, seals, copper coins and a bone needle.

Public Opinion about the Archaeological Excavation at Purana Qila

To elicit public opinion about the ongoing archaeological excavations at Purana Quila, a survey of visitors to the excavated site was conducted as per the following parameters:

The survey was conducted of 41 individuals of different age groups who visited Purana Qila in April 2023. Twenty-one of these participants were male, while the rest were females. Ten persons were in their teens, 15 were in their 20s, and four were in their 30s, while the 40s and 50s group consisted of 6 people each. Also, most people who visit here are inhabitants of Delhi and nearby areas.



Image 2: Humayun Gate, Purana Qila, New Delhi; Source: Self © Aditi Thakur

The sample size was divided into two groups, Group A and Group B. Group A belongs to the group of people who have visited Purana Quila only once, while Group B is for participants who have visited this place more than once. Group A has 27 individuals, and Group B has the rest, 14 individuals.

The result of the survey is as follows:

People of both groups, A and B, knew its name as Purana Qila, and they were ambiguous about its detailed history and the rulers associated with it. They mentioned the Mughal ruler Humayun and the Afghan ruler Sher Shah Suri, and according to them, this is a Mughal Era monument. That means they had some knowledge of the history of the place. People of both groups A and B got this information in two ways, either through books and literature or newspaper articles or through talking about the place with friends and family. In group A, 7 out of 27 people knew about the excavation. And in the case of group B, 3 out of 14 people had some thoughts about it. That means 10 out of 41 people had some idea that excavation work was being conducted here in

Purana Qila. The views of these 10 participants are that various pottery and other antiquities of the Mauryan to Mughal era were unearthed. At the same time, the rest did not have any idea about it. So, most of them had visited Purana Qila for leisure and to have fun with friends rather than to know about the place.

Also, for the participants in group B, 12 out of 14 participants found Purana Qila to have changed for the better, and it is well maintained, better conserved, and preserved. At the same time, some of them on this visit noticed that the complex even contains a museum that displays antiquities related to excavation. Meanwhile, 2 participants of group B could not find what changes took place during their visits. As participants for Group A, as mentioned earlier, they only visited the place once, so this question did not apply to them. And most importantly, all of the participants have acknowledged that they would recommend others to visit this place.

The conclusion that can be made from these observations is that the general public might know a little bit about the history of the place, but they need to gain more knowledge concerning archaeological excavations and the findings of the site.

Therefore, numerous initiatives could be taken for the purpose of creating awareness in the general public's mind concerning the archaeological excavations at the site. For instance, well-educated and trained guides could be employed to provide tourist information at Purana Qila, and more importantly, guides who have knowledge of archaeological excavations here at Purana could also be employed. Other than that, what more could be done is to increase heritage walks around that place or have workshops and seminars about not just the historical value but also the archaeological and heritage value of the site to disseminate awareness among the people about Purana Qila. Finally, other aspects, like more drinking water and toilet facilities, could be provided and maintained; also, it is equally important to have facilities for navigation and a proper place to rest during the summer season while properly preserving, conserving, and managing the site. All these steps could help in giving people more knowledge about the area and connecting them with their history and heritage.

Conclusion

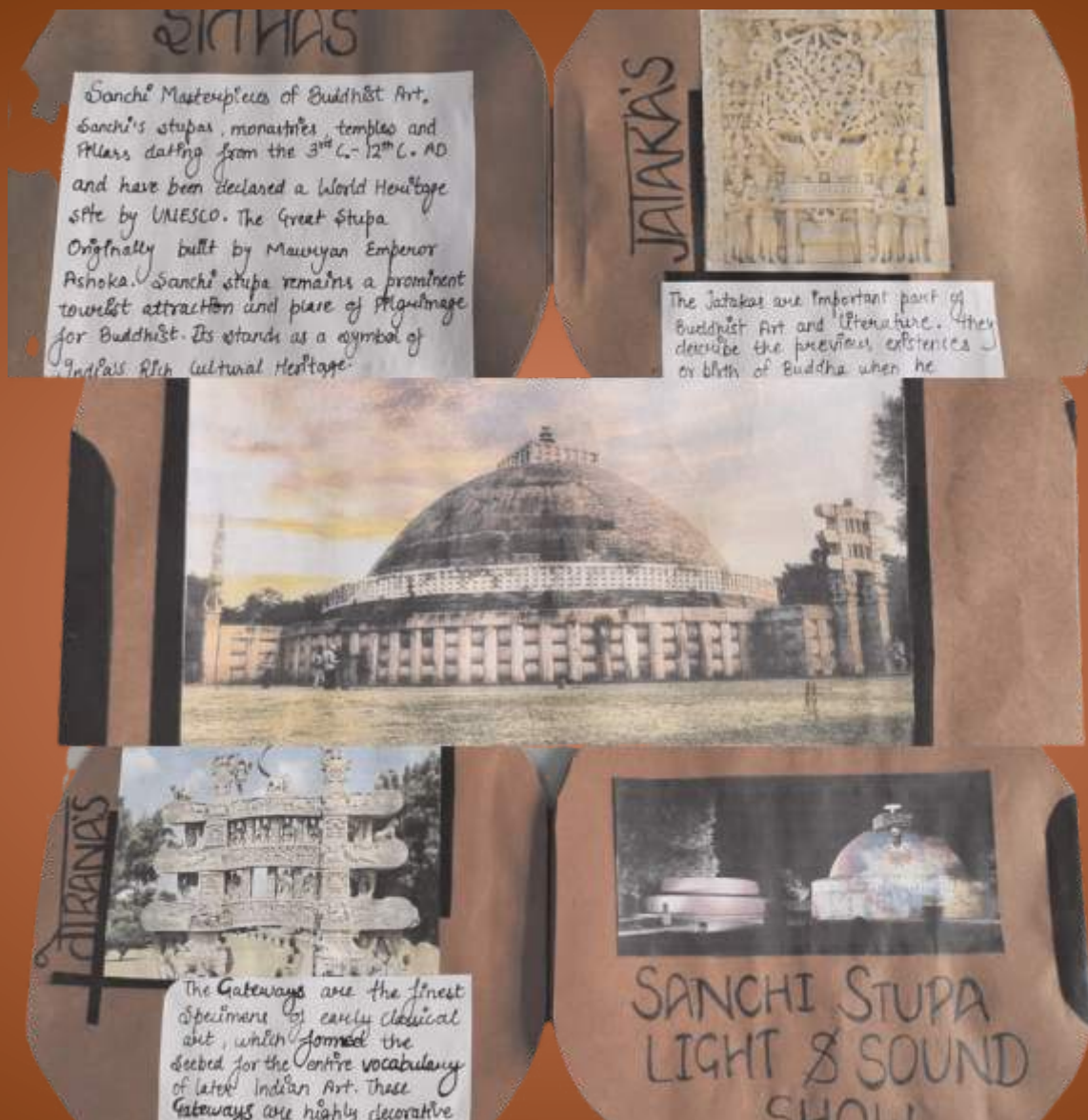
Public awareness is an integral part of Public Archaeology. For that, collaboration with the local communities involving numerous urban local bodies, schools, museums, and other similar institutions is essential. Qualified 'Archaeological Volunteers' could also be employed from the local communities volunteering in archaeological excavations, field surveys, artefact conservation, interpretation of archaeological sites, the dissemination of research findings, etc. As stated earlier, one of the main goals of public archaeology is to bridge the gap between archaeologists and the wider public. It seeks to share knowledge, create dialogue, and foster mutual understanding and appreciation for the archaeological heritage of a region or community by involving the public in archaeological activities. It encourages active learning, promotes critical thinking, and connects individuals meaningfully with their past. Public archaeology also addresses ethical concerns and challenges associated with preserving archaeological sites. Engaging local communities in the process promotes responsible and sustainable practices, ensuring the long-term preservation of cultural heritage. Public archaeology is crucial in democratising access to archaeological knowledge, fostering community engagement, and raising awareness about preserving our shared cultural heritage.

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Sanchi Tourism: A Brochure



About the Artist: Deepali is currently pursuing a Master's in Conservation Preservation and Heritage Management from the School of Heritage Research and Management, Dr B.R. Ambedkar University, Delhi.

Vikramshila Mahavihara: learning about a seat of learning

- Puja Kumari



Image 1: Vikramashila Mahavihara showing monastic cells and chaitya

Source: GoluRTRVlogs

Research objectives

The three major *Mahaviharas* of the ancient world, namely the *Taxilla*, the *Nalanda* and the *Vikramshila Mahavihara* are situated in the northern stretch between the *Taxila* region of modern-day Pakistan and the *Bihar* region of modern-day India. The establishment of the second *Mahavihara* i.e. *Nalanda Mahavihara* on the comparatively eastern side to that of *Taxilla* can be understood. Still, the establishment of a third *Mahavihara* i.e. *Vikramshila Mahavihara*, in between the area where the two *Mahaviharas* already existed, is quite unclear.

After the *Taxilla Mahavihara* was lost to Pakistan in the partition of India, *Bihar* is very fortunate that the remaining two prominent *Mahaviharas* of ancient times are located here. However, at the same time, it may not be wrong to say, that had it been located in some other state, its future would have been brighter and the *Vikramshila Mahavihara* would have been given the respect it deserves. Because *Nalanda Mahavihara* and the *Vikramshila Mahavihara* are located in the same state, a comparative study has been done to help understand the difference that existed in the ancient times and the partiality suffered by the latter in the present time.

Today, *Vikramshila Mahavihara* stands silent and overshadowed by the prominence of the *Nalanda Mahavihara*. The government, neither the state nor the centre, seems to be interested or making an effort in the conservation, development and marketing of the *Vikramshila Mahavihara* as an important historical site. The promises made during the past years, regarding its development seem mere lip service besides being a ruthless and insensitive political agenda.

My aim through this research project is to understand and find out the answers to the following questions that have caught my attention since childhood. The research also aims to understand the reasons that how selfish motives of the land allocation committee can be causing further delay in the execution of the proposed plan.

Why was a third *Mahavihara* established in the same zone while the two *Mahaviharas* were already present? What led to the choice of the spot where the *Vikramshila Mahavihara* was built? Was it a subsidiary organisation in comparison to *Nalanda Mahavihara* in ancient times?

Why did it suffer a fate of gradual decline after the attack by *Baktiyar Khilji* while the *Nalanda Mahavihara* bounced back stronger?

Why is it that one monument has all the spotlight, manpower and funds allocated to it while the other monument doesn't even seem to exist, even for local people?

The conservation efforts made so far for the excavated site of *Vikramshila Mahavihara*.

The personal motive of the committee appointed for selecting the land for setting up of *Vikramshila University* alongside the historical ruins and the reason for the delay.

How, on a personal level can the locals help to attract the attention of those interested in this unique monument?

Site of research

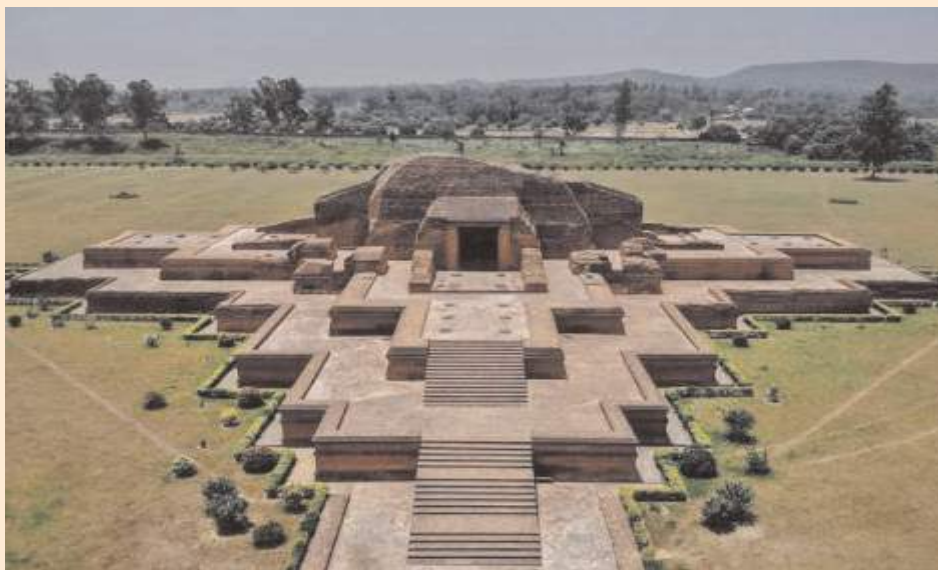


Image 2: Ruins of Vikramshila Mahavihara

Source: NewsBharati.com

Vikramshila Mahavihara was one of the three major *Mahaviharas* of the ancient times. It was built by a *Pala* ruler, *Dharampala* during the late 8th century or the early 9th century.

Three universities were built during the rule of the *Pala* Dynasty, namely- the *Odantaputri*, the *Somapura* and the *Vikramshila*. Among these three universities, *Vikramshila Mahavihara*

emerged as the most prominent and significant university besides the *Nalanda mahavihara* and the *Taxilla*.

The *Vikramshila Mahavihara* is located in *Antichak* village in the *Bhagalpur* district of *Bihar*. The site was very difficult to locate as the description mentioned in ancient texts could not be traced accurately. Finally, it was *B P Sinha*, who located a mound in the village of *Antichak* and supervised the excavation from 1960 to 1969. Later, the excavation was undertaken by the Archaeological Survey of India, Patna Circle from 1972 to 1982.

The *Mahavihara* is located on the foothills of the *Raajmahal* hills with the river *Ganga* flowing on one side. The main aim of the establishment of the site was to spread Buddhism as most of the *Pala* rulers themselves were followers of Buddhism. The *Mahavihara* was a prominent seat of learning and the teachings at this university majorly revolved around Buddhism in general and *Vajrayana* in particular. The *Vajrayana* Buddhism was practised by the *tantric* teachers of the *Mahavihara*. This subject included the art of witchcraft wizardry (necromancy) and black magic. It was generally practised in secrecy. Other subjects like metaphysics, philosophy, grammar, and logic, were taught at the *Mahavihara*. The Tibetan sources mention that the *Mahavihara* was an important Buddhist place and in one religious assembly it held, it witnessed the attendance of around 8000 Buddhist monks.

The site however is not fully excavated. The excavated portion of the site consists of *chaityas* as well as the *viharas*. The probability of a library-like structure could have been there, though not fully confirmed. Besides, the boundary wall of the *Mahavihara* also could not be traced.

The *chaitya* is two-storey and in a cruciform shape. The *chaitya* has pavilions which are projected and four shrines are facing the four cardinal directions. Out of the four chambers, three chambers had yielded the image of Buddha and *Avalokiteshwara* during the time of excavation but presently no trace of it can be found. The image of Buddha was life-size and made in *Bhumisparsha mudra*. It was in the northern chamber. The eastern as well as the northern chamber had the image of *Avalokiteshwara* and he was shown in *padmasana-mudra*.

The monastic settlement is quadrangular in plan. The east and the west sides of the *chaitya* have yielded evidence of 208 monastic cells along with a *veranda*. The cells had provision for accommodating 3 monks in one room. Also, number of other underground cells that might have been used by the monks for meditation. These underground cells were the unique features of *Vikramshila Mahavihara* and were not found in any other universities that existed during that time.

The probable structure of the library is located to the southeast of the *Mahavihara* and is rectangular. The scholars believe that the structure was used as a library for the manuscripts.

Research findings

Vikramshila Mahavihara vs Nalanda Mahavihara-The works of Fa Hein mention that in the entire period when the *Nalanda mahavihara* was functional, there had never been a case of even a single revolt. Meanwhile, in the *Vikramshila mahavihara*, there has been mention of

conflict between the tribal peasants who provided for the *maha vihara's* upkeep and the administrators of the *mahavihara*.

As per the report of 2018, the grand structures were not consolidated even after the excavation. Due to this, the effect of natural and man-made actions has caused severe deterioration of the excavated ruins. It took more than three decades for the ASI to decide to provide initial preservation to the site which should have been done after the excavation itself.

At the request of the State Government, the area of land needed for the project was reduced from 500 acres to 200 acres and even then, the state government could not find a suitable piece of land in 9 years. The lands namely- *Parashuramchak Mauja* and *Ekdara Maura* were initially passed by the central team which came for the survey. But in February 2022, the newly appointed Chancellor of the South Bihar Central University Kameshwar Singh rejected a land which was passed by the central team on the grounds of unsuitability and rather he proposed another land. The issue is now that the area selected by Kameshwar Singh is inhabited by 50 families belonging to the Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST). Moreover, it is a protected area. The state government seems to silently support this decision, which raises questions about the intention of the State Government for the project.

Mr Jaiswal, head of Vikramshila Nagrik Samiti organization (the sole organization which is constantly asserting for development of the *Vikramshila Mahavihara*) believes that the funds for the development of other sites are diverted to the sites of *Nalanda* and it is because the Chief Minister of *Bihar*, Nitish Kumar contests election from the *Nalanda* constituency. It is interesting to note that the monuments of the area in and around *Gaya* regularly hold various large-scale events involving famous personalities to assert the importance of the monument which in turn leads to its development and upkeep.

Contributions in the field of archaeology/conservation and heritage studies

The location of the *Vikramshila Mahavihara* in itself was a very challenging task but the efforts put in by the archaeologists in locating it helps us understand how ancient texts can guide us and why it is important to protect and conserve ancient monuments as well as the texts. The challenges in locating the site also give us a view of how fast the earth's geography is changing and why is it important to protect and know one's past for a brighter future.

Indeed, *Vikramshila* does not have such a strong connection with Buddha and it was more *Vajrayana-centric*. Still, it can also not be denied that one theory proposed by ASI itself is, that the existence of *Vikramshila mahavihara* was due to the decline in the quality of scholarship of the *Nalanda mahavihara*. So it cannot be denied that the *Vikramshila mahavihara* had its importance in ancient times. Also, the fact that *Nalanda* functioned for almost 800 years while *Vikramshila* had a life span of only 400 years, cannot undermine the role played by the *Vikramshila mahavihara* in the propagation of Buddhism, its contribution to the field of knowledge, produced great scholars and at time, even supervising its control over *Nalanda mahavihara* for its smooth and proper functioning.

A monument is not just a brick-and-mortar or mud structure. It is something that the local people relate themselves with, find their identity in it, take pride in it and at the same time,

cherish it. A historically important gem has stood the test of time and has witnessed the evolution of the universe and mankind. It holds in its silence, great secrets which at times, we cannot even think of. The progress made by men has its roots in the past. Therefore, to understand ourselves, our ancestors, and our past in a better way, we need not only to know the past but also conserve and preserve it for future generations because these are those treasures which once lost, can never be compensated for and whose loss will be a loss for the entire mankind on earth.

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Graffiti On Chalcolithic Pottery **A Study Of Excavated Sites Of Haryana And Western Uttar Pradesh**

- By Ankit Chanchal

Graffiti is a popular form of artistic expression and conveys reactions to social concerns affecting society. Indeed, it has become a movement in contemporary society. However, if we dive into its origins, we find various other meanings and devious interpretations. It becomes interesting for us to know what would have been the meaning of this artistic expression in the early days and the meaning later on, it has acquired today. To comprehend its evolution and significance, we must first obtain its definition. The accepted definition of graffiti will aid in our comprehension of its present context, and a more expressive definition will enable us to comprehend the various motivations for its centuries-long widespread use and application. Graffiti is derived from an Italian word, "*graffito*," postures scratched, and has a Greek root meaning "write." Oxford Dictionary defined graffiti as "ancient inscriptions roughly scratched and not properly carved". In the Archaeological context, these scratched marks occur in pottery and are also found occasionally on other materials like terracotta, stone, metal, and bones. Graffiti is often written by a casual hand rather than a trained scribe. It may be a sign/symbol borrowed from a former script or an ideogram, abbreviation, numeral, or random mark expressing self or mood. The earliest graffiti marks are alleged to be potter's or owner's logo expressing ownership and are presumed pre-runners to a tradition of writing and scripts. Graffiti retains essential and unknown information about its users on a comparably neglected medium. It offers tremendous scope for an improved investigation into issues like the script and chrono-cultural trajectories of the culture. Many graffiti marks are inscribed on the pottery from the Neolithic period to Chalcolithic assemblage. Graffiti marks in the Indian context appeared concretely during the Neolithic, Pre/early Harappan times and continued successively in Harappan, Chalcolithic, Iron Age, and Early Historical cultures. Graffiti on pottery has been executed commonly in post-firing conditions and occasionally in pre-firing conditions and has broadly been divided into two categories: geometric or naturalistic designs and expression of man-made objects. Although scholars have put forth numerous interpretations and hypotheses, comprehending graffiti's meaning is exceedingly challenging.

Since Branfill and Yazdani first observed graffiti on pottery, researchers have proposed several recommendations to identify graffiti marks. Over time, the occurrence of graffiti signs/symbols has become a non-event, and these have been dismissed as having no meaning at all ever since the discovery of the Indus script, which consisted of as many as 419 signs occurring on seals and had drawn the attention of the scholars from various countries to consider their decipherment. Scholars rejected even the ligatured graffiti discovered at Savanadurga and Sanur as early as 1881 and 1952, respectively, because it had no bearing on the writing system of our ancestors. However, S.R. Rao and a few others who engaged themselves seriously in deciphering the Indus script have noted the Sanur graffiti's relevance to our ancestors' writing system. Mahadevan has expressed reservations about identifying the Sanur graffiti as signs or letters with any definite phonetic value. He emphasised the urgent need for a concordance of graffiti from all over India, which could provide some clue as to the nature of the sign's composition of the Indus script and their probable source of origin, evolution, and meaning.

Graffiti marks have been studied in the Indian context by various scholars under four main themes, which are as follows:

- Potter Marks
- Owner Marks
- Graffiti precursor of Script (Specifically for Indus script and Early and Tamil Brahmi)
- Graffiti as Magic or Ritualistic Marks

B.B.Lal (1962) made a comparative study of the graffiti of different cultures of South India and North India and observed cultural similarities in all these graffiti. Lal hypothesised that 85% of Harappan-Chalcolithic symbols had counterparts in Iron Age culture and that roughly 89% of Megalithic symbols had parallels in either the Harappan culture or that could be compared with the pottery marks used by the Central Indian Chalcolithic societies.

S.R.Rao (1982) classified graffiti into two categories: basic signs and auxiliary marks while researching the Harappan script. He went on to categorise the graffiti into simple and complex signs. While compound signs rely on basic signs to arise, basic signs are signs that occur on their own.

S.Gurumurthy (1999) coined the term '*Ligatured Graffiti*.' He observed that this Ligatured graffiti was later transformed into a script. Gurumurthy believes that the potsherds, having graffiti, were a recorded document.

Similar work has been done at the Rakhigarhi site concerning the description and classification of graffiti specific to the site. According to Amendra Nath, graffiti was associated with magic or sanctimonious rituals. He provided a list of 163 graffiti marks on the Rakhigarhi pottery and divided them into the following:

1. Marks engraved randomly
2. Marks engraved with some objective
 - a. Potters mark
 - b. Artistic signs
 - c. Signs having resemblance to Harappan script

M. Acharya and J.S. Khatri noticed 194 potsherds with graffiti from Kunal Excavation (Archarya & Khatri,2005). They have classified them into four groups:

- i. 36 different signs were adopted by the Mature Harappans in their writing script.
- ii. 8 groups of two or three Mature Harappan writing characters.
- iii. 23 signs in the form of geometrical patterns.
- iv. 26 other designs and signs that do not fall into the above groups.

Understanding the direction and technique by which these graffiti marks were executed is imperative—through the graffiti marks obtained from Kalibanga, B.B. Lal (1975) asserted that the direction of its execution was from right to left. The early graffiti marks were thought to be of owner or potter marks, but because these early potter signs were used for a long time and even after writing was invented, some scholars suggested that there is no connection or correlation between them and later writing (Kenoyer,2006,2020) Microscopic analysis shows that the graffiti was executed under two different conditions: Pre-firing and Post-firing. Pre-firing graffiti has thick, flat, deep cuts into the outer layers of the vessels or sherds, while post-firing graffiti is

very dull, thin, and feeble because these were executed on comparatively harder surface, being baked/fired. Although graffiti is found on full pots or vessels and on hundreds of broken pottery fragments, the two should not always be seen as belonging to the same group. They belong to two different categories. In the former case, potters scratched graffiti or hieroglyphs into the yard at the behest of the owners. But the second category offers much more than that. Another issue to consider is whether the graffiti was merely carved on the potsherd or was made on a complete vessel too. The maximum percentage of evidence of graffiti we have found from several excavations in the area so far has been found on potsherds only. Two pots that were excavated from the sites of Bhagwanpura and Rakhigarhi provide the answer to this query. These two pots are intact in condition, and graffiti is on them. While researching graffiti, one needs to look into the area of the pot where these marks have been executed. Graffiti is mainly found on the outer portion of the pot, including their rim, neck, shoulder, belly, and base. All these parts have been found covered with graffiti, and marks also found on the lids. The style of displaying the graffiti varies from vessel to vessel, from site to site, depending upon the nature of the site and the utilitarian values of the vessels and their association.

Researchers have classified and explained graffiti into categories, including geometric or naturalistic marks. Still, these marks are further classified into other categories like potter marks, identification marks, marks related to Harappans, Brahmi script, marks found on Punch Marks Coins, abstract marks, artistic expression and marks related to auspicious and ritualistic aspects.

Scholars have noticed the connection between graffiti and some early scripts, especially the Indus or Brahmi scripts. They believe that the developed forms of the symbols we find in graffiti have been found in the script—various pre-Harappan, post-Harappan Chalcolithic, and South Indian Iron Age graffiti sites support this fact. The connection between graffiti and Brahmi has been highlighted by several scholars, most notably Yadjani (1997), Gurumurthy (1999), K. S. Ramachandran and more recently K Rajan (2015). Out of a total of 513 prominent graffiti, there are about 72 which have been picked based on similarity with Brahmi letters of either North Indian or South Indian characters. To preserve some sense of individuality, the potter made identification marks on specific sections of each pot. It was mostly made on the rim and shoulder or on the underside of the base. According to scholars, many potters came from different regions and worked together in one kiln to produce pottery. As a result, to preserve the distinctive character of the pottery they produced, potters employed various marking techniques, such as signs and symbols, which served as a visual cue of their individuality. A second interpretation, these marks indicate the pots' quality and functionality, as well as a kind of trademark, individual ownership, and registration mark. The comparative study reveals numerous graffiti similar to those of the symbols. There are still a few which could be traced on the Punch marked coins but slightly modified with the addition of short strokes and pellets either at the end of their arms or disposed slightly on the exterior of such graffiti and reproduced as symbols on the coins.

In our present work on graffiti, we studied 419 marks obtained from different sites in Haryana and Western Uttar Pradesh. A maximum number of 194 graffiti marks were observed from Kunal, followed by 163 from Rakhigarhi, 21 from Girawad, 22 from Bhgwanpura (all in Haryana) and 19 from Lal Qila in Western UP. Most of these are post-firing marks, whereas the pre-firing marks are minimal. Based on the published reports, it can be concluded that out of the

total graffiti marks from both areas, only 12 graffiti marks are such, which could be associated with the marks of the pre-firing stage.

It is conceivable to view graffiti as a crucial criterion for comprehending past societies' socio-cultural or religious dimensions and economic aspects. Three hundred eighty-three potsherds from both areas from different sites were analysed, and the results indicated that over 95% of the graffiti had been executed during the post-fired stage, while there was a notably smaller amount of pre-fired graffiti. A comparative study approach will be more insightful in comprehending the significance of graffiti. For instance, the recently found Palaeolithic rock painting from Manger Mani in the Aravalli Hill Range of Haryana resembles one of the geometric graffiti found from Kunal. This points towards the continuity of such marks from very early days and further provides scope for a comparative study of rock paintings and engravings. We should not compare graffiti with scripts merely. While studying graffiti in concerned areas, we find marking significant on many potsherds, not other terracotta objects. In this regard, it may be suggested that pottery was perhaps the best choice of the people for graffiti-making because of its sturdiness and mass use. Being a vital artefact, it is also easy to carry. For this reason, pottery was chosen for graffiti as this medium was the best way to communicate ideas. Studying graffiti is fundamental not only for understanding the writing tradition but also for comprehending the social, cultural, and ritual complexities of the society that existed in the past.



Pie charts showing percentages of Pre-firing and Post firing Marks



291



289



88



1096



362



335



245



1090



959

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A comparative study of Iron Age Burials of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh

- Kritika Joshi

Christopher Marlowe has rightly said, "All places are alike, and every earth is fit for burial" No matter what life a person leads, death is the great equaliser. All burials may not be as extravagant as some, but they are burials nonetheless, and every burial, even though it may not fit the preconceived notion of a burial site, might have the potential to yield important information about the past.

Burying the deceased has been a way for people to express their spiritual beliefs since ancient times. Some people relied on it as their only means of keeping their ritual and symbolic ties to their ancestors. The customs associated with the burials evolved from "single and multiple cave burials" to genuine tombs and graveyards. Many improvements and alterations have been made throughout the years, and while there are some similarities among them, each culture has developed its own distinctive style with time. Although it may seem quite foreign to our way of thinking to leave often precious commodities for the dead, the goal was to ensure that the goods would be available in the afterlife, even though most items were perishable.

The burials preserve the material culture and provide significant information about the past. This paper tries to uncover different methods as well as rituals performed during disposing of the dead by the Himalayan people during Iron Age. The paper aims to investigate and compare the Iron Age burial sites along with the understanding of the intangible aspect of the heritage associated with them. Through this research, attention has been given to the documentation of burial sites of the two states, which are lesser known, and some of them are permanently destroyed due to negligence, urban growth, and lack of awareness.

In archaeology, burials are generally associated with the Megalithic culture which is composed of two Greek words *megas* (huge) and *lithos* (stone). This culture includes the custom of building massive stone monuments on grave sites possibly for ceremonial purposes and it was the primary

characteristic of megaliths. These megaliths are categorised as celtic, dolmens, dolmen cists, slabbed cists, port holed cists, cairns, pit circles, urns, cromlechs, menhirs and cave burials. Sometimes these are also made up of wood.



Figure 1. Zoba was found from Malari
Note. (1987), *Trans Himalayan Burials*,
Vis-a-Vis Malari: An Assessment.

In terms of the Uttarakhand and Himachal regions, it can be noted that not much work has been done to uncover the ancient relics. Some archaeologists

have recently carried out their investigations in this region bringing to light many significant aspects of archaeological importance. The excavations of burials in Uttarakhand, reflects concrete evidence of their socio-cultural practices and understanding of death. Many historians and archaeologists have uncovered artefacts belonging to Megalithic

culture from Malari, Ladyura, Sanana, Baseri, and other minor locations of Uttarakhand. The only excavated cave burial site Malari, falls in the India's Higher Himalaya Region. Malari and the area around the hamlet are significant due to the proximity of the Tibetan border and the region's historical significance as a hub for trade. The main discoveries in these caves included two full pots, a copper bead, a few burnt pottery fragments, and bones. Various types of pottery, including bowls, spouted pottery, pedestal pottery, high-neck pots, and some funeral items made up of gold, were discovered in earlier discoveries. Ladyura (Almora) excavated by the ASI revealed some cists in the road cutting.

As Iron ore is accessible, the entire burial area is a lateritic zone. It suggests that people had the knowledge of iron smelting. The burials revealed fragments of human bones, pottery, and funerary goods. Two types of burials - Dolmenoid cist and urn burial were discovered in Sanana and Baseri (Almora). The fact that every cist-chamber had a bouldery and a protective wall was a significant discovery. The majority of the burials contained minuscule fragments of human bone and teeth. However, the finding of disarticulated human bones, including two skulls, a femur, tibia, fibula, few isolated teeth and pieces of maxilla and mandible was significant. The discovery of both skulls side by side suggest that multiple burials were a common practice.



Figure 2. A gold mask at Malari
Note. (1987), Trans Himalayan Burials,
Vis-a-Vis Malari: An Assessment.

The exploration and excavation in Uttarakhand gives us the burial evidence in the form of human and animal skeleton, bones residuals, funerary offerings such as gold mask, pottery, and jewellery. The type of burials consisted of cave burial, dolmenoid cist and urn burials.

Sanana Baseri revealed an interesting feature. The soil analysis of the site reveals the reason behind the fragments of bones found at the site. These burials were excavated in the alluvial terraces which have moderate porosity, little humus, and are acidic by nature. It also suggests that the soil of mid-central Himalayan region is typically acidic in composition. The study demonstrates that, in contrast to habitation sites where it is abundant, phosphorus availability is limited in Himalayan region.

As far as Himachal is concerned, prehistoric settlements have been discovered in various parts. Recently, excavations have been done to uncover the Palaeolithic and Megalithic cultures in the region. Here, with the consideration of the Megalithic culture, the burial practices of this region gives us concrete evidence of the socio-cultural practices and people's understanding of death. This is evidenced by the excavation of burial sites that contained skeleton remains and funerary goods of various shapes and sizes. The present study of Spiti Valley sites focuses on several burial sites like Pomarang, Tashigang, Gue, Kibber, Lari, Poh, and Mane Gogma. All these sites have similar kinds of burial structures, consisting of pit and cist burials. They have similar kinds of red ware pottery and funerary goods also.



Figure 3. Spouted pot at Tashigang, Spiti
Note. (2017) A preliminary investigation of the burial sites at Spiti Valley in Himachal Pradesh, India



Figure 4. Skeleton found at Kibber
Note. 2017, A preliminary investigation of the burial sites at Spiti Valley in Himachal Pradesh, India

The site of Poh provided evidence for an entire skeleton, funerary goods comprising of copper and cist made up of wood. Another site, Mane Gogma, had a burial which was like a surface cave filled with pots and gold artifacts. However, it was devoid of skeletal remains or bones from the site. The archaeological evidence includes full pots, potsherds, beads and bone residuals. A few burial sites had wooden shafts in contrast to the normal cist burials. The discoveries in Spiti offer a starting point for an extensive interdisciplinary study to comprehend the adaptation and embodiment, habitation, burial customs, and trade networking of this region's early societies. The distinctive handmade red slip pots and cord-impressed pottery from the burial sites exhibit remarkable parallels, indicating very close connections between the people who used the various burial practices in the past in this mountainous region through trade networks and cultural contacts.

While doing the comparative study, we found a slight difference between their customs and beliefs. In the past, bodies were buried with artefacts such as utensils, coins, jewellery, and food and alcohol. However, since most of the population was not wealthy, they were often buried with utensils made of mud.

The locals' perspectives on dying and interment are intricate and deep today. It refers to transitioning to a new existence after death rather than the end of the world. They also think that the dead can speak to the living and provide comfort and direction to people who are grieving. While burying the dead, people opted for different methods. Some people had a rather odd way of burying their dead. They used to place the deceased person's body in a grave that had been dug out of the ground. The body was then covered with earth, and the earth was then topped with a big rock. It could be because of the wild creatures disturbing the body. They frequently conduct rituals to contact their ancestors' spirits. They dance and sing throughout these rituals. They also provide the spirits' food and drink. They think that by making these offerings, the spirits will be delighted and grant their requests. According to some personal interactions, the people in Spiti Valley still use some burial practices which were associated with

megalithic burials. The people living in the Valley believe in tantrism, and they use the bones of females, especially the femur bone, for the rituals. If the female dies while giving birth and has a stillbirth, then it is considered more acceptable as there is the power of two souls while performing rituals. The occurrence of femur bones found at some sites supports this point. The excavated remains unearthed from the regions revealed the prevalence of at least three types of burial practices, viz. (i) complete burial, (ii) fractional burial, and (iii) post-cremation burial.

Discussion and Conclusion

The study leads to the revelation of various sites and the associated tangible and intangible heritage in these two regions. While comparing the tangible evidence of both regions we get to see a lot of similarity. Though the form of burials vary, the funerary offerings are similar to an extent. By comparing the sizes of the burials found in the two regions, we get to know that they vary in size, which raises the question – “Are they Megaliths”? Megaliths are huge stone structures, while the structures found in the Himalayan region are not huge, and some of them are not even made of stone. However, we consider them a part of megalithic culture due to the association of materials and practices found in the sites to the megalithic culture.

The archaeological evidence includes human remains as well as funerary goods. Apart from that, the residual studies inside the pots are not done, which raises a question of whether the food items were offered in the pots or not and what food items were usually placed while burying the dead. The study shed light on the lesser-known megalithic sites of the Himalayas. It might be said that not much work has been done to uncover the archaeological facts from the various sections of the Uttarakhand and Himachal region. More extensive work may be undertaken to uncover some interesting aspects of the region, and the people who lived there. Although some reports are published by the ASI and the state universities, the field lacks research and scholarly works. Apart from that, due to urban growth and ignorance, the sites are in a dilapidated state and therefore needed immediate considerations.

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Marine Archaeology: Problems And Perspectives

- Tripti Soni

Research Objective

As human activities were not confined to only land boundaries, it is not possible to reconstruct human history by research and excavations on land only. Despite systematic explorations in different parts of the world, a clear picture of a long and varied past could not be drawn, and many gaps remained. Some of these research gaps can be supplemented with careful investigation of the artifacts hidden in the depths of water bodies. The following article focuses on a theoretical understanding of marine archaeology, accompanied by a special reference to Dwarka.

Introduction

Underwater Archaeology (Tripathi, 1996 pp. 203–210) is a highly scientific and interdisciplinary subject devoted to discovering, excavating, studying, and conserving archaeological remains in different humid environments. Research and study of submerged ports and wrecks are only two among many other aims of underwater archaeology. It also studies the development of shipping and seafaring, transoceanic trade and cultural contacts, unfavourable effects of the marine environment, sea level fluctuation and coastal erosion, etc. It requires the active cooperation of oceanographers, oceanologists, scientists, and technologists with modern developments in their respective fields. Data produced by underwater archaeological studies are of cultural, educational, and scientific value.



Figure 1: Marine archaeologist examining a shipwreck

The great importance of the sea for humankind was realised centuries ago, and ancient Indians called it ‘ratnakara,’ the bestower of wealth. The idea of scanning the sea for obtaining valuables is evident in the ancient concept of ‘samudra manthan’, the churning of the ocean, in Indian mythology (Raghunathan, 1976, pp. 18-48). Besides great wealth, “Blue Continents” also contains precious material evidence of the human past in various forms. Modern archaeologists

in the later half of the twentieth century also realised the importance of blue continents in reconstructing human history, leading to the development of underwater archaeology. The importance of underwater archaeology was realized several decades ago, and as early as in the 6th five-year plan, it was proposed to start underwater archaeology in India. Marine Archaeology started in 1981, and underwater works, particularly at Dwarka, generated much popularity for this discipline, not only among archaeologists and historians but also among the masses.

A Brief History of Underwater Archaeology in India

India's undersea legacy includes sunken ships and submerged towns that date back at least 4,000 years. The National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) introduced this interdisciplinary subject in 1981 thanks to the finest efforts of Dr S.R. Rao. Since then, this research has received financial backing from numerous public and private organisations. Marine archaeological explorations and excavations have occurred in the waters surrounding Dwarka, Bet Dwarka, Somnath, Vijaydurg, Malvan, Goa, Lakshadweep Islands, Poompuhar, and Mahabalipuram during the past 20 years.

Before beginning offshore explorations, onshore and near-shore explorations were conducted at several ancient port sites, including Chilika and the surrounding areas, Kalingapatnam, Machilipatnam, along the coast of Rameswaram, Calicut, Beypore, Mangalore, Honavar, Bhatkal, Ratnagiri, Dobhal, Chaul, and Janjira, among others. Even though it is a relatively new field, marine archaeology is increasing its scope in India. The Centre for Underwater Archaeology was established by the University Grants Commission in Mandela Camp, Tamil University, Thanjavur, in 1983.

The centre, however, focused more on peninsular Indian traditional shipbuilding and navigation techniques. Also, the centre salvaged stone and iron anchors from the coast of Tamil Nadu (Rajamanickam, 1992). Off the coast of Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, the marine archaeology centre of Andhra University investigated an 11th-century Shiva temple that was thought to be submerged at this location. The first investigations were made in 1989. (Gangadharam 1991).

A significant milestone in the advancement of the field was the establishment of the Underwater Archaeology Wing (UAW) under the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) in 2001. The UAW has been actively performing underwater archaeological investigations in the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal since its beginnings. Shipwreck exploration was done in the waters off Lakshadweep and Mahabalipuram (Tripathi 2001-02). A similar discovery was made by the National Institute of Ocean and Technology (NIOT), Chennai, during geophysical surveys of the Gulf of Khambhat. To find submerged ports, coastal cities, and shipwrecks, NIO has conducted onshore and offshore explorations throughout India's East and West Coasts.

Exploration

The first stage in achieving underwater archaeology's goals is exploration. Archaeological relics can be found anywhere, from the intertidal zone to deeper levels that are well beyond the working limit of divers, as more than two-thirds of the world is covered by water. Underwater exploration is an extremely challenging endeavour because of underwater archaeology's enormous field of study. Although fishermen, sports divers, and amateur divers occasionally find several prospective archaeological sites, shipwrecks, and hoards of significant

archaeological importance, these sporadic finds are insufficient for serious archaeological study. Ocean floor explorations must be planned by underwater archaeologists.

Finding a location in the wide ocean demands accurate and thorough information. Any undersea search without knowledge would not only be impractical but also fruitless and wasteful. There are numerous sources from which information on archaeological sites can be gathered. Old maps and paintings, religious or secular literature from antiquity, and other sources of information may be reliable.

Accurate information limits the scope of the search as well as the amount of labour required, saving both time and money. Knowing the location, type, size, etc., aids in choosing the search techniques. It greatly minimises the amount of effort and helps evaluate the resolution needs.

Water is a peculiar environment about which little is known. The area of interest needs to be carefully investigated before the search operation is launched. The success of any operation is greatly influenced by the study of water depth, current, sub-bottom soil conditions, flora and fauna, divers, sediment suspension and motions, visibility, etc.

The requirements for search techniques differ from place to place and depend on the environment and the site's characteristics. Data acquired through preliminary research and information gathering also aid in determining the search strategy and system resolution.

Marking the Site

The location of the place is fixed and marked on the map when it has been investigated and verified. An accurate sextant can be used to locate submerged places close to the coast. This device calculates the angle between more than two shoreline benchmarks. Yet electronic systems must be employed for places that are far from the beach. These systems calculate the separation between shore stations and known positions. The most up-to-date satellite position fixing tools are highly helpful and provide an exact position with very little inaccuracy.

Underwater Excavation

Excavation begins after the site's extent and possibilities are known. The site is divided into a series of tiny submerged trenches, each bearing a unique number, to properly record the objects that have been excavated and record their relative positions. Also, it aids in the accurate charting of the excavated artefacts and the analysis of object distribution on the site.

In addition to physical digging, air, and water are primarily used for underwater excavations. For digging, a low-pressure airlift is a useful technique. High-pressure airlift may also be utilised to remove heavy deposits from the site, like sand or seaweeds, but regulating and using it is difficult. The archaeological excavation also uses water jets and dredges. A very practical and simple-to-use tool is the water dredge. To improve visibility and remove excavated dirt, silt, mud, and light sediments from the site, a water jet is also employed. Only an underwater archaeologist with the appropriate training and supervision may do underwater excavation.

Documentation of the Artefacts

It is comprehensive documentation for scientific research that distinguishes an archaeological excavation from merely looking for hidden wealth or a treasure hunt. The site's activities and artifacts must be completely and accurately documented. Motion movies and still images are captured with underwater cameras. Even from a short distance, some extremely wide angle fish eye cameras may capture a significant amount of space. Most of the time, underwater visibility is

still relatively limited, making "photo mosaics" beneficial. Underwater photography is hampered by changes in the environment, light absorption, and backscattering by suspended particles, phytoplanktons, etc.

The use of measured drawings is crucial in archaeology. Yet underwater measurement and sketch preparation is a laborious and time-consuming task. Before important features, plans, and other objects are removed from their positions, they are completely documented in place. Measured drawings are also made on specific sheets and graphs.

Recovering the Artefacts on Land

Excavated artefacts are carefully brought to the surface after in-situ documentation. The ability of an underwater archaeologist to safely collect brittle and organic items like ropes, textiles, leather, etc., is put to the test. Extreme caution, skilled hands, and controlled motions are necessary. The divers transport delicate and little items while enclosing them in boxes, etc. Perforated baskets and troughs that can be drawn from the boat can be used to lift other artefacts, pottery, etc. In general, larger and heavier things are lifted by lifting balloons. Moreover, massive items like the ship's hull, cannons, anchors, etc., are lifted using cranes.

Excavated relics that are not brought to the surface, such as a ship's hull or architectural remnants, should not be left exposed or carelessly. To safeguard such remains from the numerous harmful impacts of sub-aquatic environments, they must be covered with sand and sediments after being wrapped in a plastic sheet.

Challenges in Marine Archaeology

Accessing submerged locations like sunken ships is challenging and requires skilled divers and diving gear (and, in some cases, submarines). Moreover, tidal flows and bad weather could make some locations inaccessible at specific times.

Moreover, poor visibility can be a significant challenge for underwater archaeologists. Scale drawings and photography are standard methods for capturing underwater sites. However, poor water clarity can skew images and make it challenging for divers to document their findings. However, using Photoshop to blend images of the location obtained at other nearby locations has resolved specific underwater vision concerns. Video cameras can also provide a more realistic representation of the location.

Several divers must inspect and document the entire site because divers have a limited oxygen supply and cannot stay underwater for long, and, this is an area of concern. As a remedial measure, the dives must be well-planned and choreographed beforehand. Recording an entire site can take years, even with careful planning.

The temperature of the water is another difficulty for underwater archaeology. Divers' bodies will eventually become cold because they radiate heat into the surrounding water, even when wearing wetsuits (or dry suits in colder water). The time divers can spend studying and documenting underwater places is thus limited in addition to the fixed air supply.

Preservation of underwater sites and artefacts is a challenging undertaking for archaeologists. Underwater site preservation is time- and money-consuming, yet without adequate care, artefacts could decay or be accidentally harmed by visitors.

Removing the submerged artefacts is frequently difficult or impossible; archaeologists must struggle to keep the site safe from vandals and other potential threats.

Lack of funding poses a serious issue and has also resulted in the long-time halting of several excavations. For instance, the underwater surveys in Dwarka

Conclusion

Our cultural heritage includes sunken shipwrecks and underwater places. We must decipher these documents in order to connect the past to the present. Rapid expansion in coastal areas could permanently remove traces of ancient civilisations. Hence, it is essential to mandate maritime archaeological research in coastal zones where any type of development activities take place, such as ports, harbours, industry, tourism, etc. Despite the higher rate of shipwreck salvage, very few shipwrecks have been explored in India. If this continues, the evidence will be lost forever. If archaeological evidence is discovered, it must be submitted to the appropriate authorities to avoid being destroyed. Moreover, it is possible to develop tourism at locations of shipwrecks and submerged ports.

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List of Illustrations

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HERITAGE TOURISM



Exploring the Potential for Dark Tourism in India with Case Studies

- Soumya

Dark Tourism - When Tragedy Meets Tourism

Research Objectives

The primary objective of this research is to thoroughly explore the potential for dark tourism in India, taking into consideration the cultural, ethical, and archaeological implications of visiting sites associated with death, tragedy, or suffering. This study endeavours to critically examine the multifaceted facets of dark tourism in India through an in-depth analysis of case studies on Roopkund Lake, Kuldhara Village, and the Union Carbide plant. Additionally, the research seeks to identify key motivations that drive individuals to engage in dark tourism, understand the ethical concerns associated with it, and provide comprehensive suggestions for the development and responsible management of dark tourism in India.

Site of Research: Roopkund Lake, Uttarakhand

Roopkund Lake, often referred to as Skeleton Lake, is located in the Chamoli district of Uttarakhand, India. Situated at an altitude of 5,029 meters above sea level, the Himalayan Mountains surround it. This natural site of dark tourism is renowned for the skeletal remains of hundreds of humans and animals discovered in 1942.



Figure 1. The skeleton remains in Roopkund Lake, Uttarakhand (©Deepak Bafila)



Figure 2. The haunted village of Kuldhara in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan (©Flickr/Mirza Asad Baig/Creative Common)

The skeletal remains were initially believed to belong to a group of pilgrims who perished during their journey to the shrine of Nanda Devi, supposedly killed by a hailstorm. However, subsequent research dated the remains back to the ninth century and identified the victims as a diverse group of individuals of South Asian descent. These remains have provided invaluable insights into the lives, traditions, and beliefs of people from that era. The Indian government has recognised the historical and cultural significance of Roopkund Lake by designating it as a

heritage monument. To visit the site, tourists are required to obtain permits from the local government, emphasising the need for responsible tourism practices and ecological conservation.

Roopkund Lake serves as an exemplar of a dark tourism site in India, drawing visitors intrigued by its enigmatic past and the unique opportunity it presents to explore ancient history and culture. The skeletal remains offer a window into the lives and challenges faced by individuals who traversed the Himalayas in the ninth century. However, the rise in tourism has also raised concerns about potential ecological harm. Sustainable tourism practices are essential to safeguard the site for future generations.

Kuldhara Village, Rajasthan

Kuldhara Village is an abandoned village located in the Jaisalmer district of Rajasthan, India. The village's intriguing history adds to its potential as a dark tourism destination. According to legend, the Paliwal Brahmins, known for their wealth, abruptly deserted the village in the early 19th century, leaving behind an uninhabited ghost town. The reason for their sudden departure remains a mystery, with folklore suggesting that they cursed the village.

Over the years, the enigmatic history of Kuldhara Village has attracted numerous visitors intrigued by its eerie and haunting atmosphere. The Rajasthan government has implemented measures to promote the village as a dark tourism site, including night tourism initiatives, guided tours, and infrastructure development.

Kuldhara Village represents a site of historical intrigue and curiosity, drawing tourists fascinated by its mysterious past. The government's efforts to promote the village as a dark tourism destination have contributed to its development and visitor experience. However, ethical concerns regarding the potential exploitation of tragedy and insensitivity toward the historical context must be addressed.

Union Carbide, Bhopal



Figure 3. The site of Union Carbide, Bhopal (© 2019, International Campaign for Justice in Bhopal)

The 1984 Bhopal disaster, a catastrophic gas leak from the Union Carbide pesticide plant in Bhopal, India, resulted in the deaths of thousands of people and left many others with long-term health issues. The disaster is one of the worst industrial accidents in history and holds significant historical and cultural relevance.

The Indian government has acknowledged the potential of Union Carbide as a dark tourism destination and implemented measures to enhance tourism facilities in the area. The "Remember Bhopal Museum" is an independent and survivor-led establishment created to archive memories and narratives of the tragedy, offering an evolving and accurate understanding of the disaster.

The Union Carbide site in Bhopal presents a solemn and significant part of India's history. The presence of the Remember Bhopal Museum demonstrates a responsible approach to preserving the memory of the tragedy. However, the ethical implications of profiting from tragic events and the potential for voyeurism and insensitivity remain concerns.

Contribution to the Field of Archaeology

This research contributes to the field of archaeology by shedding light on the emerging concept of dark tourism in India and its potential implications. The findings reveal that dark tourism sites in India encompass a diverse range of historical, cultural, and ecological aspects. Roopkund Lake serves as a remarkable archaeological site, offering insights into the lives and experiences of individuals from the ninth century. Kuldhara Village represents an intriguing historical site with archaeological value, as it provides a glimpse into the abrupt desertion of an entire community and the associated folklore.

The research also underscores the importance of ethical considerations and responsible tourism practices when promoting dark tourism. It highlights the significance of preserving the historical and cultural integrity of sites associated with death and tragedy. Furthermore, it emphasises the need to engage with local communities and consider the cultural and religious beliefs surrounding such sites, thus contributing to a holistic understanding of dark tourism in India.

In conclusion, Dark tourism in India, exemplified by sites like Roopkund Lake, Kuldhara Village, and the Union Carbide plant, offers educational value if approached ethically. Striking a delicate balance between historical insight and avoiding exploitation, a comprehensive strategy involving media promotion, community engagement, and responsible policies is crucial. Collaborative efforts between communities, government, and tourism entities are vital for fostering responsible development and ensuring a sensitive approach to cultural, ethical, and economic considerations.

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Agra City in 1857: A New View for Tourism

- Anuj Pratap

The year 1857 is a significant one in Indian history as it was the year of the first War of Independence. It was sparked by various factors, including economic, political, social, and religious grievances. It was led by a diverse group of Indians, including *sepoys* (Indian soldiers), peasants, artisans, and *zamindars*, united in opposition to British rule. The British initially struggled to suppress it but eventually recaptured most of the territories with the help of reinforcements from Britain and other parts of India. This ultimately failed to oust the British from India, but it significantly impacted Indian history. It led to the formal transfer of power from the East India Company to the British Crown and prompted significant changes in British policies towards India. It also inspired later Indian Nationalist Movements and is remembered as a critical event in the struggle for Indian Independence.

Agra was the North-Western Provinces's capital (earlier also known as the Agra Presidency) from 1836 to 1858. Later, it was reorganised to form the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. The news of the mutiny that started in Meerut reached Agra by 13th May 1857; when Colvin received the message of the uprising, he built a group of Britishers and other Christians and approached military help from Bharatpur and Gwalior. The army from Bharatpur reached on 15 May 1857, and an army from Gwalior came with 2600 sepoys and 12 cannons. They all were sent to the Fort. There was peace in Agra till the 21st, but it could not sustained for a long time. The army of *Krantikaris* came to Agra from the Indore. The army had to be sent to stop that force. (Sharma, 2016). On 31st May, Governor Colvin ordered the disarming of the native regiments of the British army who were present in Agra at that time and sent them to their home due to the risk of rebellion against the Britishers.

By June, the English had established themselves in Agra Fort. Some Englishmen could not reach the fort and were stranded in another part of the city. Some of them sought refuge in the library of Agra College. They were slain, and the library was set ablaze. The accused of this incident



Image 1: Subhodeep Mukherjee, John Russell Colvin's Tomb in Agra Fort

Pandit Krishna Dev Shastri, who was the grandson of the Pandit Gangadhar Shastri, was hanged. He had funded the building of the Agra College. (Sharma, 2016).

Towards the end of June, the British received the news that the Revolutionary armies of Nimuch and Nasirabad were marching directed towards the Agra instead of, as which were earlier expected, to cross over Delhi. (Muir, 1896: 18). There is a letter published in the magazine 'Mofussilite' which confirmed by the end of June, the regiments of Nasirabad and Nimuch reached near Agra and by the beginning of July they camped in a village 'Sushia' which was about 20 miles away from Agra. There were 10,000 soldiers in these regiments. (Singh & Arfat, 2022).

On 1st July, the Britishers learned that these regiments were at Fatehpur Sikri and seized their official there. (Muir, 1896: 24). In early June, the Kotah contingent reached Agra with a small force of about 600 men of all arms with two guns to support the Britishers. When this force ordered to block the road of the regiments of Nimuch and Nasirabad and fought against them, then this force of Kotah contingent rebelled against the British army and joined the forces of Nimuch and Nasirabad. (Shaktavat, 2015).

On 5 July, these regiments attacked the Agra. Some Britishers were hidden in the Post office, Bank, Khandari Bagh, etc. When Brigadier Polwhele moved out to attack, by that time, the revolutionary army had established its control over Sucheta of Shahganj. The army who came from Bharatpur to help the Britishers told the Britishers that would not fight against these armies because they were their brothers. Then Polwhele attacked only with the English army. (Shaktavat, 2015). The battle took place at Sucheta Village near Shahganj, where the English Army was defeated by the regiments of the Nimuch and Nasirabad and forced them to retreat. The now victorious mutineers harassed the retreat to some distance but did not follow up their success with a general attack on the fort. (Mukherji, 1892). Thakur Heera Singh was martyred in this battle. (Singh, 2021).

The wounded people of the Britishers were kept within the fort in the Moti Masjid, which was used as a hospital at that time. The Britishers destroyed the east boundary wall and the arcade of the Jama Masjid so the revolutionaries could not fire inside the Agra fort from there. (Sharma, 2016).

By the 6 July, the Agra Police also joined the revolutionaries. Now, the Tehsils and the Police stations of Agra were in the control of the revolutionaries, but they could not capture the fort. (Sharma, 2016).

Agra got independence, and Bahadur Khan sent news to Delhi that Agra had been conquered. Then, the situation of unrest started in Agra. The houses where the Britishers were lived were burnt. Those Britishers who left outside the fort were killed. Around 4000 prisoners were taken out. Then, the Nimuch army left for Delhi via Farah, and again, the British army dominated the revolutionaries in Agra. Major Fraser became the in-charge of the fort, and the cannons from the fort targeted the revolutionaries. At that time, Maulvi Faiz Ahmed and assistant civil surgeon Wazir Khan reached Delhi, and at the request of Bakht Khan, Faiz Ahmed became the governor of Agra. (Sharma, 2016).

On 9 September 1857, Governor Colvin died in the Agra Fort. He was buried in front of the Diwan-i-Aam. At this time, the Britishers army, who marched upon the Rajwade of Himmatpur, were camped on the Budiya ka Taal near Edmatpur, and they carved out their names on this

monument which can be read even today. Budiya ka Taal is a monument which Etmad Khan built in 1592, which was a courtier of the Akbar. (Sharma, 2016).

In the first week of October, the armies of Malwa, Bhopal, Indore, etc., marched towards Agra. On the other side, commander Greathed reached Agra from Hathras with 2800 soldiers. Then, revolutionaries attacked the 9th Lancers Battalion of the Britishers, but now the revolutionaries were defeated, and a thousand soldiers died. (Sharma, 2016).

During 1857, Gokulpura was a place of prestigious and prosperous people. Britishers who were freaked out due to the attack of Agra College and the killing of the Englishmen were ordered to destroy the Gokulpura by the cannons. Professors of Agra College, Saligram, Kalyan Singh, Malkhan Singh, and Shankar Lal hardly persuaded the collector not to do this. Gokulpura saved, but cannons destroyed the Parakota surrounding it. Kansa gate and the bridge of Chhingamodi are the remains of that Parkota. Another reason for killing the Parkota of the Gokulpura was the hiding of the Tatya Tope in the Someshwar Nath temple of Gokulpura, and they did not get this information. It is said that when the Britishers started overpowering the Revolutionaries, Tatya Tope got shelter in the Someshwar Nath temple of the Gokulpura, and he changed his name to Narayandas, so the collector Devil reported Gokulpura as the Mohalla of rebels. (Sharma, 2016).

That first war of Independence was finally crushed in 1858, and the British government took direct control of India from the East India Company. There were many reasons responsible for this failure.



Image 2: Sakshi Gambhir, Kansa Gate what remains of the boundary of Gokulpura

Tourism Potential

So, now we know that Agra was also one of the leading centres of the 1857 kranti, and that period should be preserved in the form of Tourism that can add a unique perspective to the tourism of Agra.

The city of Agra is home to many places and landmarks associated with the Indian Rebellion of 1857. The most notable of these is Agra Fort, which was used as a refuge by the British during the revolt. The Moti Masjid, located inside the fort, was used as a hospital for wounded British soldiers. The Jama Masjid, which stands opposite the Fort, was also damaged during the revolt, as the British destroyed its eastern gate to prevent rebels from firing on the Fort from that side. Agra College is another important landmark associated with the revolt. Other places that bear witness to the events of 1857 include Khandari Bagh, Agra Cantt., Lalkurti, Phulatti, Budhiya ka Tal, Gokulpura, and Sucheta village.

There is great potential to develop thematic tourism around Agra's 1857 heritage. Agra Fort could be the centrepiece of such a tourism initiative, incorporating other nearby locations and landmarks into the narrative. A dedicated gallery could also be established to preserve and showcase the city's historical and cultural heritage from this period. Such a gallery would provide a valuable resource for visitors and locals alike and would help to ensure that the legacy of 1857 is not forgotten.

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APPLIED CONSERVATION AND MUSEOLOGY



Collection And Conservation Management Of Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library, Patna

- Shaheen Meraj Kaushar

This research aimed to explore and understand the methods and expertise utilised by the Khuda Bakhsh Library in preserving and conserving its mesmerising collection of approximately 21,000 rare manuscripts and other archival materials. It investigated the Khuda Bakhsh Library's history, preservation techniques, and cataloguing practices. It found that the library has a long and rich history and uses innovative methods to preserve its collection. The research highlights the importance of the library's work in preserving and making accessible its collection of rare manuscripts and other archival materials.



Image 1: Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library

The research was also important to understand the conservation measures undertaken to protect fragile manuscripts and rare books, including establishing specialised laboratories and utilising advanced equipment and techniques. It also highlights the dedication, expertise, and unwavering commitment demonstrated by the library in its mission to protect and conserve the rich cultural heritage contained within its walls. Through fulfilling these objectives, this research aims to shed light on the remarkable efforts undertaken by the Library to preserve and safeguard its invaluable collection, unveiling the knowledge and expertise behind its enduring legacy in conserving cultural treasures.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi Khuda Bakhsh Khan, C.I.E., the founder of the library, was a prominent lawyer in Patna who served as Chief Justice of the Deccan High Court from 1895 to 1898 during the reign of Meer Mahboob Ali Khan, the sixth Nizam of Hyderabad State. He was also a social reformer and a bibliophile. He had acquired his love for literature from his legendary father, Maulavi Mohammad Bakhsh Khan, who had amassed a large collection of manuscripts and rare books. On his deathbed, he decreed in his will that his son Khuda Bakhsh should take the utmost care of his collection of books and manuscripts. The diligent and faithful son not only carried out the will to the letter but also kept adding valuable pieces to the collection. Because of his passion for books, the collection quickly became a magnet for Islamic and Oriental studies. Some manuscripts are scarce and intricately designed, and there is no single copy in the world's

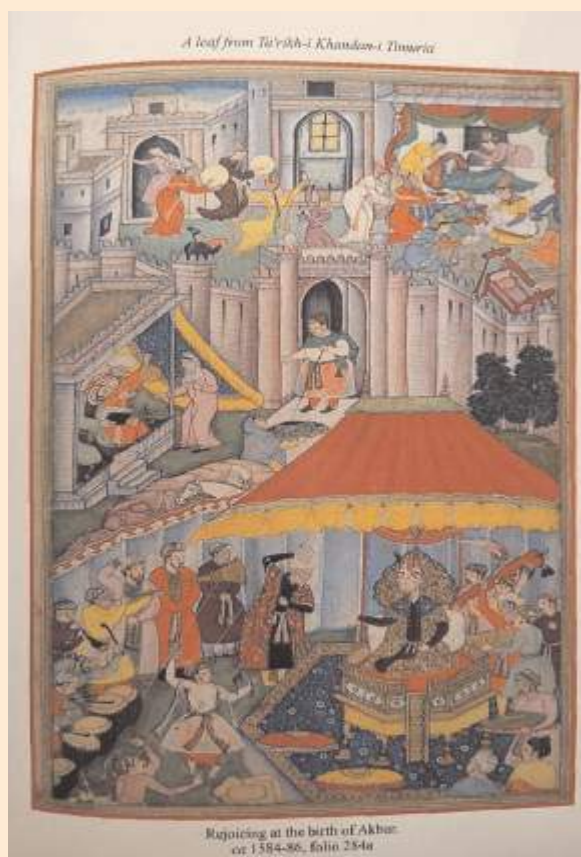


Image 2: Taarekh-e-Timuriya

libraries. "There is nothing in the world that can surpass the magnificent calligraphy, the enamelled gold, the priceless miniature, the colours of lapis lazuli and vermillion, indigo and scarlet, green, purple, vermillion and saffron of some of these illustrative pages," writes V. C. Scott O'Connor.

Even after the death of Khan Bahadur Maulavi Khan Saheb, the collection continued to grow considerably. It currently includes some 21,000 manuscripts in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Hindi, and Sanskrit, and about two lakh twenty-five thousand printed books in virtually every primary Oriental and Occidental language. In this way, the seed of Mohammad Bakhsh, carefully nurtured by his son Khuda Bakhsh, has grown into a great shady tree. R. B. Sheridan, a famous British scholar and literary scholar, correctly stated, "a circulating library in a city is like a growing tree that blooms throughout the year." Khuda Bakhsh Library is also a living tree that provides shade and spreads the fragrance of knowledge in the academic world.

In a conversation with Dr. Shaista Bedar, the director of the Khuda Bukshsh Oriental Library, the following information was obtained: the library has approximately 21,000 manuscripts. Of these, 231 are illustrative manuscripts, 6,478 are Arabic manuscripts, 8,400 are Persian manuscripts, 2,113 are Urdu manuscripts, and 85 are Sanskrit/Hindi manuscripts. The library also has over 600 palm leaf manuscripts.

The library has a magnificent collection of manuscripts. The oldest manuscript dates to the 9th century and is around 1300. The manuscript is of *Quranic* verse 35-38 of Surah Ibrahim written in parchment in *Kufi* calligraphic style.

A project to publish scholarly papers, scholar-edited manuscripts, manuscript facsimile editions, indexes of Urdu journals, a manuscript catalogue, books on fostering interfaith understanding and bridging communities, and books on Indian culture, history, literature, and Islamic studies has also been started by the library. The library has received gifts from the proprietors of over thirty manuscripts and book collections in addition to the works it has already collected. On the other hand, the printed book collection is valuable in and of itself. It includes works in Hindi, English, Arabic, Persian, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islamic studies, and other Oriental disciplines. The Periodicals Department, with its approximately 35,000 bound volumes of ancient and current periodicals, is a key element of this collection. It is used extensively by scholars and can be browsed during a visit to the library.

Like many other libraries, museums, and archives, Khuda Bakhsh Library has a laboratory dedicated to conserving and preserving its valuable collection, including books, manuscripts,

and other objects. This is essential because these items are made of organic materials and are susceptible to deterioration due to various factors, such as environmental conditions, insects, temperature, and light exposure. The conservation and preservation process at the library is managed by a team of six individuals, with Mr. Mustafa Azad leading the laboratory. A deteriorating manuscript or book is identified and brought to the laboratory for preservation.

The process involves several key steps: a) identifying the cause of deterioration, b) fumigation in a chamber using specific chemicals to eliminate insect infestation or fungus, c) arranging pages and documenting essential information about the manuscript, d) cleaning the manuscript through mechanical and chemical methods, e) conducting spot testing to determine ink solubility and consolidating the ink using appropriate chemicals, f) de-acidification using either aqueous or solvent de-acidification methods, depending on the manuscript's condition, g) performing minor repair work, such as filling holes from insect damage and strengthening the manuscript with tissue or paper, h) sending the manuscript for binding with leather covers and red muslin cloth, i) Properly storing the manuscript in a controlled ambient condition to prevent further deterioration. This meticulous process ensures the long-term preservation and conservation of the library's valuable collection, which is essential given the rarity and significance of the materials.

The Khuda Bakhsh Library is a testament to the dedication of its founders and custodians. It houses a priceless collection of manuscripts and rare books but faces challenges requiring immediate attention. Despite these limitations, the library has successfully preserved its heritage and embarked on digitisation efforts, ensuring its treasures remain accessible to the world. The Government of India established the National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM) in February 2003 under the Ministry of Tourism and Culture. The mission of NMM is to document, conserve, and disseminate the information stored in manuscripts. NMM aims to live up to its motto, "conserving the past for the future." Khuda Bakhsh Library is also among those repositories where the mission for manuscripts is being implemented.

The NMM has been working with the Khuda Bakhsh Library to digitise its collection of manuscripts. This digitisation effort will help to preserve the manuscripts and make them accessible to a broader audience. The NMM also trains the library staff to care for and preserve manuscripts. The Khuda Bakhsh Library is an essential repository of knowledge and culture. The NMM's efforts to digitise the library's collection will help keep this knowledge for future generations.

Shaheen Miraj Kaushar completed her Master's in Conservation Preservation and Heritage Management from the School of Heritage Research and Management, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar University, Delhi, in 2023. She is expanding her academic horizons, learning Persian at Persian Research House, Iran Culture House, New Delhi.

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Conservation of Paper Manuscript

- **Maria Mirza**

The tradition of writing in India has a long and vibrant history spanning ancient times. India boasts the world's largest collection of manuscripts, estimated to be approximately five million, per data from the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. The term "manuscript" refers to handwritten documents preserved using various techniques throughout history due to their significant value.

Manuscripts are also historical artefacts that reflect the material culture of their time and place of origin. They provide insights into the history of writing, book production, calligraphy, and bookbinding techniques. As primary sources, manuscripts offer direct evidence of historical events and cultural practices, revealing their creators' perspectives, values, and beliefs.

Research Objective:

The primary objective of this dissertation is to conduct a comprehensive study on the conservation of paper manuscripts, focusing on Persian and Sanskrit manuscripts in the context of India. The specific research objectives are as follows:

Historical Analysis: To explore the history of paper manuscripts, distinguishing between illustrated and non-illustrated manuscripts and understanding their cultural significance in India.



Image 1: The deteriorated folios of the manuscript
© Maria Mirza

Deterioration Patterns: To identify and analyse the various types of deterioration in paper manuscripts, including environmental, chemical, biological, and human-induced factors, focusing on their impact on Persian and Sanskrit manuscripts.

Conservation Procedures: To establish a standard procedure for conserving paper manuscripts, incorporating methods outlined in literature such as cleaning, washing, flattening, deacidification, restoration, and lamination. This will involve a detailed examination of techniques mentioned in works by Y.P Kathpalia, O.P Aggarwal, P.Renganathan, and H.J Plenderleith.

Documentation: To develop a comprehensive documentation process for paper manuscripts, encompassing graphic and photographic documentation and creating detailed condition reports for individual manuscripts.

Case Studies: To ensure the conservation of rare manuscripts, it is essential to document and understand their specific problems before undertaking conservation treatments. This study will contribute to the precise research and conservation of paper manuscripts, specifically Persian manuscripts.

To conduct in-depth case studies on the conservation of specific manuscripts, such as the Persian Manuscript "Dawahi Fatwa" issued by Jamia Hamdard, focusing on curative conservation methods applied. These case studies will provide practical insights into the conservation process.

Preventive Conservation: To explore preventive conservation measures, including proper storage techniques and recommendations for preservation, to ensure the long-term stability of paper manuscripts.

Cross-cultural Comparison: To compare the conservation techniques and challenges between Persian and Sanskrit manuscripts, highlighting the unique aspects of each tradition and suggesting tailored conservation approaches.

Evaluation and Recommendations To evaluate the effectiveness of the conservation methods applied during the case studies and provide recommendations for future conservation efforts, considering the cultural, historical, and artistic significance of the manuscripts.

By addressing these objectives, the research aims to contribute valuable insights to the field of manuscript conservation, particularly focusing on the unique challenges posed by Persian and Sanskrit manuscripts in the Indian context.

The research findings highlight the multifaceted aspects of paper manuscript preservation and conservation. Several key factors contribute to the deterioration of paper manuscripts, including environmental conditions, chemical factors, biological threats, physical composition, and human errors in handling. These factors emphasise the importance of implementing effective conservation strategies to mitigate damage and preserve valuable historical documents long-term.

Environmental Factors: Light intensity, temperature fluctuations, humidity, and air quality directly impact manuscript longevity. High light intensity, UV radiation, extreme temperatures, fluctuating humidity, and poor air quality accelerate deterioration.

Chemical Factors: Acidity, pollutants, and unstable materials contribute to paper degradation. Acid hydrolysis breaks down paper fibres, while pollutants cause discolouration and fading. Proper storage, environmental control, and conservation treatments can minimise the impact of chemical factors.

Biological Threats: Fungi, insects, and rodents threaten paper manuscripts significantly. Mold growth affects paper integrity and poses health risks.

Structural damage from insect feeding weakens manuscripts, increasing the risk of further deterioration.

Physical Composition: Handmade paper composition, primarily cellulose fibres, undergoes chemical and physical changes over time. Fibre degradation, acidity, and brittleness contribute to physical deterioration.

Human Error in Handling: Improper handling, including rough treatment, bending, folding, and excessive pressure, leads to tears, creases, and abrasions. Careful handling techniques and proper support are essential to minimise physical damage.

Standard Conservation Procedures: Assessment and documentation of manuscript conditions, including written descriptions and photographs. Meticulous cleaning using specialised tools like soft brushes and synthetic erasers.



Image 2: Deacidification treatments on the folio; © Maria Mirza

Deacidification treatments to neutralise acidity and protect paper fibres. Regulated humidity control and protective enclosures to prevent physical damage. Digitisation for improved accessibility and research purposes, following international standards. Ongoing monitoring, maintenance, and periodic reassessment of storage conditions.

Solvent Selection:

Solvents are vital in cleaning contaminants, applying polymers, and removing polymers during conservation. Factors like chemical type, purity, solubility, evaporation rate, toxicity, and flammability are crucial in solvent selection. Professional conservators adhere to ethical guidelines and international standards for optimal manuscript care.

These research findings emphasise the comprehensive approach needed for paper manuscript conservation, combining environmental control, chemical understanding, biological threat management, an understanding of physical composition, careful handling, and adherence to standardised conservation procedures. Implementing these strategies can ensure the preservation of paper manuscripts for future generations.

In the meticulous conservation process of the “Dawahi Fatwe” manuscript, well-planned steps were undertaken to preserve the document's integrity and ensure its long-term survival. These research findings shed light on the crucial stages of the conservation process and provide valuable insights into effective methods for conserving paper manuscripts.

Fumigation: Utilising 1,4-Para Dichlorobenzene within a controlled chamber proved highly effective in eradicating pests, halting biological damage, and preventing further deterioration.

The careful selection of a suitable fumigant, considering its form, concentration, time, and compatibility with paper, played a vital role in successful pest elimination.

Dry Cleaning: A soft flat brush for dry cleaning effectively removed surface dirt and incrustations without introducing moisture, ensuring the manuscript was ready for subsequent conservation processes.

Gentle and precise cleaning methods were pivotal in preserving the original material while minimising the risk of damage.

Wet Cleaning and Deacidification: Ethanol, chosen for its non-aqueous properties, expertly removed dirt and ink incrustations without causing bleeding, thanks to its compatibility with the manuscript's ink.

Double Deacidification: Although uncommon, double deacidification demonstrated benefits such as improved pH stability and customised preservation solutions tailored to specific needs.

Careful consideration of the manuscript's condition was vital when opting for double deacidification treatments.

Crease Removal and Flattening: The meticulous use of spatulas, tweezers, and scalpels effectively removed creases, restoring the paper's flat and smooth appearance.

Employing precise flattening techniques proved essential in enhancing visual appeal, improving handling, and preventing further damage caused by folding or wrinkling.

Strip Lining and Solvent Lamination: Strip lining with archival-quality materials strengthened the manuscript's edges, reducing the risk of damage during solvent lamination.

Adherence to ethical guidelines, careful adhesive selection, and expert proficiency were crucial for successful solvent lamination processes.

General Research Findings: Proper documentation, procurement from trusted sources, and expert guidance are fundamental prerequisites for effective conservation efforts. The conservation process necessitates a delicate balance between thorough cleaning, deacidification, and reinforcement techniques, ensuring manuscript stability. Preservation strategies, including fumigation, dry cleaning, and solvent lamination, were tailored based on the manuscript's condition and specific requirements. Continuous monitoring and adherence to standardised conservation procedures are imperative for ensuring the long-term preservation of invaluable historical manuscripts like the Dawahi Fatwe.

Research Contribution in the Field of Conservation

Research in curative conservation of manuscripts has a profound impact on conservation and heritage management in several ways: **Advancing Conservation Techniques:** Research leads to the developing of new and improved conservation methods and technologies. Innovative cleaning, restoration, and preservation techniques are essential for ensuring the longevity of manuscripts and other cultural artefacts. **Preserving Endangered Manuscripts:** Research helps conservators identify high-risk manuscripts and develop specialised conservation approaches for rare or endangered documents. This is crucial for preserving unique and culturally significant manuscripts that might rapidly deteriorate.

Understanding Material Science: Research contributes to a deeper understanding of the materials used in manuscripts, including inks, parchments, and papers. This knowledge is vital for developing conservation strategies tailored to specific materials, ensuring effective and safe preservation.

Addressing Environmental Challenges: Research helps understand the impact of environmental factors such as humidity, temperature, light, and pollutants on manuscripts. Conservation strategies can then be devised to mitigate these factors, safeguarding manuscripts from environmental damage.

Promoting Sustainable Practices: Research encourages the adoption of sustainable conservation practices. This includes using eco-friendly materials, energy-efficient technologies, and sustainable preservation methods, aligning conservation efforts with broader environmental conservation goals.

Enhancing Collaboration: Research fosters collaboration between conservators, scientists, historians, and archaeologists. Interdisciplinary research initiatives lead to comprehensive conservation strategies, enriching the overall understanding of cultural heritage and enabling more effective preservation efforts.

Digital Preservation: Research in digitisation and digital archiving techniques allows for the creation digital replicas of manuscripts. This not only facilitates wider access but also acts as a backup, ensuring that the content is preserved even if the physical document deteriorates.

Educational Initiatives: Research findings contribute to conservation and heritage management programs. Training the next generation of conservators with updated knowledge and techniques ensures a continuum of expertise in preserving cultural heritage.

International Collaboration: Collaborative research projects involving institutions and experts from different countries promote cultural exchange and understanding. International partnerships enhance the global perspective on conservation and heritage management practices.

Research in the conservation of manuscripts ensures the preservation of invaluable cultural artefacts and contributes to advancing conservation science, education, and sustainable practices. It is pivotal in safeguarding our shared heritage for current and future generations.

This research paper focuses on conserving paper manuscripts, specifically Persian manuscripts. The paper begins with an introduction highlighting India's rich tradition of writing and the country's vast collection of manuscripts. It traces the origins of papermaking and the challenges posed by its reduced longevity. A fragile and termit-damaged paper manuscript titled "Dawahi Fatwe" was successfully restored as a case study. The manuscript ink was water soluble. The primary objective of this research was to identify the issues faced by the paper and effectively restore a Persian document.

Maria Mirza completed her Master's in Conservation Preservation and Heritage Management from the School of Heritage Research and Management, Dr B.R. Ambedkar University, Delhi in 2023.

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Technique, Style and Subject matter of Paintings of Raja Ravi Varma-A Study

- Ruthuparna S.

Raja Ravi Varma is widely regarded as the greatest modern Indian artist. Influenced by European illusive realism, he began painting large canvases with oil paints, creating dramatic paintings of real-looking subjects in elaborate costumes and lifelike volumes. This artistic development was centred around Varma, who used academic realism to depict Indian subjects and various gods, goddesses, characters, and scenes from Indian mythology as realistic human figures in elaborate royal costumes. Varma's work is considered one of the best examples of the fusion of Indian traditions with European academic art techniques in the 19th-century colonial-nationalistic framework. He is mainly known for his paintings of beautiful sari-clad women and his allegorism of Indian subjects in the epics of the Mahabharata and Ramayana.

Raja Ravi Varma's paintings can be classified into three categories: portraits, portrait-based compositions and theatrical compositions based on myths and legends.

“It is the third category under which Ravi Varma is the most-renowned for his contribution to Indian Art”. Ravi Varma, an Indian artist, retold epics and narrated India's rich, civilized, and vibrant history through his pictorial language. His work reflected his familiarity with performing arts, particularly Parsi theatre, and Hindu mythology. He fused European and Indian elements, using portrait-based compositions and photography to create life-study and photo-realism. Indian Art History scholar Partha Mitter believes Varma's stylistic choices were successful with Indian subject matter, blending sentimentality with voluptuous women. He captured special moments in stories like the Ramayana, capturing the emotional climax of the story. Varma's use of illusionist painting as a storytelling toolset him apart from traditional Indian painters.

Raja Ravi Varma, an Indian artist, was a pioneer in the Visual Revolution, known as the Italian Renaissance, which was fuelled by the concept that "light is subject matter." Two innovations, Linear Perspective and Chiaroscuro, defined not only its imagery but also shaped the culture and thought of its people. Linear Perspective in art refers to the system of creating depth on a flat surface, appealing to artists from the Renaissance period (15th Century). Early Quattrocento practitioners believed perspective's power lies in manipulating appearances, rather than revealing them. Ravi Varma, an Indian artist, was known for his mastery of pictorial structures and the use of colour to create emotive qualities. His use of red in his paintings not only adds a vibrant and captivating element to the composition but also evokes a strong emotional response from the viewer. Varma's mastery of chiaroscuro not only adds depth and dimension to his paintings but also evokes a sense of emotion and storytelling through the manipulation of light and shadow.

The composition and spirituality of painting are another key aspect of Varma's work. The use of light and shadow in the painting not only adds depth and dimension but also creates a sense of mystery and intrigue. By strategically placing the cloaked figure in the light, Varma ensures that our gaze is drawn towards him, even though we cannot fully see his face or features. This clever manipulation further enhances the narrative and symbolism of the artwork, inviting viewers to contemplate the hidden aspects of Shakuntala's story.

Ravi Varma's ability to capture the essence of Hindu deities and religious figures in his paintings showcased his deep understanding and reverence for Indian culture. By incorporating scenes from everyday life, family dynamics, and portraits of people he met during his travels, Varma was able to create a diverse body of work that reflected the rich tapestry of Indian society. His artistic contributions not only celebrated the beauty of India but also played a significant role in shaping the nation's artistic identity during its transition into modernity.

The controversy surrounding his work highlights the ongoing debate about what constitutes authentic Indian art. Ravi Varma sought to achieve the obsolete Realism brought by Burne-Jones, Alma-Tadema, and Sir Joshua Reynolds as academic realism. Romanticism, classicism, and realism all gained importance in Italy, France, and the rest of Europe, and Ravi Varma evolved into an individual style and technique by this time. His impressionism and realism were commendable as he used these European techniques on Indian culture, traditions, and epics, giving them a fresh and unique perspective. Through his work, Ravi Varma not only captured the essence of Indian life but also showcased the universality of human emotions, making him a pioneer in bridging the gap between East and West in the world of art. His paintings showcase the beauty and essence of traditional culture through his attention to detail and the use of traditional attire and jewellery. His work has been a significant influence on Indian art and continues to inspire artists worldwide.

The Galaxy of Musicians is a famous painting by Raja Ravi Varma, depicting 11 Indian women in an elaborate musical performance. The women wear traditional Indian costumes from different regions and are depicted wearing different types of dresses and adornments associated with different regions or communities in India. The painting was commissioned by the Maharaja of Mysore and features Muslim women on the right, Nair women playing the veena on the left, and an Anglo-Indian woman with her fashionable hat.



(Raja Ravi Varma, Galaxy of Musicians, 1889, Sri JayaChama Rajendra Art Gallery, Jaganmohan Palace, Mysore, India. Raja Ravi Varma Heritage Foundation.)

Varma used the artistic technique of chiaroscuro, giving the painting a dramatic feel with each figure given an individual expression. Each woman in the painting represents idealized forms of femininity and beauty, such as young, fair-skinned, attractive, desirable, and

demure. Only two women in the group seem to meet the viewer's gaze, suggesting a passive objectification, and reinforcing traditional gender roles and societal expectations. Varma's artistic choices highlight the prevailing male gaze and the limited agency given to women in that period.

Lithographic printing gained popularity in Europe and the US, prompting Ravi Varma and his brother to create a press. Initially in Mumbai, the press moved to Lonavala, producing numerous oleographs depicting Hindu gods and goddesses. The press was the largest and most advanced in India at the time. After Varma's death, his brother managed the press, but it faced financial difficulties. It was sold to Fritz Schleicher, a German technician who managed to turn the tide by employing less talented artists and commercialising the press. However, in 1972, a devastating fire destroyed the entire factory, destroying some of Varma's most fascinating original lithographic prints. Despite the tragic loss caused by the fire, Raja Ravi Varma's legacy inspired artists and art enthusiasts alike. His distinctive style and portrayal of Hindu deities impacted Indian art, influencing generations of painters. Today, his works are highly sought after and cherished for their cultural significance and artistic brilliance.

To conclude, the details in Raja Ravi Varma's paintings are specific to the region that he depicted in the paintings. This helped in understanding the region of the painting and socio-economic status. In his painting named "Woman Holding a Fruit" we can understand the lady is a Maharashtrian. She is wearing an ear ornament called "*Bikbhal*" and a gold bracelet with a green glass bangle "*Ekada*" both of these are traditional Maharashtrian ornaments.



Reclining Lady (Raja Ravi Varma Heritage Foundation)

When we look at another painting named "Reclining Lady" the lady depicted in this painting is a Kerala woman because she is wearing a traditional Kerala attire called "*Kasavu sari*" In addition to that she has a necklace called "*Kashi mala*" which is made of Roman coins. This shows the trading relationship between Romans and Travancore. We can see the reclining lady is reading a book which shows the higher cast women in Kerala were educated at that time. Also, there is another woman in this painting who is darker in skin tone, Raja Ravi Varma gives the difference in skin tone to enhance the main character. The servant lady is a

lower-caste woman but we cannot confirm that she is from a lower caste because the lady is wearing a golden ornament which is not seen in the possession of lower-caste people.

In the painting “There Comes Papa” there is a third character apart from the mother and son. A pet dog is gazing in the same direction. The dog looks like a foreign breed. The culture of allowing pets inside the house is a British influence. As we study all the paintings of Raja Ravi Varma his paintings show wealthy people. Even though all these characters have foreign influences they can afford all the foreign luxuries they keep following the traditions.



There Comes Papa

(Raja Ravi Varma. Raja Ravi Varma Heritage Foundation)

About the Author: Ruthuparna S. is currently pursuing a Master's in Conservation Preservation and Heritage Management from the School of Heritage Research and Management, Dr B.R. Ambedkar University, Delhi.

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Can Kolkata retain its architectural legacy?

'There's no shortcut to preservation'



Kolkata is rich with different types of architecture and monuments. It is the first step to take to building that Kolkata is rapidly losing its heritage property. Architects should be given a role to restore them.

PRESERVING HERITAGE

It is not about saving the old buildings, the preservation of the old buildings is also important. It is about saving the old buildings in a way that they can be used for the future.



For almost a decade, I have been working on the preservation of the old buildings in Kolkata. It is a long and difficult process, but it is worth it.

HOW TO TACKLE NATURAL CALAMITIES
At least one of the main reasons for the destruction of the old buildings is the lack of proper maintenance. It is important to have a regular check-up of the buildings to ensure they are in good condition.

INDIA'S THREE BUSIEST RAILWAY STATIONS IN WEST BENGAL



ANSI PLUS

Revisiting History

SUNDAY

THERE ARE SEVERAL MONUMENTS PRESENT IN BHANSI, BEARING THE TRACES OF A MAJOR ATTRACTION FOR HISTORY AND HERITAGE LOVERS. THE WORLD HERITAGE DAY (APRIL 18), JP EXPLORES FEW OF THEM.

There have been several attempts to restore the old buildings in Bhansi. It is a long and difficult process, but it is worth it. The old buildings are a part of our history and we should preserve them for the future.

Saving Indian heritage vital: Modi unveils museum expo

'Many countries are returning India's artefacts amidst improving reputation'

SHASHI BHUSHAN
NEW DELHI, MAY 18

Pointing out the lack of efforts towards reviving and preserving the long-lost heritage after independence, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said that his government has prioritised preserving the country's heritage.



Children at the International Museum Expo 2022 after its inauguration by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi on Thursday. — PRITAM BANDYOPADHYAY

PM flags off Puri-Howrah Vande Bharat Express

AKSHAYA KUMAR
Bhubaneswar, May 18

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday flagged off the much-awaited Vande Bharat Express (22861/22862) between Puri and Howrah, via video conferencing.

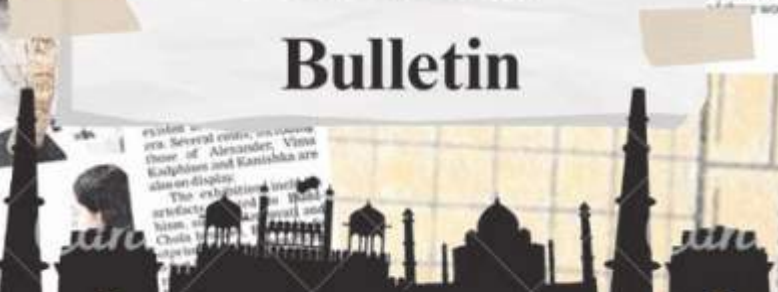
Three Hoysala temples declared World Heritage Sites

There is a significant increase in tourism to Belur, Halebidu, and Somanathapur in Karnataka.



The temples have horizontal friezes and many of the sculptures are signed by artists which is unique in the history of Indian art while the doorways show intricate carvings showcasing the excellence achieved by the artist.

Dharohar Bulletin



2nd PHASE EXCAVATION AT 5th-CENTURY VIHARA

LOCATION | Moghalmari, about 2km from Dantan in West Midnapore

NAME | A local indicates that it is called 'Sribaddha' Vihara Aryabhikkhu Sangha'

ERA | Probably 5th-6th century. Artefacts and seals unearthed two years ago showed the site belonged to the time of Raja Samachar Dev, a local satrap who gained control of the area as the Gupta dynasty's influence waned

FIND | Total 40 statuettes, figurines and seals
 > A bronze Buddha statuette, measuring 7cmX6cm, was found in the middle trench
 > Several others followed. The smallest statuettes were of 7cm height, the biggest ones were of 20-25cm height and 6-12cm width
 > Some Buddha statuettes. Some

Gwalior on UNESCO Creative Cities Network

New Delhi: Gwalior and Kothikode from India are among the 35 new cities which on Tuesday joined the UNESCO Creative Cities Network. UNESCO made the announcement on its official website.

These new cities were "acknowledged for their strong commitment to harnessing culture and creativity as part of their development strategies, and displaying innovative practices in human-centred urban planning," the world body said in a statement. On World Cities Day, 35 cities joined the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN), following their designation by UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay.

While Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh has made it to the coveted list in the 'Music' category, Kothikode in Kerala has earned a place in the 'Literature' category.

UNESCO has shared the full list of the new cities which include Bhubaneswar - Crafts and Folk Art, Gwalior - Music, Kothikode - Literature, and Srinagar - Gastronomy.

Roots and Routes — exhibition gives peep into rich cultural heritage of India through ancient artefacts

Andal Pradesh (Pragatya)



New Delhi: A new exhibition titled 'Roots and Routes' is on display at the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi. The exhibition showcases the rich cultural heritage of India through ancient artefacts.



Yogi hands over baton to Brazil

Times News Network

Varanasi: Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath handed over baton of G20 to Brazil, which will get Presidency of the year-long G20 Culture Ministers' Meeting, at the cultural event, 'Sur Varanasi' - The G20 Presidency, at Doon Road Quadrant, Trade Facilitation Centre here in Varanasi on Saturday evening.

Yogi along with Union ministers OR Bhatti, Arjun Kumar Singh and Manoj Kumar Singh attended the cultural evening in which artists from eight invited countries performed.

Yogi also attended the dinner hosted by the G20 Culture Ministers. The CM honoured the composer of 'Sur Varanasi', Cultural promoter...



Art Heritage On The Move No Full Stop To Work

Current Restoration Work At The Centre

A 4.5 million sq ft building...

Artists of the Centre...

Painting of the G20...

गुजरात को गर्व : हड़प्पाकालीन शहर धोलावीरा विश्व विरासत सूची में दर्ज

वाराणसी में गीत-कला कार्यक्रम : भारत के सांस्कृतिक विरासत के लिए वाराणसी में...



1967-68 में हड़प्पा की खोज हुई। यह शहर 2500 साल पुराना है।...

Unesco declares Harappan city in Gujarat a world heritage site

NEW DELHI: The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) has declared the Harappan city of Dholavira in Gujarat a world heritage site.

The site is the largest and best preserved of the Harappan civilization. It is a testament to the advanced urban planning and architecture of the Harappan people.

Three Hoysala temples declared World Heritage Sites

Move will bring global recognition with prospects of increase in tourism to Belur, Halebidu, and Somnathapur in Karnataka

R. Krishna Kumar

The Hoysala temples at Belur, Halebidu, and Somnathapur in Karnataka were declared UNESCO World Heritage Sites on Monday in a move that will bring global recognition with prospects of increase in international tourism to these places.



Major temple: The Chennakeshava temple at Belur in Hassan district of Karnataka, N.A. 2011/12

by the Centre as India's entry for 2022-23 in February 2022. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) said the coming together of creative genius.

The temples have horizontal friezes and many of the sculptures were signed by artists which is a rare feature of Indian art.

A. Devanag, Commissioner, Department of Archaeology, said the temples are a masterpiece of art and architecture.

As culture event concludes, CM Yogi hands over baton to Brazil



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2nd PHASE EXCAVATION AT 5th-CENTURY VIHARA



Figurines (bottom left) unearthed from the site on Sunday as the excavation work was re-launched after a gap of...

Expressions from the Students Editorial Board

“Heritage of India and its diversity bejewel its civilisation of continuity that spans over thousands of years; learning and exploring this heritage in the School of Heritage Research and Management is not a mere academic degree but a privilege that helps us better understand the source of our shared humanity. The classrooms of SHRM are an echo of said diversity through and through, and it is an engaging space that makes concepts within heritage understandable and exciting; this is undoubtedly the basis of the magazine that I, along with various inputs from my batchmates, came up with ‘Heritage is not a remote entity; it is everywhere around us’, and each student from different backgrounds learned this truth and enriched our understanding of heritage with their personal experiences and interaction with their traditions. We thought putting forth these academic revelations a student uncovers while learning was necessary. Additionally, a student-curated magazine is a skill we wish to inculcate among young minds who are headed towards an increasingly competitive world.”

- Shenaj Akhtar Hussain, Master’s in Conservation, Preservation and Heritage Management, 2021-2023.

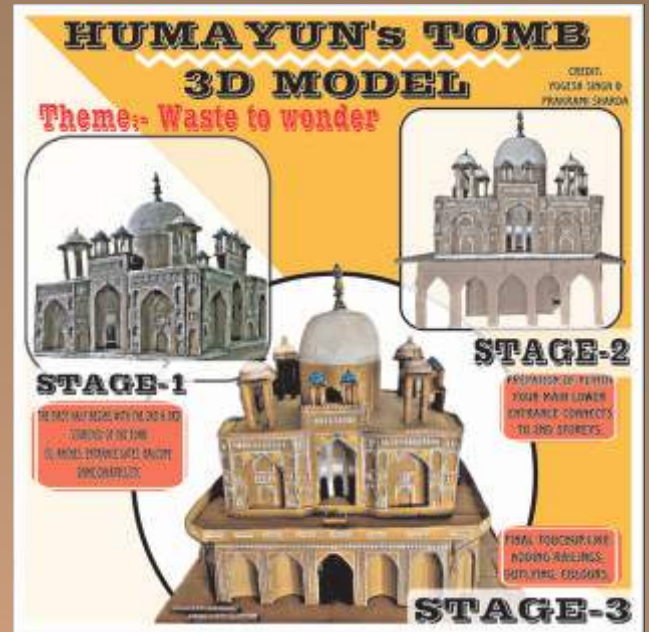
The diverse backgrounds of the students, as well as their learning about their own identities and those of their friends, enriched our understanding of heritage. The goal of this idea was to bring our everyday conversations into a structured academic piece that might resonate with others. This idea would never have taken shape without the hundreds of discussions and conversations that the students had with each other after classes, on field visits, and during workshops. Therefore, we would like to thank our classmates for this idea. As we wrote papers discussing and debating culture, heritage, ethics, and principles of conservation and archaeology, we found ourselves wanting a place where all our creative energies and passions could find expression. The idea of a student magazine available was thus conceived. Thankfully, our Dean and faculty were equally passionate about the idea and were willing to help us bring it to fruition.

This e-magazine is a stepping stone towards us contributing to the field and encouraging more students to join us to make heritage more relatable to those to whom it is an unfamiliar concept or subject. It allowed skill development and growth in our academic pursuits. We believe that everyone should be able to appreciate and celebrate their heritage through creative and innovative thinking. This e-magazine allows us to expand our horizons by opening up to more interdisciplinary ideas and interpretations beyond typical academia. This e-magazine hopes to provide a platform for students to share their unique perspectives. It is a place where they can explore their identities and learn about the cultures of others.

We hope this e-magazine will inspire others to appreciate their heritage and pass it on to the next generation. After all, we are all stewards of heritage and will one day pass it on as our legacy to the next generation. Similarly, we hope this e-magazine can be a legacy for the students of SHRM!

Editorial Team

Chief Editor : Dean SHRM
Student Editors : Srishti, Rashi, Ankit (2021-23), Brishti, Tripti and Tannistha (2022-24)
Faculty Editorial Advisors : Dr Sima Yadav and Dr Sailendra Kumar Swain
Contact Us : deanshrm@aud.ac.in



Made by: Yogesh Singh & Prakrami Sharda

Humayun's Tomb *Theme: Waste to Wonder*

Creating a D model of Humayun's tomb is an intricate process that requires meticulous planning and preparation. Based on our thorough and meticulous on-site inspections, we were able to obtain precise and detailed information, enabling us to create a comprehensive blueprint of the structure with utmost confidence. We paid close attention to the architectural features, layout, and colours of the tomb, carefully documenting each aspect of the monument. Using this information, we were able to develop a detailed framework for the D model that would ensure an accurate and realistic representation of this magnificent historical landmark. We used a variety of materials to construct the model, including cardboard boxes, thermacol sheets, bonding materials Hot-melt adhesive HMA, which is commonly sold as solid cylindrical sticks of various diameters, was used to create a form of thermoplastic adhesive that we applied using a hot glue gun. masking tape, Fevicol, box sealing tape, craft colour clay, and hardener black MC seal. We also used a detail pen cutter to ensure precise cuts, Kraft paper to add texture, and laces that were used because the lace pattern is quite similar to the edge of the wall of the tomb. Other materials used in the construction of the model included balls, with one ball for the main dome and other small balls for making *Rajputani* styles of chhatris semi-open, elevated, dome-shaped pavilions. We also added small flower motifs on each entrance gate of the tomb to enhance the model's overall aesthetic. In terms of colours, we used blue for the chhatri semi-open, elevated, dome-shaped pavilions and white for outlining. By taking a thorough and detailed approach to the construction process, we were able to create a D model of Humayun's tomb that was both accurate and visually stunning.

About the Artist: Yogesh Singh and Prakrami Sharda are currently pursuing Master's in Archaeology and Heritage Management from the School of Heritage Research and Management, Dr B.R. Ambedkar University, Delhi.



**School of Heritage Research
and Management Family**