



Time, Tools and Terrain: Rethinking Paradigms in Indian Prehistory



The South Asian Palaeolithic has significant potential to address questions of global importance, ranging from the nature and chronology of hominin dispersals across vast landscapes of Asia, to microlevel studies of studies of specific adaptive strategies and behavioural changes in the context of Pleistocene palaeoenvironmental variability. The speakers present an overview of their long-term research investigations at Attirampakkam and other sites in Tamil Nadu, that are significant in addressing larger debates of global interest. They also highlight strategies for planning heritage management of prehistoric sites and focus on the crucial issue of public outreach drawing on examples from their own programs.

About the speakers

Dr. Shanti Pappu, is the founder / secretary of Sharma Centre for Heritage Education (SCHE) and a former Professor of Prehistory from Deccan College, Pune, from where she completed her Ph.D. Along with Dr. Kumar Akhilesh, she is directing long-term interdisciplinary projects researching prehistory and palaeoenvironments along the southeast coast of India, including excavations at Attirampakkam and other sites. Field research along with satellite remote sensing is combined with public outreach and advocacy for heritage management. They have published two books and over 30 research papers in peer-reviewed journals, including *Science* and *Nature*. Dr. Pappu



is a former Homi Bhabha and Charles Wallace Fellow, amongst other awards and is a member of the selection committee of the Alexander von Humboldt German Chancellor Fellowship, amongst other positions held.

Dr. Kumar Akhilesh is the Director, SCHE and jointly directs the programs with Prof. Pappu, with numerous publications including in *Nature* and *Science*. He is directing a program on experimental knapping to investigate technological reduction strategies adopted at Palaeolithic and Microlithic sites in Tamil Nadu. He obtained his Ph.D. from Deccan College and is a former Homi Bhabha Fellow specializing in experimental knapping. He is also in charge of developing new sections in the children's museum at the SCHE. The SCHE organizes workshops on Prehistory, lithic studies and experimental lithic knapping. They are hosting an online archaeology forum, 'Down Ancient Trails' with lectures, discussion meetings and workshops.