

UNVEILING MARITIME HISTORY AND LOST CIVILIZATIONS THROUGH UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGY.

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Underwater archaeology is a sub-discipline offering profound insights into maritime history and ancient civilizations by studying submerged archaeological sites. This research paper is dedicated to exploring shipwrecks and sunken cities, revealing their significance, interdisciplinary nature, and promising future. Recent technological advances have paved the way for remarkable discoveries, making underwater archaeology an exciting frontier in archaeological research. Shipwrecks, acting as historical time capsules, unveil crucial information about ancient trade routes, maritime warfare, and seafaring technology. Prominent examples from the Age of Exploration and World War II shed light on critical historical events and societal conditions. Moreover, the excavation of Thonis - Heraklion, an ancient Egyptian city submerged for over a millennium, exemplifies the wealth of knowledge hidden in these sites, revealing insights into religious rituals, trade networks, and daily life. Beyond shipwrecks, submerged cities like Heracleion in Egypt, Pavlopetri in Greece, and Dwarka in India have become burgeoning research topics. Advanced technologies such as side-scan sonar, bathymetry, and LiDAR enable archaeologists to uncover these hidden urban centres and explore their remarkably preserved structures and artefacts. These discoveries offer significant insights into past civilizations, trade networks, and urban planning. The interdisciplinary aspect of underwater archaeology is a key highlight, with partnerships between archaeologists, oceanographers, geologists, marine biologists, and conservationists offering a comprehensive understanding of submerged landscapes. These collaborations address ecological impacts and preservation challenges, illustrated through successful case studies. Ethical considerations in underwater archaeological research are vital, as they balance the drive for discovery with responsible excavation practices and community engagement. Initiatives and guidelines have been developed to protect and manage submerged cultural heritage. The future of this field is promising, with extensive unexplored underwater territories holding the potential for further discoveries. Emerging technologies such as underwater drones, and DNA analysis are poised to revolutionize underwater archaeology. This research paper aims to inspire curiosity, underscore the significance of underwater archaeology, and emphasize the need for responsible exploration and preservation of our hidden submerged heritage.

Keywords: Underwater Archaeology, Sunken Cities, Shipwrecks, Ethical Considerations, Emerging Technologies.

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