

Prof. R. C. Sharma Chair for Art & Archaeology

Dr. V.S. Wakankar National Award conferred on Prof. Vidula Jayaswal

7th August 2020 was the day to be rejoiced by Jñāna-Pravāha as one of its senior fraternity Prof. Vidula Jayaswal was conferred Dr. V.S. Wakankar National Award for the year 2015-16 by Smt. Usha Thakur, Minister of Culture, Government of Madhya Pradesh. One of the most coveted academic recognitions, Dr. Wakankar National Award, honours eminent scholars of History of Arts and Archaeology for their original and valuable research contributions. The awardee receives a well framed citation and a token of appreciation of Rs 2 Lakh in a felicitation ceremony held at Bhopal. Due to the pandemic Covid-19, the function was organized online at Jñāna-Pravāha by Dr. Ramesh Yadav, Archaeological officer of the Directorate of Archaeology, Government of Madhya Pradesh. The Minister of Culture and senior officers of the Government of Madhya Pradesh joined from Bhopal. As mentioned in the citation, Prof. Jayaswal is honoured for conducting excavations of about a dozen important sites, covering the span between Prehistoric and Historical periods and publishing the report of each one of these. She has authored two dozen monographs and books and around eighty research papers.



Prof. Vidula Jayaswal and Dr. Ramesh Yadav during the Online Award Function



Dr. Ramesh Yadav presented the Citation and the Cheque to Prof. Vidula Jayaswal on behalf of the Minister Culture Government of Madhya Pradesh



Members of Jñāna-Pravāha, Government of Madhya Pradesh and Prof. Jayaswal rejoicing the Award after the function

Studies in Archaeology during 2020-2021

The report on the excavations of Saraswati Udyan and Shooltankeshwar which was sent to the publisher in the last session was finalized for printing. Entitled *Archaeology and Mythology of Varanasi - Report on Excavations at Shooltankeshwar and Saraswati Udyan*, was authored by Prof. Vidula Jayaswal. The final printing of the Report got delayed due to the lockdowns in succession.

The ongoing analysis of archaeological findings by the team lead by Prof. Vidula Jayaswal in the peripheral region of Varanasi, focused this year on the site Bhuli. A small hillock of sandstone, Bhuli was nucleus of stone chiselling during historical period. Located in Chunar *tahsil*, this site was brought to notice by Cunningham in 1877-78. The visit of the team from Jñāna-Pravāha under the leadership of Dr. Arvind Kumar Singh and Dr. Subhash Chandra Yadav (2019) could record more than hundred inscriptions, about a dozen mason's marks, symbols and engravings. In view to maintain precision in the documentation, the entire hill at Bhuli was mapped by GPS, and each of the epigraphs and other engravings was placed within its readings. The report on this important site was prepared during the session under consideration.

Prof A.K. Singh deciphered all the hundred and seven epigraphs. Besides highlighting the contents, he has also dated these on palaeographic grounds between fifth century CE and modern times. Name of stone carvers and architects of sixth and seventh centuries CE could be identified due to the suffix of *shilakutta* and *vastukara*. This is a significant information not commonly found in early historical times. The catalogue of stone carvings from the site is prepared by Dr. Meera Sharma. Dated stylistically in seventh-eighth centuries CE, the group appears to belong to Shiva temples.



Sandstone hillock containing inscriptions and engraved drawings, Bhuli



Short epigraphs engraved on Bhuili hill



Sketch of Shiva-linga and inscription recording the name of the engraver, Bhuili

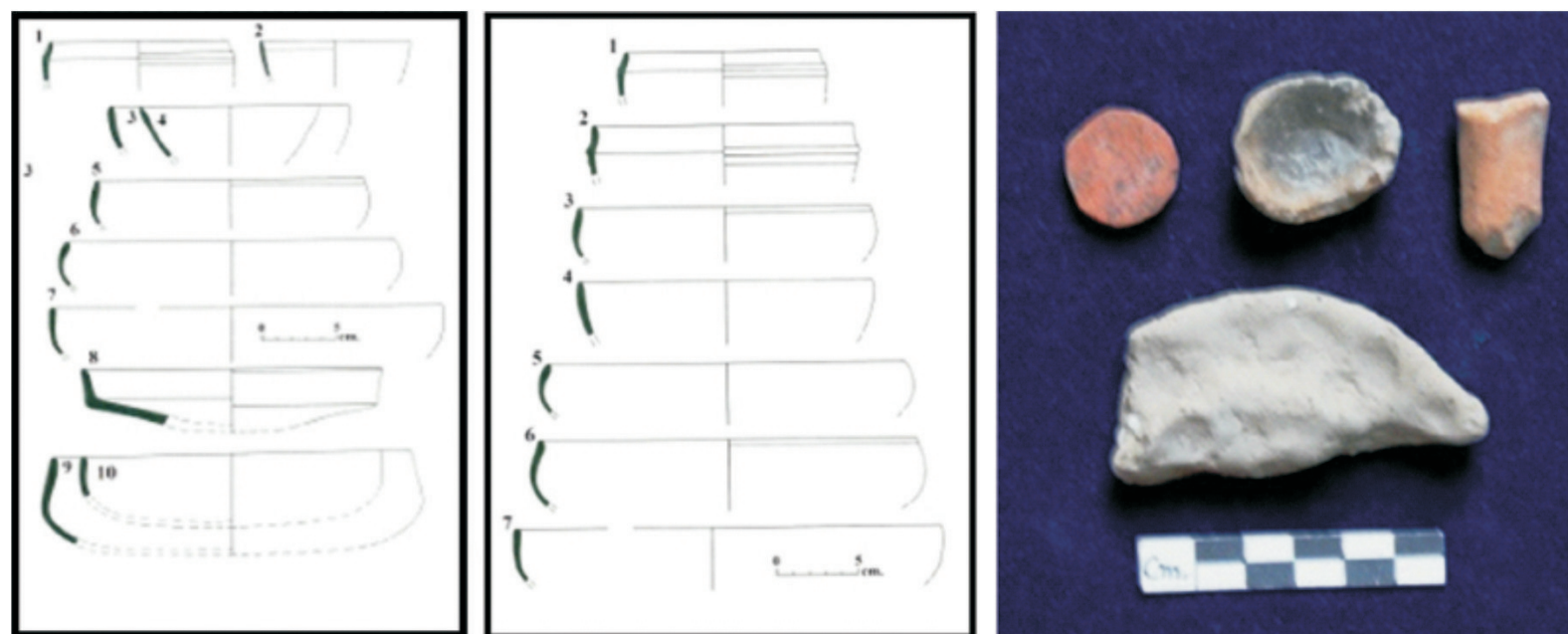


Sculptures found at the foothill, Bhuili



Dr. Meera Sharma preparing catalogue of stone carvings

A small habitation mound near the hill was under occupation during early Historical period. As the main pottery found from the cuttings of the ancient deposits were Late Northern Black Polished, Grey and Red Wares. The report of these findings was prepared by Prof. Vidula Jayaswal. The drawings of antiquities were prepared by Shri Ajay Kumar Chakrawal.



Pottery and fragments of terracotta figures, Bhuli

The period of long lockdown during 2020, due to Covid-19, made us confined in our homes. The task of writing the report in hand, thus, could not continue. Prof. Jayaswal utilized this period for writing one of the volumes of a series, in which she proposes to acquaint general readers, non-archaeologists, to be familiar with recent studies on the past. She wrote a monograph entitled *Clay Art for Folk Rituals of Ganga Plain*, which incorporates significant notes of her earlier publications based on the ethnographic and archaeological field studies. All the main aspects of ancient and modern terracotta - techniques, forms, utility, workshops, artisans and socio-economy of the craft dealt in this have replaced technical details of earlier publications with interpretative and simple narrations.



Prof. Jayaswal with a woman artisan at Navanaga Kumhara-tola, Gorakhpur

Modern ritual terracottas of Gorakhpur district



View of a terracotta production workshop, Varanasi

Clay figures of ancient times found from Khairadih (left) and Rajghat (right)



Advanced Study Courses/Workshops

Technical Training Courses in Archaeology

It was felt by Prof. Vidula Jayaswal that the practical training to the students of Indian Archaeology is not imparted in satisfactory amount at the Graduate and the Post-Graduate levels by most of the teaching institutions. As a result of which they often are neither able to understand the published details, nor are capable of communicating the significance of their own findings. Proper documentation of ancient remains, an imperative for Archaeology is aided with technical methods, and is a language to communicate the specification of discoveries. Each of the artefact or the structure which are exposed while excavating an ancient site, or is a surface discovery, is an important source of human history, and needs to be recorded and interpreted for revealing our past. Tools made of stone, bone or horn of the Prehistoric times, for instance, were the basic manmade category which catered to the daily needs of the man and, the forms and techniques of tool-kits developed parallel to the physical capacity of man. Similarly, earthen pots which served the edible needs and catered to the habits of the historical times, reflect separate line of history and development of potting technologies. Shelter, another basic need of man also has an individual history of development, of building technologies, as well as the changing socio-economic status of the society. All the archaeological remains thus, have to be documented by using select technical methods, for example, three dimensional drawings and photography, and by narrating the details in words. Three main categories of archaeological remains, viz. *Tools of the Stone Age*, *Ceramics of the Ancient Period* and *Ancient Structures* were selected for designing these courses.

The courses were designed and co-ordinated by Prof. Vidula Jayaswal. The technical training of the courses was imparted by Shri Rambadan, Shri Shiva Kumar and Shri Shiva Shankar Prajapati, Senior Draftsmen of Archaeology, Banaras Hindu University, and Shri Ajay Kumar Chakrawal, Draftsman, Jñāna-Pravāha.



Introduction of the Technical Courses
by the Coordinator Prof. Vidula Jayaswal



Technical training experts Shri Ajay Chakrawal, Shri Rambadan
and Shri Shiva Kumar (left to right)

With precautionary measures, only 36 serious students from different institutions of Varanasi, Baroda, Pune, Ghazipur, Azamgarh, Garhwal and Amarkantak were selected for these courses. Due to Covid-19 pandemic, it was decided not to admit more than 10 participants for one course. But, willing participants for Course 1, were double than the proposed number. At the request of the students this course was repeated.



The participants of the Courses in the classroom

Course-1 : Documentation of Stone Age Remains : Drawing and Description of Palaeolithic, Mesolithic & Neolithic Tool-kits

In the long span of about two lakh years Man was not only living on hunting and gathering food from the nature, but his activities were performed primarily by stone. Stone tools thus become backbone of prehistoric studies. The fine divisions of the time is determined on account of the form and techniques of these artifacts.

- The background of Stone Age with its major divisions, i.e., Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic, and main tool types of each phase was explained to the participants by the Coordinator.
- Main tools of each period of Stone Age were discussed thereafter.
- Participants were then taught drawing tools and writing descriptions.
- They were also imparted training of conjoining method, to fix the basic form of flaking specimen by putting together its' small chipped parts. This helps in understanding in which way the tools were made.
- Participants were also explained drawing and documentation of tools in published reports on Prehistoric sites.
- Participants were given assignment to document the specimens drawn by them and also to note details of published drawings. This helped in ascertaining their understanding of the exercises designed for the course.
- All the assignments were assessed and discussed by the Coordinator with the individual participants.
- This course was conducted twice, first from 17th to 21st February 2021, and second from 23rd to 27th February 2021.



Prof. Vidula Jayaswal delivering lecture on the main aspects of Prehistoric tools

Students learning conjoining method



Students learning drawing a tool from Shri Rambadan

Prof. Jayaswal explaining a tool





Prof. Jayaswal checking assignments



Prof. Jayaswal explaining flaking technique with the help of tool-making debris



Chief Guest Smt. Krishna Neotia gave certificates to the students successfully completing Course-1



Participants with Coordinator after receiving certificate of Course-1 : Documentation of Prehistoric Tools



Prof. Kamal Giri, the Director and Chief Guest, gave certificates to students successfully completing Course-1 : Documentation of Prehistoric Tools (repeat course)



Participants with Managing Trustee, Director and Coordinator after receiving certificate of Course-1 : Documentation of Prehistoric Tools (repeat course)

Course-2: Documentation of Old Structures : Preparation and Description of Plan and Elevation of Buildings

Shelter is one of the main requirements of man. Its history starts from the Stone Age and continues till today. There are marked stages of development in the nature and technique of construction of shelters, which help dating archaeological horizons and determining the dwelling tendencies of ancient communities. From small groups of huts of semi-permanent nature in the Prehistoric times, the settlements developed into villages and, eventually, in cities. The use of durable material in the later stages helped elaborate architectural features as well as added elements of hygiene and utility. Documentation and three dimensional recording of structural remains, along with the details of material used, is another significant aspect of the archaeological studies.

- An introduction of the history of structures of Ancient India was felt necessary for the course, which was delivered in the form of an illustrated lecture by the Coordinator.



Prof. Vidula Jayaswal explaining the history of structures through computer

- The general format of recording structures at archaeological sites is by drawing plan and elevation. This was explained and also taught practically.
- Participants themselves prepared drawing of one structure and wrote details of it.
- They were given assignments to describe drawings of exposed structures from published archaeological reports.
- Co-ordinator examined and discussed assignments of each of the participant individually.
- This course was conducted between 16th and 20th February 2021.



Participants measuring plan of structure under the supervision of Shri Shiva Kumar



Participants learning drawing plan from Shri Shiv Kumar and Shri Rambadan



Participants learning drawing of elevation from Shri Ajay Kumar Chakrawal in front of a wall





Prof. Jayaswal discussing assignment with a student



Participant receiving certificate after the completion of Course from Smt. Bimla Poddar, Managing Trustee



Participants with Coordinator after receiving certificates of Course-2 : Documentation of Ancient Structures

Course-3 : Documentation of Ancient Ceramic : Drawing, Reconstruction and Description of Pottery

The most frequent finding of archaeological sites is large collection of fragments of earthen pots. Pottery is not only found in sufficient quantities, but it also changes its shape and texture every few centuries. It is therefore, the backbone of study of excavated remains. While excavating a site, it is possible to fix date and chronology of the entire habitation-deposit on the basis of the contemporary ceramics. Since associated with the edible requirements, earthen pots also reveal nature of their use in storage, cooking, serving and other daily utility, on account of which socio-economic format of the ancient societies are possible to reconstruct. Documentation of pottery requires a good grasp of draftsmanship. And, also the three dimensional recording needs skills of reconstruction.

- Initiated around 7th millennium BCE, the production of earthen pots has an interesting history of technique of its making. Time to time changes in the food habits might also have influenced pottery collections. An introduction to the history of ancient ceramic of India, therefore, was an essential background for the participants of the Course. This was complied by Prof. Jayaswal in the beginning.
- A number of clay pots of different shapes and sizes were purchased. These were broken, to demonstrate how the bulk of pot-fragments forms in ancient deposits. This collection of potsherds were classified and drawn by the participants.
- In view to give them first-hand experience of pottery of the ancient period, one of the studied collections from Rajghat site was made available to them. This enabled them to identify different types of fabric, texture and colours, which are typical to the early historic pottery.
- Participants were also made to study drawing and descriptions of Ancient Indian pottery published in the Archaeological Report.
- They were given assignment to describe drawings from the published Archaeological Reports.
- Co-ordinator examined and discussed assignments of each of the participant individually.
- This course was conducted between 23rd and 27th February 2021.



Participants attending Introductory lecture



Participants breaking modern pots under supervision of the Coordinator



Students learning pottery drawing from Shri Ajay (left) and Shri Shiva Shankar (right)





Prof. Jayaswal teaching pottery analysis (left) and checking assignments (right)



Chief Guest Prof. Yugal Kishor Mishra, Trustee and Acharya distributed Certificates to participants (left) & Prof. Kamal Giri, Director at the closing session of the courses (right)



Participants with Managing Trustee, Chief Guest & Coordinator after receiving certificates of Course-3 : Documentation of Ancient Ceramic