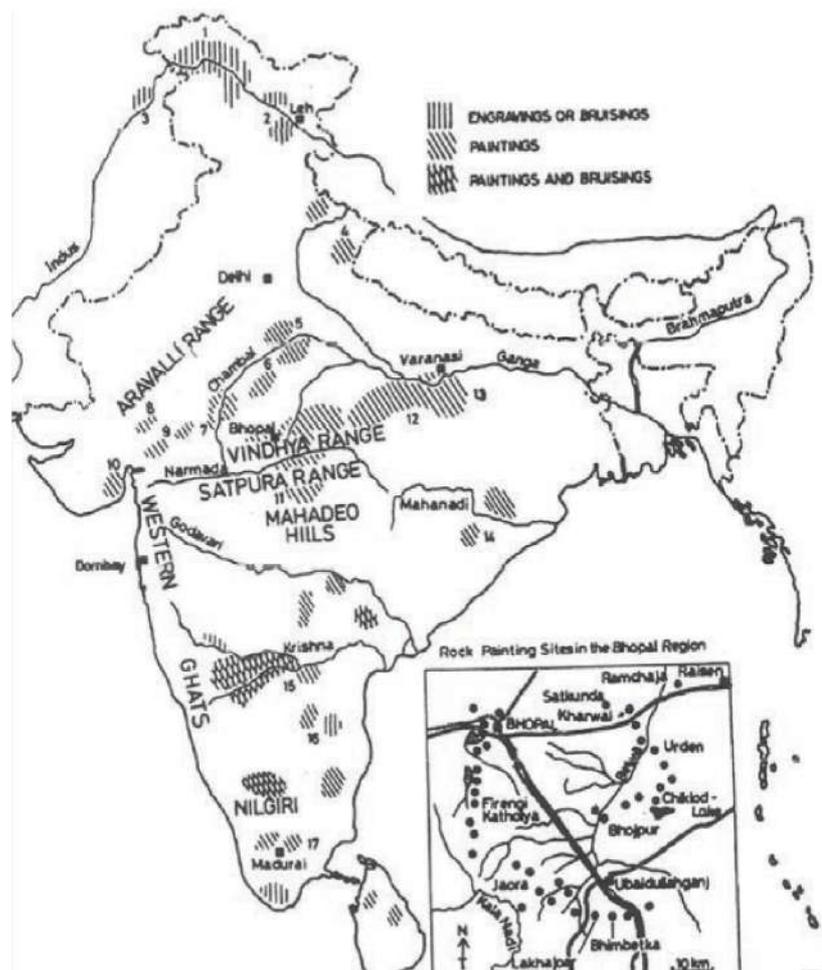


Recent Trends in Rock Art Research in India

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Among the many things that our ancestors left behind nothing is more evocative and exciting than their signatures on rock. Painted and engraved walls of caverns, rocks and boulders present us an avenue to walk through archaic expressions of human societies as well as their cultural traditions. Rock art is a global phenomenon and as of today it is reported from more than 150 countries and regions across the world. Its antiquity ranging from the Palaeolithic to Historic periods is an important evidence of human creativity through the vicissitudes of time and space. In the history of mankind rock art is the only form of fine art having such a wide distribution and longevity. India is one of the very rich zones containing rock art along with South Africa, Australia, North and South America, Europe and Saudi Arabia. The spectrum of Indian rock art is vast both in terms of their thematic and stylistic contents. In magnitude, vividness and richness it is outstanding and in some respect unique in the world, forming an important cultural heritage. It constitutes the visual documents of our ancestors, which are fascinating as well as challenging at the same time in terms of their interpretations. The rock art of India is quite distinct on its own and not comparable with



Map : Distribution of major rock art regions in India

any other parts of the world owing to its diversity in thematic contents and cultural continuity till recent times.

For a long time, after the pioneering discoveries made in 1867 by the colonial period geologist Archibald Charlyle in the forested region of the Kaimur ranges in Mirzapur District of Uttar Pradesh, the existence of rock art in India was an enigma and even its very antiquity was questioned. However, though its study crossed the threshold of archaeology rather late, after the discovery of Bhimbetka, the spectacular rock art site in Madhya Pradesh by Padmashri Dr. V. S. Wakankar in 1957, brought a new momentum recognizing its archaeological potential.

The vast corpus of rock art in India is confined to sandstone and granite pockets, stretching from southern parts of Kerala to the high altitudes of the Ladakh and Zaskar valleys in the north and from Gujarat and the deserts of Rajasthan in the west to the large hilly tracts of Central India, Chhota Nagpur plateau, Odisha, Bengal, and the far eastern regions of Assam, Manipur, and Nagaland in the east, encompassing almost all the states of India (See Map). Rock paintings have been found in the most diverse geographical, geological and climatic regions, particularly in the areas of sedimentary, metamorphosed and igneous rocks, of the Indian subcontinent. The rock art sites are mostly found on the plateaus, hill tops and slopes, in the valleys and gorges having rock shelters, caves and open rocks. These are located in the regions where nature unveils its serene beauty in the form of lush green forests full of flora, wild fauna and plenty of natural resources to sustain life. However, the largest concentration is confined to the quartzite regions of the Vindhyan ranges of Madhya Pradesh and its Kaimurean extensions into Uttar Pradesh. Equally important paintings and engravings were reported from Southern Deccan in the extensive granite wilderness of the Krishna-Tungabhadra Doab.

Earliest Rock Art Expressions

In the Indian context, the antiquity of rock art dates back to Upper Palaeolithic period. However, evidence of artistic expression begins with the haematite and quartz crystals found in the Acheulean deposits of the Lower Paleolithic period. One such haematite specimen was found at locality V at Hunsgi (Karnataka) and bears a worn out facet with distinctive striation marks suggesting that it had been used as a crayon to colour or mark a rock surface (Bednarik 1990). The excavator believes that these haematite nodules were brought to the spot from some distance, since this material does not occur in its natural state around the site. He further states that these red ochre nodules must have been used for body decoration or similar other purposes (Paddayya 1984:356). Interesting evidence also comes from Singi Talav (Rajasthan) where, from the base of the Lower Paleolithic deposit, six small quartz crystals were recovered (Fig.1). They measure 7 to 25 mm in length and are therefore too small to have been used as tools and were almost entirely unmodified. Like the Hunsgi haematite nodules, they were brought to the site deliberately and were apparently collected for their visual qualities (Bednarik 1994:

356-57a). Although regarded as a tentative inference, one cannot rule out the possible functional reality involving an aesthetic sense amongst our early ancestors.

Such an early beginning for rock art is further substantiated by the discovery of petroglyphs found at the site of Bhimbetka. Bednarik has reported two petroglyphs from the excavated Auditorium rock shelter (III-F 24). These consisted of a large circular scooped out cupule and a pecked meandering line running to its periphery. Their stratigraphic position within the habitation deposit suggests that they were made during the Acheulian period. He considered them as the oldest known rock art in the world (Bednarik 1994, 356-57a; Bednarik et al.1991:34). More recently Giriraj Kumar has reported nearly 500 cupules at Daraki-Chattan (Fig.2) near Bhanpura in Chambal valley and assigned them to the Palaeolithic period based on the occurrence of the Acheulean and Middle Palaeolithic implements on the same cave floor (Kumar, 2006).

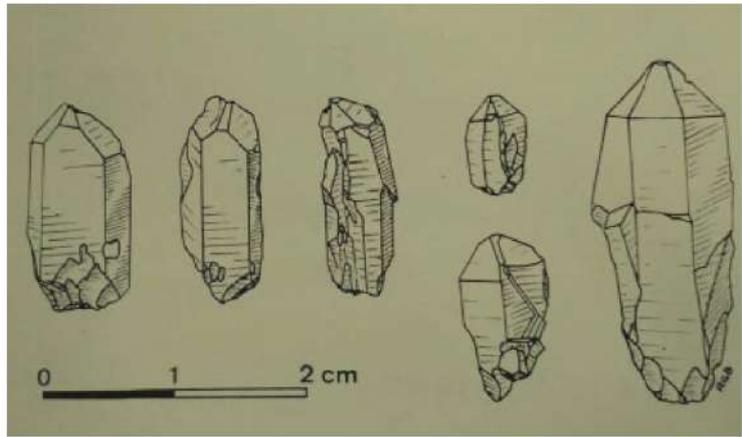


Fig.1 : Quartz crystals, Singi Talav, Rajasthan

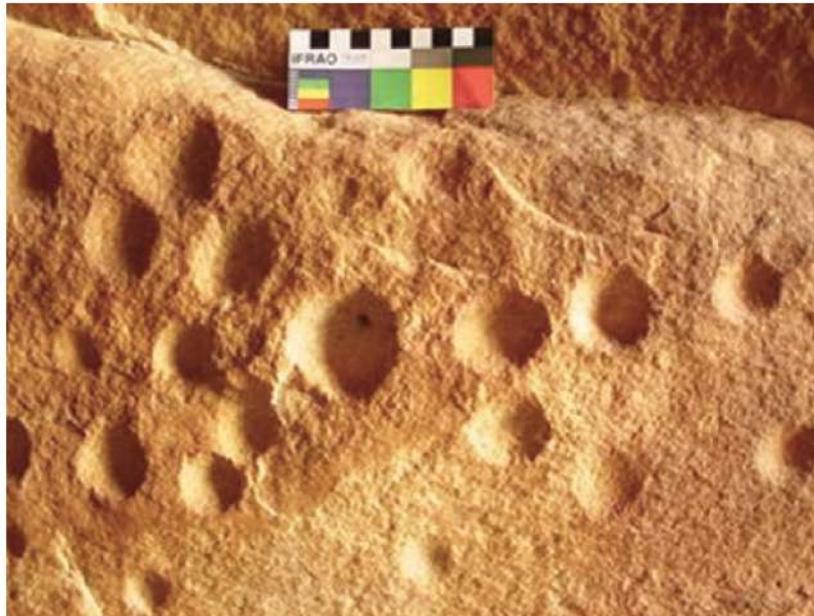


Fig.2 : Cup marks, Darki Chattan, Bhanpura

It is quite possible to infer that some of the symmetrically formed and beautiful looking bifaces often encountered in the lithic assemblages of the Lower Paleolithic period reflect the artistic ability of the tool makers and served as either art or religious objects. Two such circular discoid stone artifacts of non-utilitarian character, one found from Bhimbetka III F-24 and the other from Maihar (Madhya Pradesh), have provided

possible relevant evidence in this regard (Bednarik 1992). The anthropomorphs forming part of the Copper Hoards and numerous ethnographic analogies would corroborate this assumption.

Upper Paleolithic Phase

Though there is no dispute of the historicity of the Mesolithic rock paintings, it is quite likely, as Wakankar believed some of the early paintings done in green colour do belong to the Upper Paleolithic phase of Indian prehistory. The possible basis for this supposition is that faceted green earth (what he called terra verta)



Fig.3 : Intricate geometric patterns, Shamala hills, Bhopal

Though red colour is most frequently found in the paintings of the earliest style in the region around Bhopal, there are instances of paintings drawn in green and a few even in yellow. These paintings show a strictly codified repertoire in their style and use of space as if they were part of a widely understood communication system. They are distinguished from later paintings by a high degree of craftsmanship and a characteristic uniformity. The quality of application of the pigment in the form of controlled and fine lines seen in these early paintings symbolizes the beginning of

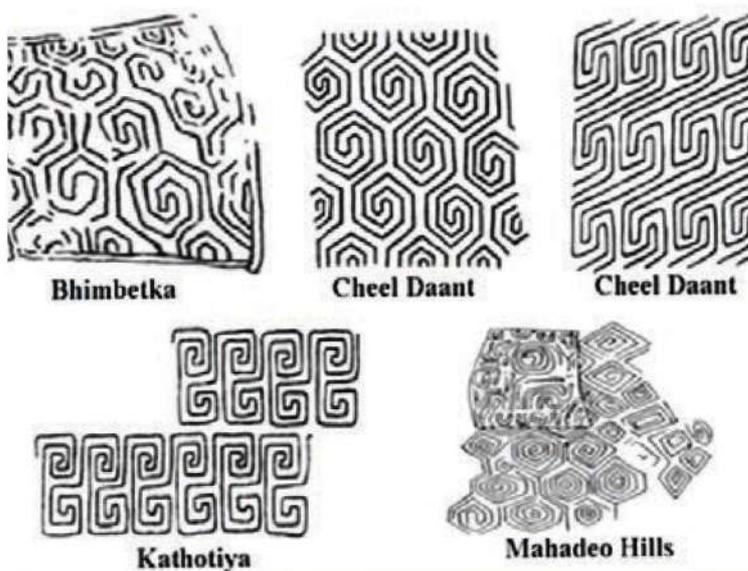


Fig.4 : Pre-figurative rock paintings

has been found in the Upper Palaeolithic deposits of one of the excavated rock shelters (III A-24) at Bhimbetka (Wakankar 1975b: 19; 1983). However, there is a dispute about the chronological position of the green paintings. Some researchers feel otherwise and have remarked that green paintings were preceded by red paintings (Tyagi 1992, 304). Here emphasis has to be given to the style rather than the colour of the paintings.

known or surviving rock art in India. Basically the Upper Palaeolithic paintings can be broadly subdivided into two phases, pre-figurative or non-iconic and figurative or iconic, on the basis of their thematic styles.

Closer inspection of global rock art sites shows that pre-figurative rock art precedes the figurative one in most cases. The pre-figurative art consists of fairly restricted range

of elements or form constants, which are found in numerous variants or which may be built into elaborate 'mazes' or geometric arrangements. The basic element of all archaic rock art is dominated by curvilinear motifs like concentric circles, spirals with variations and intermediate forms including geometric motifs (Bednarik 1994b). Indian rock art is no exception to this widely accepted phenomenon. Paintings consisting of geometric patterns or intricate designs form the most conspicuous feature of this earlier style (Neumayer 1993: 43). In several paintings these intricate designs often identified as Labyrinthian are composed of rhombic meanders and honeycomb patterns along with their multiple derivatives and cover a large space of virgin rock shelter surface (Figs.3-4). None of these are superimposed on any of the earlier paintings (Tyagi 1992: 304-06).



Fig.5 : Red intricate design superimposed by green dynamic dancing figures, Jaora



Fig.6 : 'S' shaped dynamic dancing figures, Jaora

Chronologically, pre-figurative or non iconic symbolic motifs are followed by figurative or iconic representations. This has been attested at some places where 'S' type of green paintings depicting dynamic dancing human figures have been observed superimposed on the intricate designs of earlier paintings drawn in red ochre (Fig.5). The striking feature of this later style consists of human forms which are transformed

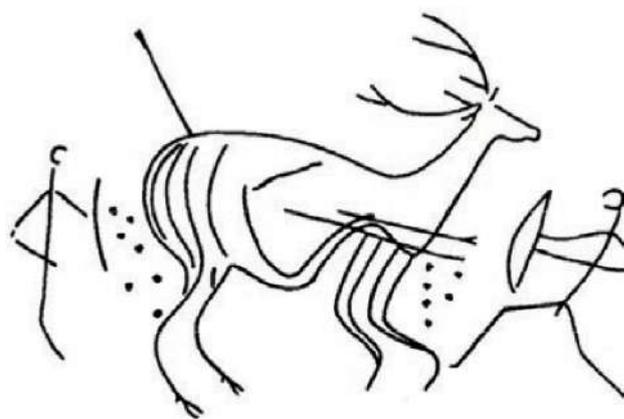


Fig.7 : Hunting scene, Putli Karar

to perfect 'S' shapes (Fig.6). These paintings do not depict any activities except dancing and hunting scenes and are known for their vigorous dynamism which

is unparalleled in later rock art (Fig.7). In this regard, the authenticity of a green painting depicting an ostrich noticed recently by S.K. Pandey at one of the sites in Central India might resolve the earlier controversy (personal communication with S.K. Pandey). In several rock shelters the intricate designs are found as body decoration of some animal figures (Fig.8). Here, among other designs, the spiral rhomboid is a recurring motif on the large and uncommon depiction of wild boar, elephant, rhinoceros and deer. These large figures are identified as 'deified animals' (Misra 1985:120). It seems this early tradition continued to some extent even during the Mesolithic period and therefore sometimes becomes difficult to demarcate precisely.

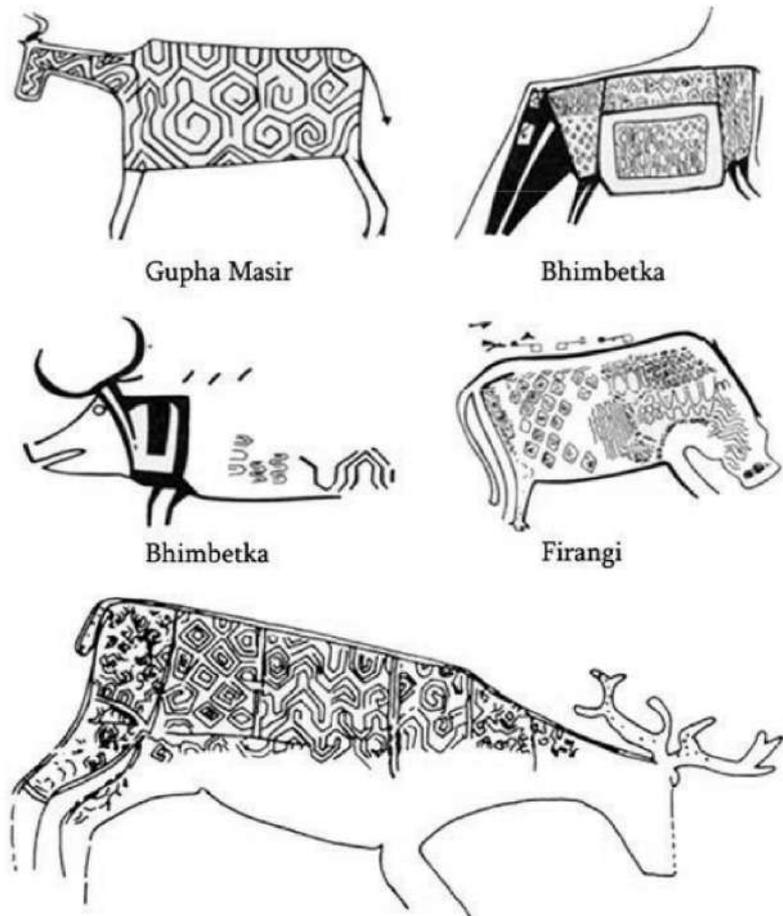


Fig.8 : Animal figures decorated with intricate designs

Other Forms of Rock Art

Apart from rock paintings, interesting evidence pertaining to ostrich egg shells, bones and stones comes from a few sites of this period. In this regard, an engraved portable artifact of applied art is reported from Patne (Maharashtra). Of several ostrich egg shell pieces recovered from Upper Paleolithic levels, one had a distinct simple geometric pattern forming a criss-cross hatching between two parallel lines. A somewhat similar engraved design is also seen on the lower part of the same egg shell fragment (Fig.9). This has been dated to 25,000 BP based on C14 dates of the ostrich egg shell samples from the same strata (Sali 1974: 157). The authenticity of the engraving found on the ostrich egg shell pieces reported from Bhopal, Ramnagar and Chandresal has been questioned by scholars (Bednarik 1993: 24; 1994: 359a; Neumayer 1990: 27), although they have furnished very early dates ranging from 40,000 to 25,000 BP (Kumar et al 1988).

Ostrich egg shells were also effectively exploited for making ornamental beads. Two such perforated disc beads were reported from Patne. Two more beads of this category were found at Bhimbetka in shelter III A-28 excavated by Wakankar. All of them were recovered from the stratified archaeological deposits of the Upper



Fig.9 : Engraved ostrich egg shell, Patne

Palaeolithic period. In this context, recent discovery of an ostrich egg shell bead (Fig.10) manufacturing site in Narmada valley at Khaparkheda by S. B. Ota and Sheila Mishra is very interesting (Ota: personal communication). Apart from these, barrel shaped bone beads and grooved animal teeth (Bovid) pendants were found from one of the Kurnool caves (Bila Surgam III) of Andhra Pradesh (Murty and Reddy 1975). The Upper Palaeolithic cave site of Muchchatala Chintamanu Gavi has furnished a TL date of C. 19000 BP from where one such bone bead was obtained

(Murthy 1974). All these specimens show facilities of attachment to a string and they constitute the earliest known evidence of ornamentation in India.

In this context, a carved bone artifact recovered from cemented gravel layer III of Lohanda Nala in the Belan valley (Uttar Pradesh) is worth recalling (Fig.11). The specimen is about 8 cm long, 1.5 to 2.5 cm broad and about 1 cm thick. It has generated two divergent feelings among scholars – whether to call it a figure of mother goddess or an object similar to a harpoon (Gupta 1979-80; Bednarik 1993:34-35). However, it is now regarded as a well made bone harpoon which suffered extensive damage in very coarse sediment matrix. Its presence thus provides cogent evidence of highly sophisticated tradition of bone working during this period even in India. The stratum in which

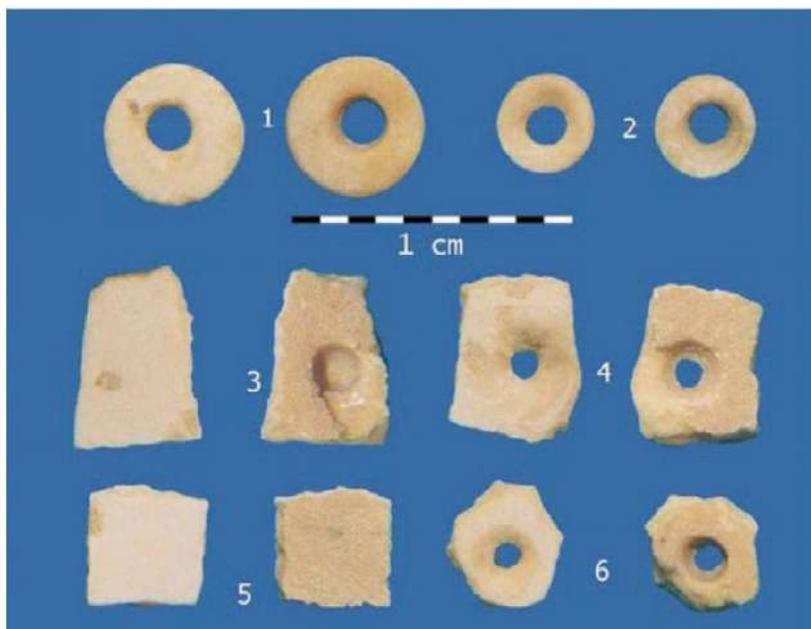


Fig.10 : Ostrich egg shell beads from Khaparkheda

this artifact was embedded contains evidence of Upper Palaeolithic blade and burin industry and was dated to 25000 BP, on the basis of C-14 dating of fresh water shells (Misra 1977:49).

A solitary object found from Chandravati in Rajasthan in the form of an engraved core is highly significant in this context. The design engraved on the semi-rectangular patinated cortex of the chert nodule appears to be like a spiral rhomboid (Fig.12). The



Fig.11 : Bone harpoon,
Lohanda Nala, Belan
valley, U.P.

design consists of a pair of parallel lines moving clockwise from the centre forming two intertwining spiral arms. One of these arms bears a series of short diagonal lines whereas the other one has been left plain to render a foreground and background effect. The engraver has taken care to make these infinitesimal yet distinguishable marks. This precisely indicates the specific intention of the artist to ensure that the significance and visual effect of the engraved design should not go unnoticed. The design was engraved on the nodule prior to its use as a core (Sonawane 1995-96). Identical designs have been found painted in earlier rock paintings at Mahadev hills, Cheel Dant, Bhimbetka, Kathotiya and several other places in India which are identified as examples of pre-figurative rock art. A striking parallel exists even in the Upper Palaeolithic art of Mezin, a site in Ukraine (south Russia) where similar designs have been found engraved on the mammoth ivory female figurines as well as ivory bracelet (Fig.13) of late Pleistocene period (Clark 1977). The motif engraved on the Chandravati core and its variations found elsewhere in numerous early rock paintings clearly denote some religious connotations in prehistoric art (Sonawane 1997: 12-14). In this regard the evidence obtained from the Upper Palaeolithic site of Baghor 1, Son Valley, Madhya Pradesh, (Fig.14), offers an important convincing clue (Kenoyer et. al.1983).

Owing to their close similarity with the design engraved on the Chandravati core, the earliest paintings representing geometric patterns had been attributed to the Mesolithic phase (Sonawane 1992). The Chandravati specimen is

not actually dated, since it forms a part of the surface assemblage. It is merely assumed to be Mesolithic and acknowledged that the engraving on the object predated its use as core (Bednarik 1993:34). However, Tyagi's only objection to Wakankar's observation is that green paintings representing 'S'- shaped dynamic dancing human figures are not the earliest paintings (Tyagi 1992: 310). In the light of new evidences, both from Chandravati and elsewhere, it appears that the pattern of design engraved on the Chandravati core



Fig.12 : Engraved chert core, Chandravati



Fig.13 : Ivory bracelet, Mezin, South Russia



Fig.14 : Natural triangular sandstone, Baghor I

is of the Upper Paleolithic tradition (Sonawane 2008). In view of the above situation, rock paintings representing purely geometric patterns as pre-figurative or non-iconic art forms and succeeding figurative or iconic

depictions painted either in red or green, animated human and animal figures need to be seriously considered as the earliest depictions belonging to the Upper Paleolithic period. The existence of these early paintings has been consolidated by other contemporary surviving art objects as a parallel or simultaneous development at par with the rest of the world.

Mesolithic Phase

The wide spectrum of rock art of the Mesolithic phase is full of varied descriptive details. The paintings essentially portray a hunting gathering population. It is surprisingly uniform in style and content all over India. There is a remarkable divergence in the degree of abstraction between the depiction of human and animal forms. All hunting scenes show animals drawn quite realistically characterized by vitality and dynamism, whereas the human forms are reduced to stick-like figures in a stylistic

manner. Sometimes, humans are shown wearing masks or elaborate head dress. This difference between human and animal depictions is most visible in hunting scenes. Again, in contrast to fragile male figures, the female form is always static with a plump square body. Since animals and women are quite bulky, there was enough room for body decoration. Intricate design patterns like the spiral or honey-comb are seen in such paintings and thus show continuity of the earlier tradition (Fig.15). There is no clear demarcation between body pattern and 'X-Ray depictions'. Both appear at places side by side within single composition. Mesolithic paintings give a remarkably detailed account of various activities, recording minute details of the intended message. The hunting scenes which predominate in the rock art of this period show a variety of game animals, both big and small. Among these, which are clearly identified, include gaur, humped cattle, buffalo, rhinoceros, elephant, tiger, leopard, boar, sambar, chital, chinkara, nilgai, blackbuck, monkey, jackal, fox, dog, rat and porcupine. All these animals have been depicted in a variety of positions like standing, sitting, grazing, walking and running. They are shown being hunted with spears

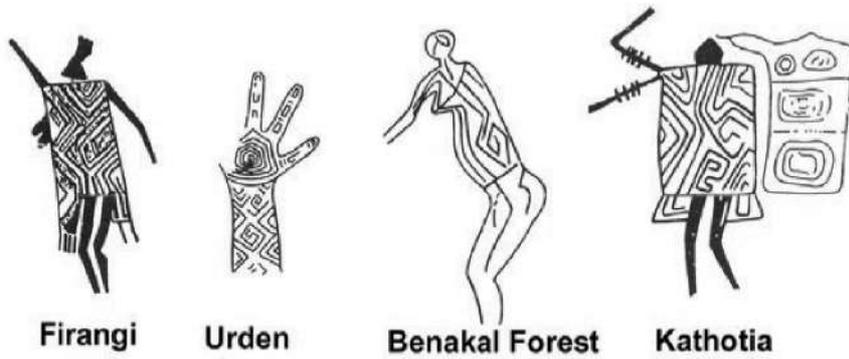


Fig.15 : Female figurines decorated with intricate patterns

and arrows, tipped and barbed with microliths (Figs.16-17). They also furnish fairly detailed description of a variety of traps used for capturing game, shooting arrows at prey, transporting the kill (Fig.18), butchering, fishing (Fig.19), catching rats by pushing digging sticks into the burrow

(Fig.20), as well as the collection of fruits, honey and other subsistence practices. Apart from these, there are paintings which depict other activities such as dancing, singing, playing with musical instruments (Neumayer 1992-93b), drinking and eating inside a roofed house (Fig.21). A large number of paintings show subjects which may be classed as religious or cultic. Here, we find mythical stories depicting huge defied animals chasing diminutive human beings. Scenes narrating magical cures or medical treatments signify a deeper meaning in their creation. The most touching is the scene of a child burial where family members are mourning (Fig.22). Depending upon the nature, theme and space available, these paintings vary in size from a few



Fig.16 : Hunters carrying barbed arrows, Kharwai

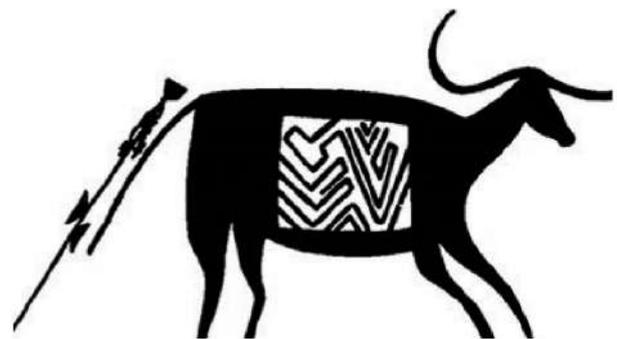


Fig.17 : Transverse microliths hafted on a shaft, Lakhajaoar

centimeters to more than life size. Most of the paintings have been done in shades of red such as scarlet, purple, chocolate and orange. These paintings therefore render an expression of urge of an individual, charged with a mission or prompted by some artistic exultation (Chakravarty 1984:16).

Compared to the rock paintings, Mesolithic engravings are few and far between, with whatever is known being in the form of mere scratches, figures of animals or abstract patterns. In Odisha (Pradhan 1995) and in Bihar (Chakraverty 1996), such



Fig.18 : Transporting the kill, Jaora

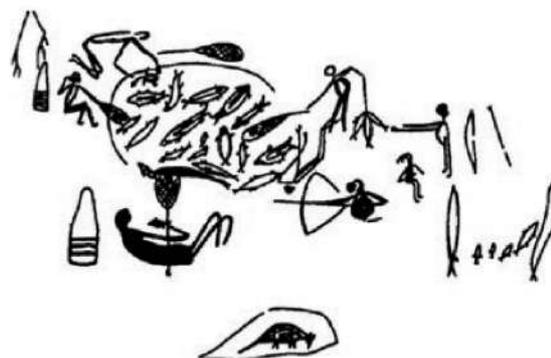


Fig.19 : Fishing scene, Lakhajoar

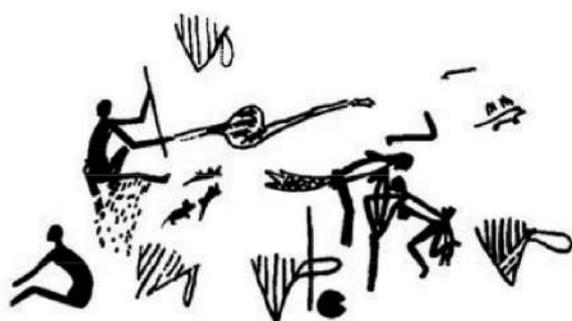


Fig.20 : One of the modes of rat hunting, Jaora

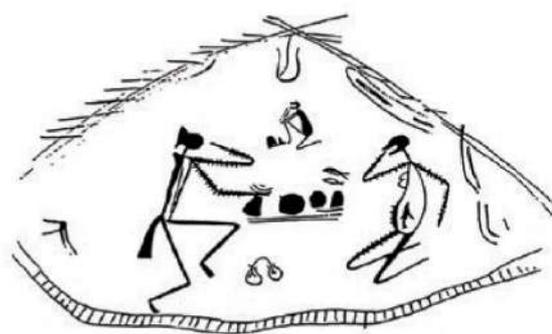


Fig.21 : A family in a hut-like structure, Lakhajoar

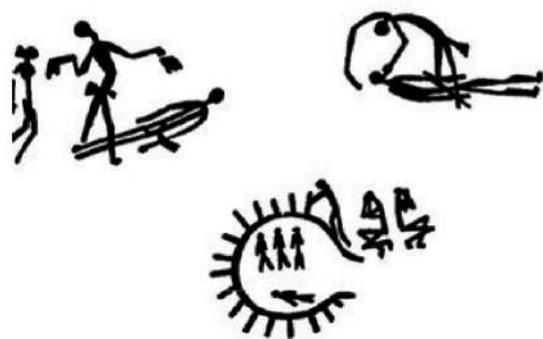


Fig.22 : Painting depicting magical cure, medical treatment and a burial scene, Bhimbetka

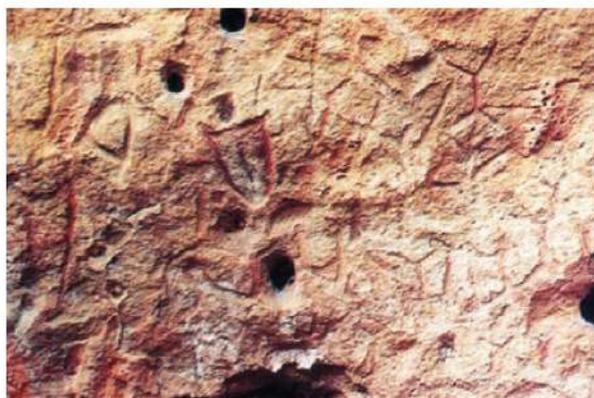


Fig.23 : Engraved pigmented triangles, Tongo

engravings were invariably filled in with colours (Fig.23). The continuity in the tradition of engravings as mode of expression is further supported by discovery of bone objects recovered from Mesolithic deposits in the rock shelter III A-28 of the Bhimbetka complex (Wakankar 1975b). The engraving consists of simple straight or zigzag lines and irregular parallelogrammatic designs. Apart from this, the evidence

of bone and antler rings used as ornamental earrings and components of a necklace from Sarai Nahar Rai and Mahadaha (Uttar Pradesh) supply additional information on the aesthetic taste developed by the Mesolithic communities (Pal 1994).

Neolithic-Chalcolithic Phases

An abrupt change in style and theme is seen between the rock art of the hunter-gatherers and that of the early agriculturists. The earliest pictures of this period featuring domesticated animals are stylistically well demarcated from the pictures of the preceding periods. The dynamic art of the hunters and gatherers gets replaced by a progressively stiff and static art of the agriculturists and cattle-keepers. Their thematic spectrum is extremely limited and confined to the depiction of long-horned humped cattle. However, where hunting scenes were painted, they give us a good idea about the weapons used during this period. Although the most common weapons were bows and arrows, the appearance of metal arrow heads, spears and axes herald a fast changing technology. The complexity of this available technology is best represented by the depiction of chariots. Several large Chalcolithic pictures show processions, accompanied by acrobats, boxers, load carriers and musicians. In several such scenes, chariots and their crew are prominently depicted showing an advanced stage of social stratification. Agriculture, the economic foundation of this period, is hardly shown in the paintings except those found at Chaturbhujnath Nala and Lakhajuar, where paintings of ploughing farmers are seen. All the Chalcolithic pictures of central India represent a man's world, in which women were depicted very peripherally. Similar tendencies are also visible in the Neolithic/Chalcolithic pictures of south India where women appear very subservient to ithyphallic men. There are also instances of scenes depicting heterosexual intercourse in different postures.

Depictions of bullock carts are quite frequent as the common vehicle for transportation. A cart bruising from Kupgallu, resembles the terracotta toy cart models reported from several Chalcolithic sites, is worth recalling (Fig.24). There are several indications that chariots were drawn by horses and in paintings also they appear as mounts. Compared to these, elephant-riders are sparsely depicted.

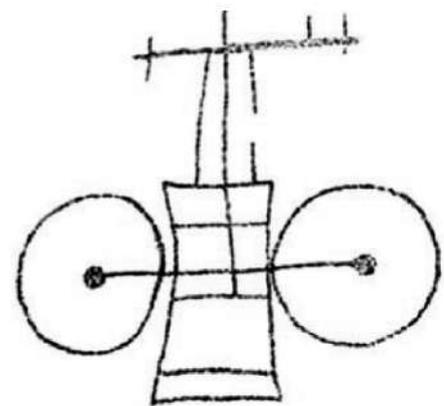


Fig.24 : Line drawing of the rock bruising depicting a cart, Kupgallu

Elegant long horned bulls are a special feature of Neolithic/Chalcolithic pictures in south India, occupying the position of an icon. One interesting depiction comes from Kupgallu where four typical bulls are aligned at the periphery of a circle (Fig.25). In other pictures, they are placed on a T-shaped pedestal. Besides this, there are several bruising of large implements. Compared to the size of the accompanying human figures, they are drawn excessively large. These engravings of implements are often placed at prominent points on the granite

hills indicating their use as standards or cultic weapons. Likewise, depictions of endless knots recall the design pattern engraved on the copper plates found at Mohenjo-Daro (Sundara 1996). Of these, several rock art sites are situated in the vicinity of Megalithic burials. Obviously, some of the paintings and engravings can be related to burial practices (Rajan 1991). One such painting shows a dead person within the burial inventory of a stone circle in Benekal forest.

In the same spirit, rock paintings found in the Karakoram region and Himalayas, particularly in the upper course of the river Indus and its tributaries in Ladakh and Zaskar, show hunters with bows and arrows stalking ibex, deer and bovids (Francfort et. al. 1992). These compare well with the hunting scenes engraved on the stone slab (Fig.26) recovered from

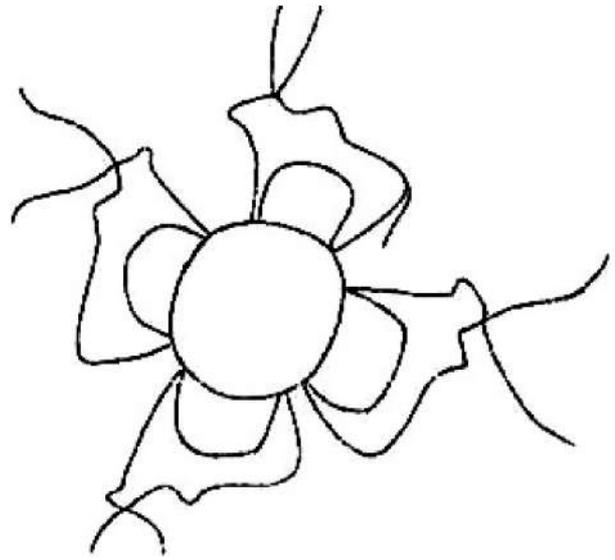


Fig.25 : Line drawing of the rock bruising depicting long-horned bulls, Kupgallu

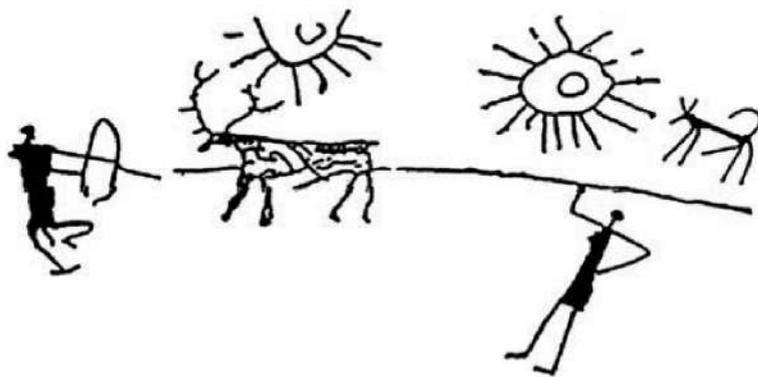


Fig.26 : Hunting scene engraved on a stone slab, Burzahom

the rectangular structure belonging to the Neolithic phase II at Burzahom showing the hunting of a deer by two armed persons (Pande 1971). Another slab found in the same context at the same site, has an abstract design identified as a tectiform or trap, representing a hut with a thatched domed roof (Pande 1972).

The obvious advantages of dating the rock art of this cultural phase is the availability of reliable stratified archaeological data in the form of contemporary protohistoric art forms.

Historic Period

So far as the rock art of the historic period is concerned, it is characterized by the presence of writings in Brāhmī, Kharoṣṭhī, Śaṅkha and even Nāgarī scripts, besides the introduction of religious icons and symbols of various prevailing faiths. These include depiction of Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and Viṇādhara Śiva (Fig.27) at Tikula near

Gwalior (Neumayer 1992-93), Gaṇeśa and Yakṣa at Bhimbetka, *Lajjā Gaurī* at Chintakunta (Andhra Pradesh), Buddha at Satdhara near Sāñchī, *stūpas* showing structural and decorative details at Satdhara (Fig.28) and Kotra near Narsingharh, Gambhirpura near Idar (Fig.29) (Sonawane 2002: 74-76a), *Dharmacakra* on a pillar, Bodhi Tree and *Triratna* symbol along with the story of Śravaṇa Kumāra at Chibbarnala near Bhanpura, suggest the depth of a penetration of a codified and uniform system of religious beliefs throughout the country. Similar depictions mostly in the form of petroglyphs have been found further north in Ladakh and Chilas narrating Buddhist themes along with Kharoṣṭhī and Brāhmī inscriptions



Fig.27 : Balarama and Kṛṣṇa, Tikula

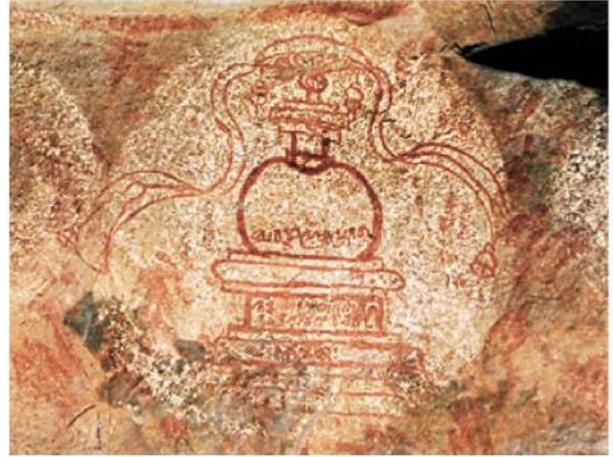


Fig.28 : Stūpa painting, Satdhara

(Dani 1983:43-58; Orofino 1990).

Apart from distinct religious or cultic narrations, rock art of the historical period is dominated by heavily caparisoned horses and elephants often with riders depicting battle scenes, soldiers engaged in fighting equipped with metal weapons such as spears, swords and shields, daggers and occasionally bows and arrows. Sometimes soldiers are shown wearing armours.



Fig.29 : Stūpa painting, Gambhirpura



Fig.30 : Classical Painting, Badami



Fig.31 : Sailing boats, Chamardi

There are also royal processions depicting royal personages standing under canopies. In addition, there are pictures representing many aspects of the contemporary life of the people residing both in plains and forests, together with a variety of animals, birds and plants confined to the regions of rock art distribution. The aesthetic sophistication of some of these paintings, particularly those from Badami (Fig.30) and Mahadev Hills is comparable with the famous Fresco painting of classical Indian art and some show close parallels with the Kushana and Gupta sculptural styles in their descriptive details. In this regard, the rock paintings of sailing boats found at Chamardi (Fig.31) near Bhavnagar in Gujarat, depicting sea-going vessels current on the west coast of Saurashtra, is quite unique (Sonawane 2011). Apart from these, there are several examples of traditionally accepted themes and styles marked by monotonous depictions showing a decline in artistic standards. Geometric and floral patterns, signs, symbols, etc. which are distinctly different from earlier paintings, show strong stylistic and thematic analogies with modern pictures found in houses in tribal belts, though attributed to a comparatively recent origin but they confirm their popularity and common ethos.

Conclusion

The data provided in the preceding pages not only reveals the antiquity and development of rock art in India but also enriches our understanding of the way of life of the people of different cultural periods. Though the reasons for the occurrence of rock art in various forms is still open to speculation, certainly all these works of art can be regarded as an influence of the mental as well as physical environment in which it was created. There is some homogeneity in rock art of different geographical locations yet the character of each region has its own personality. A cursory glance at the panorama of Indian rock art will reveal it quite judiciously. Therefore, there is definite need for regional studies in rock art and peculiarities of a micro-region should not be overlooked in a holistic macro-level study.

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