

A REPORT ON

2014 Chinese Helan Mountain International Rock Art Summit Forum

2014 贺兰山国际岩画峰会
Helanshan International Rock Art Forum

Hosts
银川市人民政府 People's Government of Yinchuan City
宁夏回族自治区文化厅 Culture Department of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region
宁夏回族自治区旅游局 Tourist Bureau of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region
中国岩画学会 China Rock Art Association
印度英迪拉·甘地国家艺术中心 Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Art

Organizers
岩画管理处 Administration Office of Helanshan Rock Art of Yinchuan City
Ningxia Rock Art Association
中国岩画研究中心 China Rock Art Study Centre of Minzu University of China

at
Yinchuan, China
(26th - 28th August 2014)

印度岩画展览 EXHIBITION ON INDIAN ROCK ART

(27th August, 2014 - 30th September, 2014)

Jointly hosted
By

**People's Government of Yinchuan, Department of Culture of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region
Tourist Administration of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region
Rock Art Research Association of China
Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), India**

(I)

The summit was jointly hosted by People's Government of Yinchuan, Department of Culture of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Tourist Administration of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Rock Art Research Association of China and Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), India at Yinchuan, China.

- (a) A delegation of four Indian scholars namely Prof. V.H. Sonawane (M.S. University, Vadodara), Prof. Sadasiba Pradhan (Utkal University, Bhubaneswar), Prof. R.C. Agarwal (Former Joint D.G., ASI) under the leadership of Dr. B.L. Malla, Project Director, Rock Art Department of IGNCA participated in the “2014 Chinese Helan Mountain International Rock Art Summit Forum” held at the Provincial Headquarters of Yinchuan from 26-28 August, 2014. Another delegation of six scholars from France also participated in the event. One of the highlights of the present event was the exhibition on 'Rock Art of India' by IGNCA.

On day one (26/08/2014) after the breakfast, as per the programme, the delegates were taken on a visit to the Chinese Hui Cultural Park and the Ningxia Provincial Museum at Yinchuan. Chinese Hui Cultural Park is the only civilian-run and government support exhibition place for the Chinese Hui culture and customs. Ningxia Provincial Museum has a well conceived rock art gallery. In the evening the Organisers hoisted a welcome dinner in a hotel for formal introduction of the participating delegates.

On day two (27/08/2014) after the breakfast in the hotel delegates were taken to Helanshan Rock Art Park for the opening Ceremony of the Summit. Mr. Liu Hanxing, the Vice Mayor of the Yinchuan City and Dr. B.L. Malla jointly inaugurated the Summit. In the function the gifts were exchanged by both the sides.

After inauguration of the Summit, the Mayor of the Yinchuan City Mr. Ma Li and Dr. Malla unveiled the China-India Rock Art exhibition, jointly put up by the IGNCA and the Chinese Organisers for the scholars, local Public and the tourists visiting China. The exhibition is mainly based on IGNCA collection. Dr. Malla gave an introduction to the Rock Art exhibits from India. IGNCA exhibition got an immense response from the participants and the general masses. By this exhibition IGNCA's research and documentation in the field of rock art has been showcased abroad (at international level) for the first time. This will help in appreciating the first universal artistic/creative act of human being which is not confined to any political boundary or region or country as defined presently. The immediate need is to share, appreciate and to study this boundaryless art form altogether. **The exhibition would be initially open for the public viewing up to 30th September, 2015.**

In the Post-lunch session five Special lecturers were delivered by Rock Art experts from India, China and France. While Prof. V.H. Sonawane spoke on Chinese Rock art and Prof. Sadasiba Pradhan spoke on “Symbolism in Rock Art”. Two lectures were delivered by the Chinese experts and one lecture by a French expert.

On day three (28/08/2014) all the delegates were taken to the Ningxia Provincial Museum where in a Plenary session as many as nine Chinese Scholars presented their papers. In the Post-lunch session the delegates were taken on Field tour to visit the Helanshan Rock art site.

Indian delegation got a special attention from the organisers from the first day of their arrival in China. They had made arrangements to receive Indian delegation at Beijing airport by a research scholar at Minzu University. She escorted the team to Yinchuan city (about 2 hrs by air journey from Beijing) and was with them till team left back to India on 29th August, 2014. A full time English translator was also provided to the team during the event period. All the due respect was given to Indian delegation in all the events of the International Forum 2014. The local hospitality was exceptional.

The whole event was widely covered by both the print and electronic media. Indian Rock Art exhibition got a special attention from all sections of society including the scholars, students and media persons.

- (b) In order to further strengthen rock art communication and cooperation between China and India the Chinese side was of the opinion that the Administration Office of Helan Mountain Rock Art of Yinchuan, China, and Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts of India have already started the a preliminary cooperation in the '2014 Helan Mountain International Petroglyph Forum' by organising an Indian Rock Art Exhibition and by welcoming Indian Rock art experts at Yinchuan. It would be highly appreciated if IGNCA also reciprocates in the same manner and invite the Administration Office of Helan Mountain Rock Art of Yinchuan to host and organize China Rock Art Exhibition in India in 2015. Through this communication and cooperation, it is hoped that both parties could establish a mode of win-win cooperation to enhance international cooperation and promote cultural exchanges.
- (C) Before leaving for India on 29/08/2014, the Indian scholars had a dialogue with the Chinese experts under the leadership of Prof. Zhang Yasha, Director of China Rock Art Study Centre in Minzu University, to work out the possible areas of cooperation between the two countries. The following areas were identified for taking up collaborative ventures in future:
- (1) Cooperation in conducting research, documentation, conservation and management.
 - (2) Exchange of research publications relating to rock art.
 - (3) Joint publication of books on rock art (bi-lingual).
 - (4) Exchange of experts.
 - (5) Organising/holding seminars/conferences jointly (preferably bi-annually).
 - (6) Holding/organising exhibitions on new discoveries/research in these conferences.
 - (7) Deputation/nomination of young research scholars for a period of three months by both the sides to develop and promote the study of rock art.
 - (8) Both the sides shall develop educational curriculum for popularisation of rock art and awareness among the masses.
 - (9) Exchange of technical know-how for establishment of rock art galleries.
- (d) Prof. Zhang Yasha also showed her great interest to work and collaborate with IGNCA in the field of rock art studies. She suggested that IGNCA and Minzu University may also take up joint ventures in this field. After discussions at length it was decided that Prof. Yasha may work out specific areas of collaboration which may be of common interest to both the institutions and send the same to IGNCA for consideration and follow up action.
- (e) The French delegation was very much impressed by the exhibition on Indian Rock Art and the work done by IGNCA in this field. They proposed to take up joint venture(s) with IGNCA, as well as, between three countries India, France and China. They would be writing to us very shortly about their intent of collaboration.
- (f) Some of the Provincial institutions and Provincial Rock Art Associations of China have also shown their keen interest to work with IGNCA in the field of rock art. They have also invited us to visit their respective institutions next year to share our knowledge and expertise with them.

ROCK ART GALLERY IN NIGXIA PROVINCIAL MUSEUM



General view of Nigxia Provincial Museum at Yinchuan



A model of Helanshan mountain, Nigxia Provincial Museum, Yinchuan, China



Interview of Dr. B.L. Malla by TV Channel in Rock Art Gallery Nigxia Provincial Museum, Yinchuan, China



A model of rock art site in Rock Art Gallery Nigxia Provincial Museum, Yinchuan, China



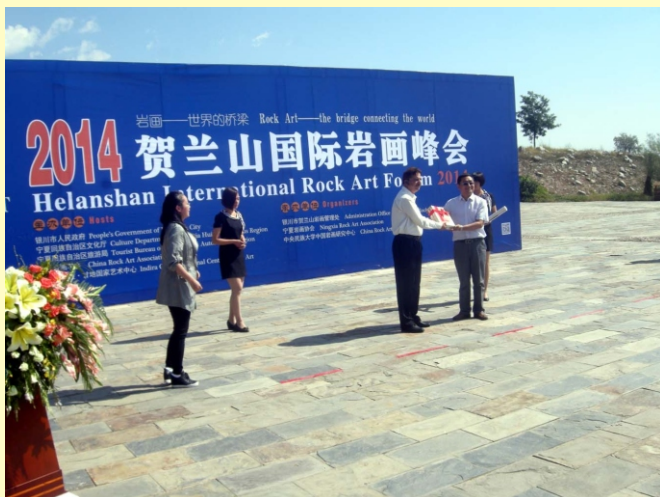
Exhibits in Rock Art Gallery Nigxia Provincial Museum in Yinchuan, China



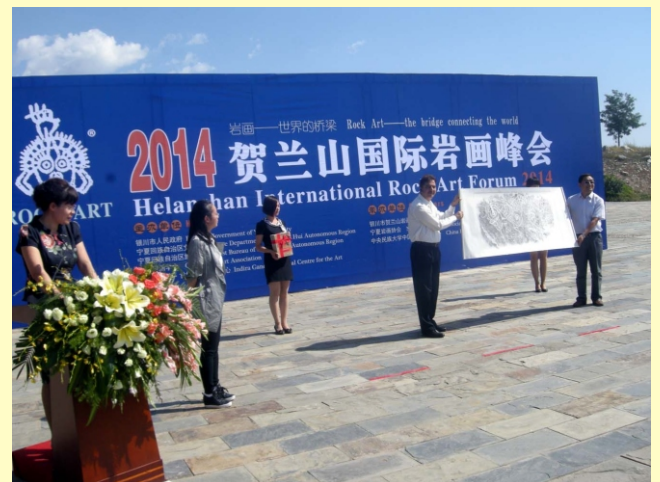
Exhibits in Rock Art Gallery Nigxia Provincial Museum in Yinchuan, China



Mr. Liu Hanxing, the Vice Mayor of the Yinchuan City and Dr. B.L. Malla jointly inaugurated 2014 Helanshan International Rock Art Forum in Yinchuan, China



Gifts exchanged at the inauguration of 2014 Helanshan International Rock Art Forum in Yinchuan, China



Gifts exchanged at the inauguration of 2014 Helanshan International Rock Art Forum in Yinchuan, China



Delegates proceeding towards inaugural venue of the 2014 Helanshan International Rock Art Forum in Yinchuan, China



Group photo of the delegates of the 2014 Helanshan International Rock Art Forum in Yinchuan, China

Exhibition
on
ROCK ART OF INDIA
(27th August, 2014 to 30th September, 2015)

India houses one of the largest, richest and diverse repositories of rock art traditions. A. C. Carlylle was the first to report the discovery of rock art in India in 1867. Since then the rock art has been found throughout the length and breadth of the country. Central India has by far the largest concentration of painted rock shelters. In the Central, Western and Eastern parts of the country rock art is found on the walls and ceilings of these rock shelters. In Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh rock art is reported from boulders/rock shelters. Kerala is notable for rock art evidence found in underground caves. The Megalithic burials are the favoured canvas in Tamilnadu.

Undoubtedly this landscape art comprising both pictographs and petroglyphs, is common to all varieties of geological formations, but they vary in terms of time, density and cultural affinity from one geological zone to another. For instance rock bruising and engravings (a variety of petroglyphs) are generally confined to granite-gneiss and dolerite-gabbro landscapes of Neolithic-Megalithic south India.

Eastern Region

The Eastern region encompasses the states of Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Odisha. Characteristic feature of the rock art of Jharkhand and Odisha is the predominance of pictographs. These are decorative motifs both geometric and abstract. The monochrome paintings are mostly in red, white and rarely in yellow. Bi-chrome paintings are in red and white. Odisha has a good number of petroglyphs. Chronologically, the rock art of both the states date from Mesolithic to early Historic period. Indigenous groups in both states have tradition of painting on the walls of their houses on auspicious occasions. These paintings often show motifs that are frequently found on rock art sites. Rock art in Bihar is an extension of Madhya Pradesh and southern Uttar Pradesh tradition. It is almost exclusively pictographic. It dates from Mesolithic to Historic period.

The subject matter of the rock art of Odisha and Jharkhand is by and large non-thematic and what is seen is a host of intricate and enigmatic geometric and non-geometric patterns made of a host of spiral lines, cross hatches, zigzag lines. In Central India such motifs are used for filling the body of human and animal figures where as in Odisha they are independent patterns.

Western Region

The states comprising Western region are Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Goa. Both petroglyphs and paintings are encountered in the rock art repertoire of Rajasthan. The common theme of the painted rock shelters are animal, anthropomorphic and human figures, human with bull, hunting, battle, dancing scenes, geometric and decorative motifs. Paintings are mainly monochrome and in red colour. Sporadic reporting of cup-marks is known from sites in southern Rajasthan. North-east Rajasthan has large number of petroglyphs. While the cupules or cup-marks are common, engravings of human and animal figures are also frequently encountered in this region. Chronologically, the rock art of Rajasthan has a long time-bracket from Mesolithic to Medieval period. Rock art tradition of Gujarat has similarity with that of Central India. It is datable from Mesolithic to Historic period. Petroglyphs have not been found in Gujarat so far. Paintings depict animal and human figures, hunting scenes, floral motifs, religious symbols, etc.

Northern Region

The states of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh form part of the Northern region. Rock art is known from Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh. The rock art of Ladakh (Jammu and Kashmir) is exclusively petroglyphic while that of Uttarakhand is predominantly pictographic with small percentage of petroglyphs. The rock art of Ladakh is to be visualised as part of a larger tradition encompassing Pakistan, China and parts of Central Asia. In Ladakh, two thematically distinct rock art traditions are visible. The first is secular, predominantly hunting scenes, animal and human

figures and the second has Buddhist affiliation. Rock art specimens found in Leh, Zaskar, Kargil, Chanthang, Nubra, etc may be counted as one of the earliest record of human presence in this region. Petroglyphs of Uttarakhand almost exclusively comprises of cup-marks. Rows of anthropomorphic figures simulating dance is a common depiction among the painted figures. The rock art of Uttar Pradesh is almost exclusively pictographic and is a continuation of the Vindhyan tradition.

North-eastern Region

The north-eastern part of India comprises of eight states marked by ecological and ethnic diversities. The archaeological richness amidst ethnic groups with diverse cultural traits made North-eastern states of India an important region for rock art studies. The only form of the rock art that has been reported from the region so far is the petroglyph of historical period. Some of the important sites of rock art in North Eastern India are Unakoti (Tripura), Dimapur (Nagaland), Suryapahar (Assam) etc. The themes depicted are mainly mythical animals, birds, flowers, leaves, draggers and decorated designs like circles, semi circles, straight lines etc. Megaliths of different shapes and sizes with or without engraving are spread in the hilly region of North Cachar and Karbi Anglong, Kamrup and Nagaon districts.

Southern Region

The states of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu and Kerala form the Southern region. The rock art traditions of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamilnadu appear to be quite different from each other. However, there are some common grounds. Humped bull figures are found in good numbers both as petroglyphs and pictographs in the rock art of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, especially during the Neolithic period. Rock bruising in these two states also starts from the Neolithic period. Karnataka and Tamilnadu have painted figures depicted on the walls of Megalithic burials. These paintings are predominantly in white. Kerala is unique in having underground caves decorated with deep engravings. Walls of these caves bear such depictions. In addition, Kerala also has number of sites bearing painted figures and motifs.

Central India

Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh form part of the Central region and together they account for the largest concentration of rock art sites in India. The rock paintings of Madhya Pradesh are mainly figurative and thematic and are dated from Upper Palaeolithic to the Historic period. The painted rock shelters are mostly concentrated in the Vindhyan ranges. Petroglyphs are an important feature of the rock art repertoire of Madhya Pradesh that has come to light in recent years. They mostly comprise of cup-marks or cupules. Chhattisgarh has a large number of abstract decorative motifs. Human and animal figures are very rare. The use of red and white dominate the painted motifs, both in monochrome and bi-chrome. In this respect, Chhattisgarh has similarity with both Odisha and Jharkhand.

The images on the rock surfaces include anthropomorphic, zoomorphic and geometric figures. Other forms include social groups, objects of transport, plants and flowers. The vast majority of paintings are in single colour, although bi-chrome and polychrome imageries are also known, though rarely.

On the basis of thematic content earliest (Upper Palaeolithic) landscape art can be broadly divided into (a) pre-figurative art and (b) figurative art. The pre-figurative art is seen in the form of geometric symbols, including intricate designs. These designs are considered the oldest form imageries and antecedent to figurative art.

IGNCA's INDIAN ROCK ART EXHIBITION
(27th August, 2014 - 30th September, 2015)



Indian Rock Art Exhibition at Helanshan Rock Art Museum, Yinchuan, China



Indian Rock Art Exhibition at Helanshan Rock Art Museum, Yinchuan, China



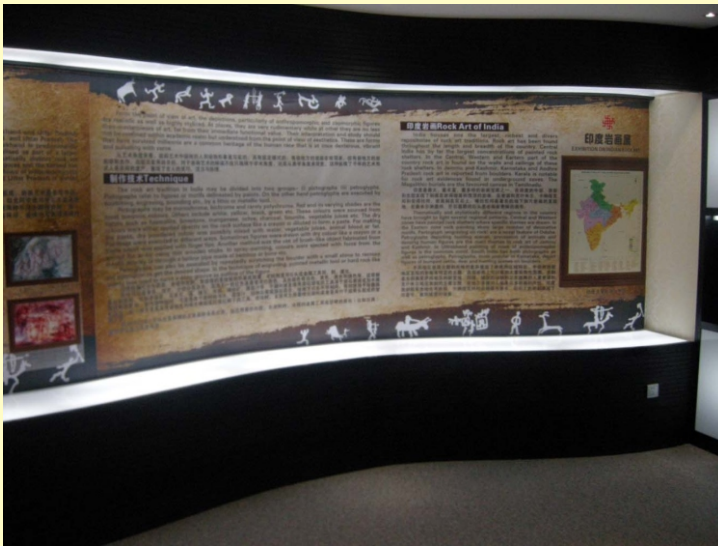
Mr. Ma Li and Dr. Malla unveiled the China-India Rock Art Gallery and the Indian Rock Art Exhibition at Helanshan Rock Art Museum, Yinchuan, China



Indian Rock Art Exhibition at Helanshan Rock Art Museum, Yinchuan, China



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Helanshan Rock Art Museum, Yinchuan, China



Prof. V.H. Sonawane presented paper on *Chinese Rock Art* in the first academic session of 2014 Helanshan International Rock Art Forum, Yinchuan, China



Prof. Sadasiba Pradhan presented paper on *Symbolism in Rock Art* in the first academic session of 2014 Helanshan International Rock Art Forum, Yinchuan, China



First academic session of 2014 Helanshan International Rock Art Forum, Yinchuan, China



First academic session of 2014 Helanshan International Rock Art Forum, Yinchuan, China



Second academic session of 2014 Helanshan International Rock Art Forum, Yinchuan, China



Second academics session of 2014 Helanshan International Rock Art Forum, Yinchuan, China

HELANSHAN ROCK ART SITE



General view of Helanshan Rock Art site, Yinchuan, China



Sinage at the Helanshan Rock Art site, Yinchuan, China



Engraved faces/masks at Helanshan Rock Art site, Yinchuan, China



Engraved face/mask at Helanshan Rock Art site, Yinchuan, China



Engraved face/mask at Helanshan Rock Art site, Yinchuan, China



Engraved Sun (?) At Helanshan Rock Art site, Yinchuan, China



Water resource at
Helanshan Rock Art site, Yinchuan, China



Engraved figures, designs and Chinese inscriptions at
Helanshan Rock Art site, Yinchuan, China



Sun/Nature worship at
Helanshan Rock Art Site, Yinchuan, China



Tree worship at
Helanshan Rock Art site, Yinchuan, China



Wooden path made for the visitors at
Helanshan Rock Art site, Yinchuan, China



Dustbin for collecting and burning the trash at
Helanshan Rock Art site, Yinchuan, China



A group photo of Indian delegation with staff of the Helanshan Rock art sites, Yinchuan, China



Indian scholars had a dialogue with the Chinese experts under the leadership of Prof. Zhang Yasha, Director of China Rock Art Study Centre in Minzu University, Yinchuan, China



Reproduction of rock art in different mediums





ROCK ART DEPARTMENT