

FIRST VISHNU SRIDHAR WAKANKAR MEMORIAL LECTURE



V. S. Wakankar (4th May, 1919 - 3rd April, 1988)

Dr. Vishnu Shridhar Wakankar was born on 4th May 1919 at Neemuch, a town in the Malwa region of the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. His distinguished academic career earned him the title of '*Pitamaha*' of Rock Art studies in India. From 1954 onwards, he carried out extensive field work on rock art in India and abroad - Europe, North America and the Middle East. In India, it is estimated that he discovered and documented some 4,000 decorated shelters. In 1957, he discovered the Bhimbetka rock art site which was inscribed as the UNESCO World Heritage Site in the year 1970.

He was awarded with numerous prestigious awards including *Padamshri*, in the year 1975, which is one of India's highest civilian honours by Government of India. He held important positions in various academic institutes and was involved in numerous archaeological surveys; he explored the ravines of the Chambal and Narmada rivers, as well as tracing the basin of the now-dried-up Saraswati river, said to hold secrets of the Indian civilization. He carried out archaeological excavations at various sites in India and abroad.

Dr. Wakankar was also an expert in the field of numismatics and epigraphy. He collected and studied over 5,500 coins ranging from 5th Century B. C. onwards. The collection is now part of the Wakankar Shodh Sansthan. Moreover, he studied numerous inscriptions dated from the

2nd Century BC in Sanskrit, Prakrit and Brahmi. He had published 6 books and over 400 research papers.

He established the Wakankar Indological Cultural Research Trust in Ujjain, India. Today Wakankar Shodh Sansthan hosts a collection of over 7500 sketches of rock art paintings sketched by Dr. Wakankar himself.

*This Memorial Lecture Series is initiated in honour of an eminent Archaeologist, great Humanist and Gandhian, Dr. V. S. Wakankar, who was the pioneer of rock art studies in India.

About the Speaker

Dr. G. B. Deglurkar, born on 10th September, 1933 is an eminent Indian archaeologist. He held important positions in many institutions and universities during his tenure of service. He was the former President of Deccan College, Deemed University, Pune. He has done his Ph.D on 'Cultural History of Marathwada with special reference to the Old monuments'. He has published about 20 books in English and Marathi and also has more than 100 articles to his credits. He has received many awards for his outstanding contribution to Indian archaeology. He has rich experience of 24 years in the field of art and culture and archaeological excavations. He has widely travelled across the world and has attended many conferences and seminars.