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सत्यमेव जयते



Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts
New Delhi

Report



International Webinar
on
Understanding Rock Art of Europe
(3rd April, 2021)



Adi Drishya Department

INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE ARTS
New Delhi

Among the many things that our ancestors left behind, nothing is more evocative and exciting than their signatures on rock. From time immemorial the early man started to record the world around him and his activities for the life sustenance and to bring forth his progenies to flourish. It is a form of historical record that helps us to understand the development of artistic and cultural traditions and belief systems in various ecological niches at various chronological contexts.

In IGNCA, rock art forms a crucial component of the *Adi Drishya* programme under which we record all rock art motifs by all possible means of documentation in a uniform format developed by IGNCA for this purpose. IGNCA is perhaps the only institution in the country where rock art is being studied as the earliest visual manifestation of mankind in a holistic perspective. Under the aegis of *Adi Drishya* Department the IGNCA organised an international webinar on “Understanding Rock Art of Europe” on 3rd April, 2021 that highlighted the different aspects of rock art of India and Abroad.

On this occasion, Prof. B. L. Malla (HoD, *Adi Drishya* Department, IGNCA, New Delhi) welcomed our Chief Guest Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi (Member Secretary, IGNCA), Chairperson of the session Dr. B. R. Mani (former Director General, National Museum), our foreign panelist Prof. Angelo Eugenio Fossati (Professor of Prehistory and Proto-history at the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Milan, Italy), Dr. Heidrun Stebergløkken (Associate Professor of archaeology at NTNU Department of Historical and Classical Studies, Norway), Dr. Valérie Feruglio (Researcher at PACEA laboratory, Bordeaux University, France), Prof. Mila Simoes De Abreu (Professor at the Archaeology Unit of the Geology Department at the University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro, Vila Real, Portugal) and all the other national and international participants.



Prof. B. L. Malla Delivering Welcome Address



Panelist with Chief Guest (Dr. Mani) and Moderator (Prof. Malla)

Thereafter, Chief Guest Prof. Sachchidanand Joshi inaugurated the session. He focused on many aspects of rock art tradition and its relevance to understand the development of civilization. He explained about the importance and the pivotal role of the eminent rock art researchers to reconstruct the past culture as well as protecting the future of the past by educating others about this archaeological treasure. Prof. Joshi also expressed that the webinar should be culminated into a form of very nice publication which would be for the benefit of the entire scholarship of the world.



Inaugural Address by Prof. Sachchidanand Joshi



Dr. B. R. Mani Chairing the Session

After inaugural address, Prof. Malla welcomed and requested the Chairperson Dr. B. R. Mani to take over the session proceedings. In his address Dr. B. R. Mani gave the brief introduction of all the eminent scholars.

At first, Dr. B. R. Mani welcomed Prof. Angelo Eugenio Fossati to deliver his lecture on “Rock Art in the Alps: A Review and Update”, where Prof. Fossati talked about the Alpine area that contains prehistoric and proto-historic rock art through a vast chronological excursus that extends from the Palaeolithic to the end of the 1st millennium BC (Iron Age). As well as he tried to underline the thematic, stylistic and chronological similarities and differences among these various Alpine rock paintings that are proposing different interpretations depending on the various phases in which they depicted.



Prof. Angelo Eugenio Fossati Delivering Lecture

Second in the line of talk Dr. Heidrun Stebergløkken, gave her deliberations on “Scandinavian Rock Art Research: General Trends and Challenges”. In her presentation she intended to present some of the challenges coined by Scandinavian rock art researchers. Dr. Stebergløkken, mainly focused on the issues of methodological approaches at the time of systematizing the rock art material as well as she also talked about some general trends in interpreting and theorizing the rock art when it comes to the dichotomy or symbiosis of the rock art, its landscape and how to perceive the images and the placement of the images on the rock medium itself.



Dr. Heidrun Stebergløkken Presenting Her Paper

Dr. Valérie Feruglio presented paper on “Palaeolithic Rock Art Research: An Overview of the French Policies and Methods” where she explained that, for the first time discoveries of cave art were made in an archaeological context and set the study of this art within archaeology since the beginning. Dr. Feruglio concluded that recent research is more appealing to new technologies like 3D registrations, modelisation, GIS documentation and geo-science analysis for the caves newly discovered but at the same time we have to focus on renewing the ancient studies.



Presentation by Dr. Valérie Feruglio

All the presentations concluded with fruitful discussions by the scholars and the participants. Prof. Mila Simoes De Abreu, could not present her paper due to poor internet connection in her place. But we will publish her paper in the proceedings of the seminar.

Finally, Chairperson, Dr. B. R. Mani summarized the session and expressed his view point on the different aspects of rock art to understand the lifestyle of our ancestors which helps us to reconstruct the glorious past of ancient civilizations. The event was a great success and was attended by about 700 participants in zoom format and 2.1K on facebook live.

At the end of the session, Prof. Malla proposed the vote of thanks to the Chief Guest, Chairperson and the panelist for sharing their valuable knowledge which definitely paved the path of further research activities in rock art of India and Europe. This webinar may help to explore new horizons of knowledge and new avenue of rock art research of entire world.

