



NATIONAL SEMINAR ON

Rock Art of Northeast India

Methodological and Technical Issues

(5TH-6TH OCTOBER, 2016)



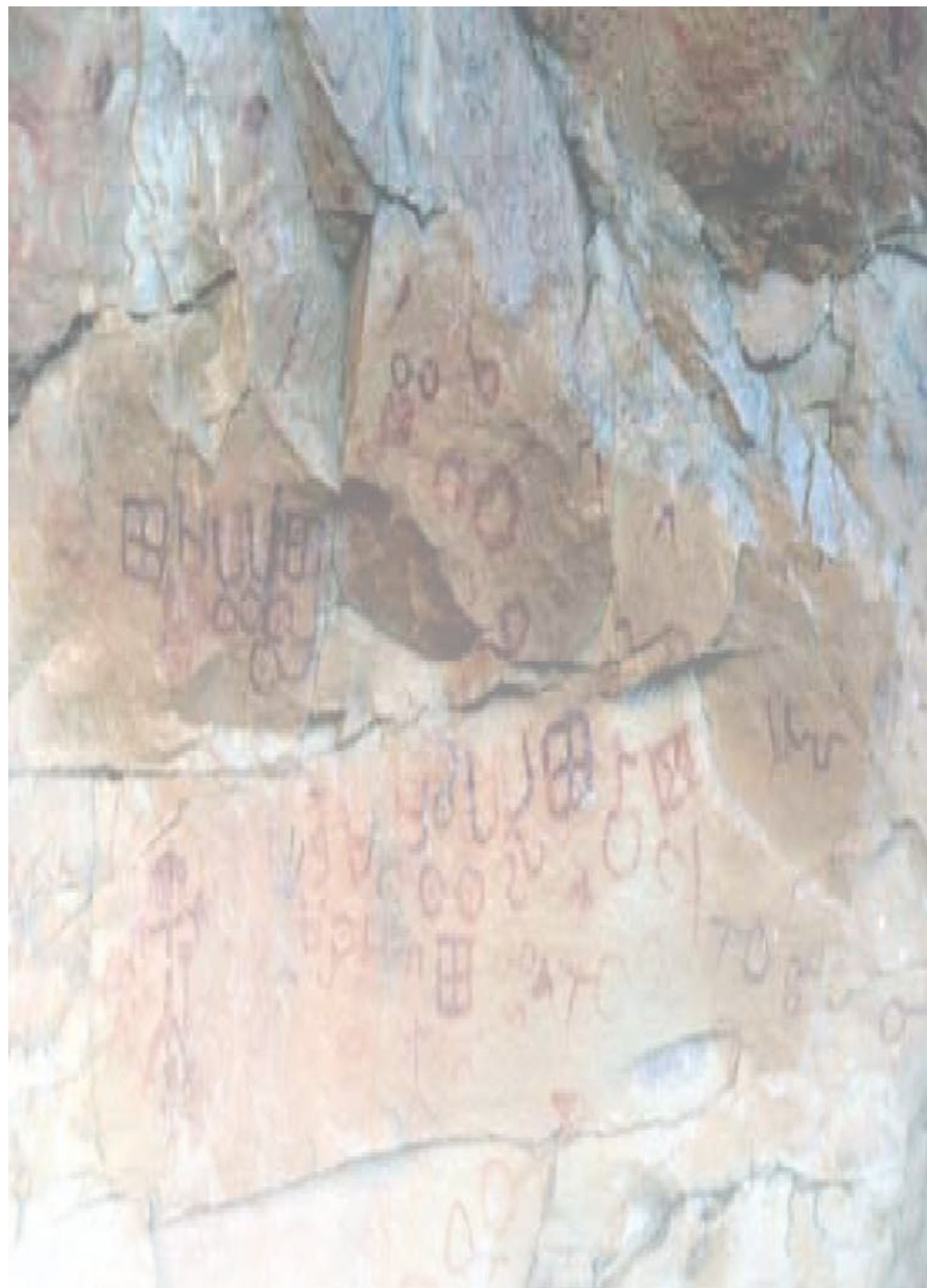
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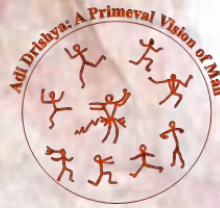
Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi

in collaboration with

Department of History and Archaeology

North Eastern Hill University, Tura Campus, Meghalaya





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**INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE ARTS,
NEW DELHI**



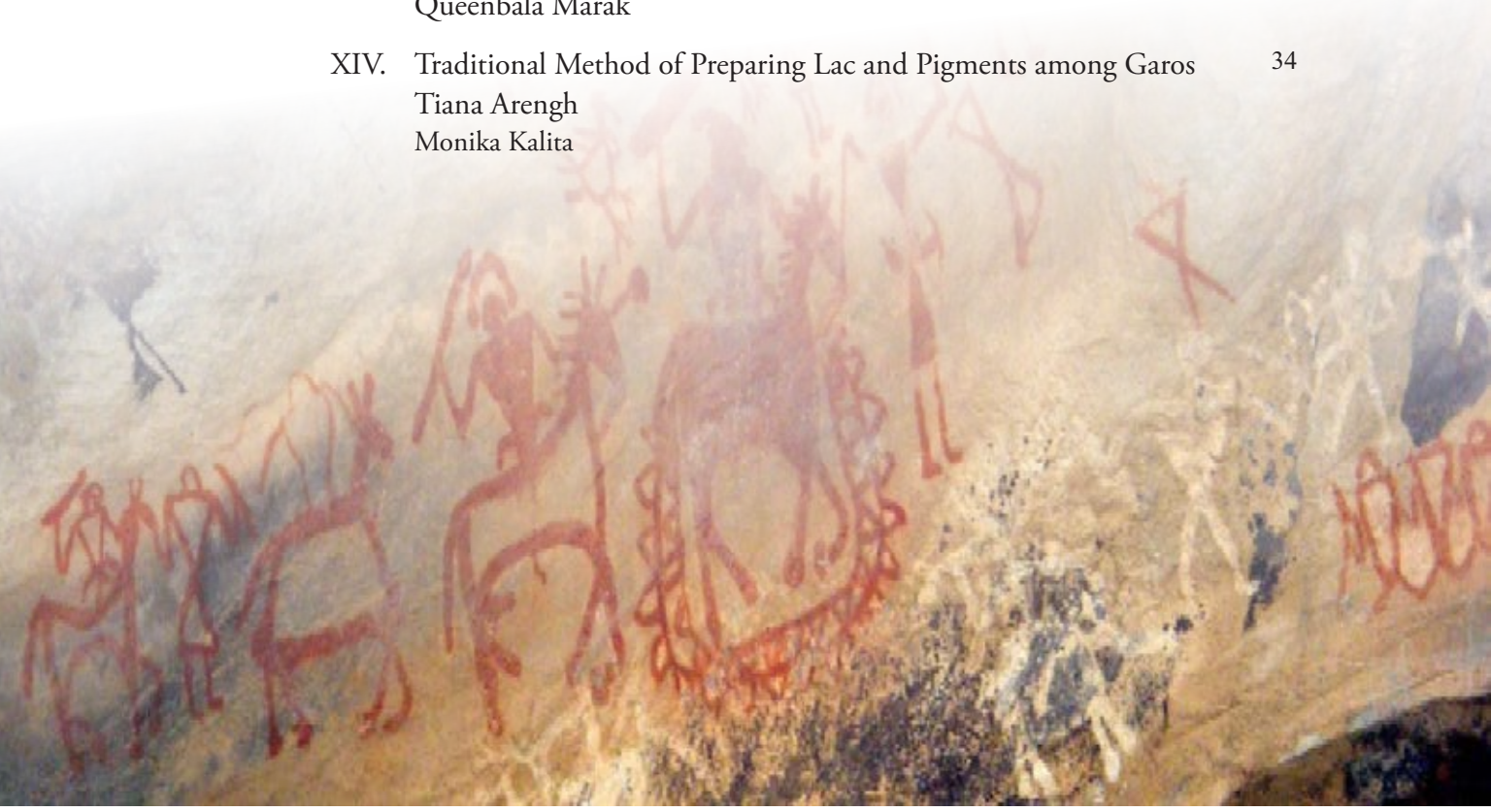
**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY,
NORTH EASTERN HILL UNIVERSITY, TURA CAMPUS,
MEGHALAYA**





Contents

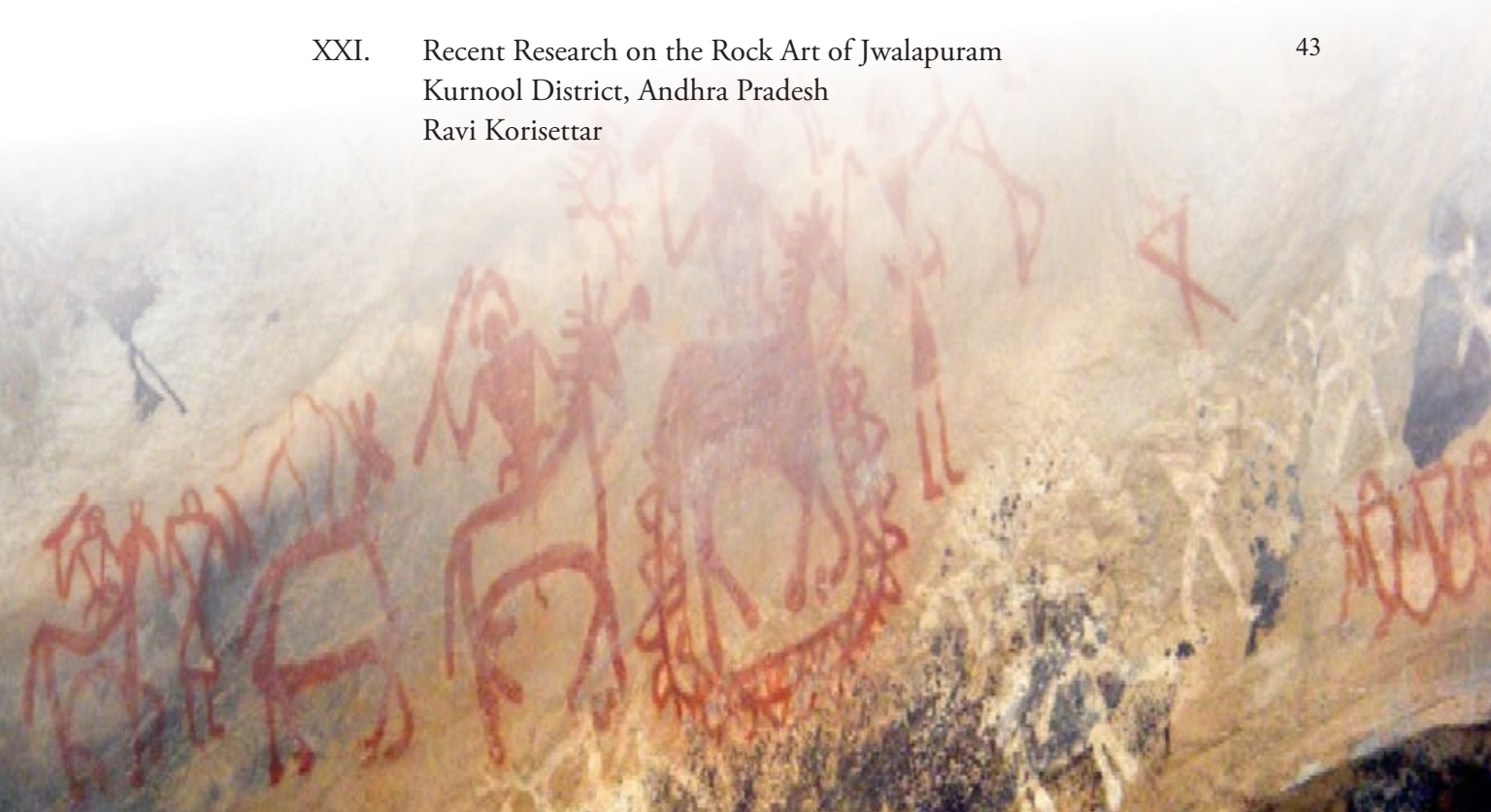
	<i>Page No.</i>
VII. Rock Art of North-East India: Some Observations V. H. Sonawane	26
VIII. Observations on Some Unique Rock Art Features of Nagaland Ditamulu Vasa Tiatoshi Jamir	27
IX. Petroglyphs at Pallong, Tamenglong District Manipur Huidromcha Suraj Singh	29
X. Recent Discovery of Rock Art in Tawang, West Kemeng and Upper Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh Nabaji Deori	30
XI. Engravings on Megaliths in Mizoram Malsawmliana	31
XII. Cup-Marks: A Prospect of its Study in North-East India Salam Shyam Singh	32
XIII. Rock Art in Folklore: A Preliminary Study of Petroglyphs from a Garo Village Queenbala Marak	33
XIV. Traditional Method of Preparing Lac and Pigments among Garos Tiana Areng Monika Kalita	34





Contents

	<i>Page No.</i>
XV. Khasi Traditional Technology and Culture: A Probe in the Ri-Bhoi Area Benora Batemon Masharing	36
XVI. Tattoo Culture among the Nagas of Nagaland with Special Reference to Ao Nagas Yilobemo Sangma	37
XVII. The Memorial Stones or Monoliths of Mizoram as Rock Art and its Stipulation Aten Nungshi	38
XVIII. Wild Animals in the Prehistoric Rock Art of the Malaprabha Basin and Prospect for North-East India Rock Art R. Mohana	39
XIX. An Approach to Rock Art Research B. L. Malla	40
XX. Circles and its Variants in Indian Rock Art: A Synthesis Riza Abbas	42
XXI. Recent Research on the Rock Art of Jwalapuram Kurnool District, Andhra Pradesh Ravi Korisettar	43







IGNCA's Contribution to Rock Art Studies

Rock art is one of our greatest surviving art treasures. It is a vital archaeological source to study and analyse the cognitive evolution of the human intellect across the world. As the written word had not yet been conceived, the urge to articulate, document and preserve ideas and events found expression through pictorial representations. IGNCA is one of the few Indian institutions working in the field of rock art studies from a holistic perspective. While looking into the importance of this earliest artistic activity of human beings, IGNCA has taken up its documentation, study and dissemination very seriously. The Centre has conceived a major academic programme, which relates to exploring artistic manifestations emanating from man's primary sense perceptions. Amongst the senses that lead to aesthetic experience are vision (*Drishya*) and hearing (*Shravya*). Rock art forms a crucial component of the *Adi Drishya* programme. Its conceptual plan aims to open the doors to the realization that rock art is pure and absolute, and hence capable of dispensing great experience beyond its original culture and time.

Rock art study is an emerging discipline in India. IGNCA has initiated many projects/programmes for its study, research and its outreach. A number of Survey and Pilot Study programmes are being organised as a part of IGNCA's *Adi Drishya* project to encourage the scholars to work in this emerging discipline to keep them updated about the status of rock art research in a global perspective and to

encourage Indian scholars to take up this new discipline very seriously, as it is directly related to the primeval vision of man which is perhaps the first creative act of human being. Its proper study can take roots of our civilization thousands of years back.

IGNCA under its programme - *Adi Drishya* (primeval vision of man) has initiated field documentation at national level for preserving the rock art sites/data, which is otherwise open to human vandalism and natural factors beyond one's control. While recognising the importance of the rock art for the present generation and posterity, the phase wise field documentation has been planned in different states of India with rock art concentration. The main objective of the project is to make textual, contextual, video-photo documentation and communicate with people in the hinterland for archaeological research, and to build up a bio-cultural map, a mental and ecological atlas of the rock art landscape on the basis of documentation of related folklore, and natural and manmade features. Based on research and documentation etc., the publications are being brought out both in print and electronic media.

As a part of its outreach programme, IGNCA is organising different programmes for capacity building like organisation of special lectures and orientation workshops for researchers and university students; for general awareness among the school/college students and general masses; temporary and mobile exhi-





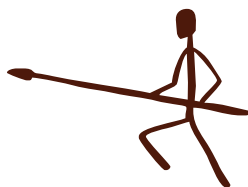
-bitions, workshops for children are being organised at the national/state/international levels. General awareness workshops are also being organised at different tehsil/block levels for the local administration and for the community members living around the rock art sites.

The impact of projects/programmes undertaken by IGNCA is immense and overwhelming. It can be assessed by the responses of the children, scholars and general masses participating/visiting in these programmes/events throughout India. The

reviews in professional journals and its wide coverage in both print and electronic media (National/ Vernacular) are quite encouraging. Some of the universities have started taking the subject very seriously. Briefly, the goal to be set is not merely the development of a database and multimedia gallery/displays but also to establish *Adi Drishya* into a school of thought and research on alternate means of understanding prehistoric art. For achieving all the goals, the outreach/ general awareness programmes, inventorisation and interpretive research of rock art are going on hand in hand.

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Concept Note

National Seminar on Rock Art of Northeast India

Methodological and Technical Issues

Rock art, begun with the Upper Paleolithic period, is one of the early expressions of art of early human. Rock art is found in diverse cultural context from many regions of Africa, Asia, Australia and Europe. India possess a respectful position in terms of rock art as it has been reported from almost all parts of the country beginning from Upper Paleolithic onwards. Rock art can be divided into two broad categories as “pictographs” and “petroglyphs”. Pictograph is the common form of rock art and found extensively. It is line drawing made on the surface of stone using pigment. Petroglyphs can be created by scratching the stone surface. Rock art in Northeast India are rare compared to the other regions of the country and comprised of both pictographs and petroglyphs. Northeast India is considered as cross road for migration of prehistoric populace and cultures for its convenient geographical location to East and Southeast Asia. The region has given significant archaeological evidences belonging to Hoabinhian and Neolithic cultures. Though not in clear context, there are artefactual evidences discovered from Garo Hills and Arunachal regarding Palaeolithic presence in Northeast India.

The possibility of finding of Pleistocene archaeological record is unconvincing to deny when argued the region as cultural cross road for early human migrations with East and Southeast Asia. Presence of prehistoric rock art in this region is thus expectable. There are a number of sites in Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya and Mizoram where rock art in the

form of petroglyph has been discovered and recorded. Nagaland presents some decorative engravings on rock surface in addition to engravings reported on menhirs. The menhirs or the upright stones reported from Mizoram carry the engravings of human figures, animals (mainly mithun), birds, weapons like spear, dao, gongs, ornaments and decorative motifs. Engravings are known from Khoupum hill near Imphal and Ukhrul districts of Manipur. These evidences suggest that petroglyph is perhaps the common form of rock art in Northeast India. However, it does not deny the presence of pictograph in the region. So far no pictograph has been convincingly found from the region, and this may be due to lack of interest on rock art or lack of specific field investigations for finding rock art. One has to admit that the region is not getting desired attention for prehistoric research for reasons such as ignorance, difficult geography and political situations.

A seminar, therefore, is desirable on various issues on rock art in Northeast Indian context. Rock art research in Northeast India is in formative stage, and thus require conceptual and methodological framework to be set up in order to avoid ambiguities and the seminar intends to initiate a serious discussion on the issue. Moreover, the multi-disciplinary approaches to the study of rock art need to be appreciated and promoted for their holistic understanding. The ecological, geological, geographical and archaeological factors are undeniable while locating or discovering rock art. Likewise, contributions from social sciences





aspects of rock art, the seminar aims to provide a learning platform for aspiring participants on rock art in general and of Northeast India in particular.

The tentative sub themes of the seminar are outlined as follows; however, more sub themes related to rock art studies can be accommodated depending on the paper to be presented:

1. Rock Art: its meaning and Northeast India (NEI) context
2. Prehistoric background of NEI and context of rock art
3. Methodological issues related to rock art studies in NEI
4. Rock Art in NEI: nature of evidence i.e., pictograph and petroglyph
5. Rock Art and scientific approach: documentation, analysis, dating and photography
6. Ethnography in rock art studies
7. Geological and Geographical importance of NEI in locating rock art.





Programme Schedule

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Programme Schedule

5th October, 2016

INAUGURAL SESSION: 10:30 am - 12:00 pm
Tea Break : 12:00 pm - 12:30 pm

ACADEMIC SESSIONS

Pre Lunch Session: 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm

Lunch Break: 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm

Post Lunch Session: 2:30 pm - 5:00 pm

6th October, 2016

Pre Lunch Session: 10:30 am - 1:30 pm

Lunch Break: 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm

Panel discussion : 2:30 pm - 4:30 pm
& Valedictory Session







Abstracts





I

Rock Art of Northeastern India: Some Methodological Issues

A. Sundara

Among regions with rock art sites in different parts of India, North-East India is one. In the recent years some rock art sites are traced here and there besides some prehistoric Stone Age sites. In view of such discoveries it is promising that the entire region to a considerable extent is potential in prehistoric heritage and therefore desirable to be explored intensively and methodically and therefore, necessarily to develop methods for discovering sites suitable to the region.

First, it is very essential to be very well acquainted with the physical environment of the whole region: the geological formations and the geographical features. Northern Karnataka with which I am rather acquainted, especially the southern part is crisscrossed with innumerable mountain ranges of the sedimentary rocks such as sand/lime stone which reigns of semiprecious stones such as jasper chert etc. in the western part and peninsular gneissic rocky formations in the eastern enclosing here and there frequently fertile open lands drained with many rivers fed with numerous rivulets. In the western part are innumerable rock shelters but rather infrequently shallow open caves and in the eastern part, countless number of deep caves and shelters. In the river valley regions are traced pre and protohistoric sites ranging from the early Palaeolithic to the Iron Age megalithic in hundreds.

Similarly, in North-East India it is very essential in the first place to understand the physical environment such as the behaviour of hills, drainage pattern, flora, fauna, rocks, minerals, climate and soils etc. of the whole region. In the light of what is known the explorer will have to plan investigation. Most of the sites known so far are rock engravings on the open boulders scattered here and infrequently on hillocks. Rock paintings are reasonably scarcely found if not totally absent in some favourable situation. However prehistoric human settlements are rarely found in the vicinity of such sites.

In the first place it is therefore necessary to look for such settlements within the reasonable surroundings of the known rock art sites. Further, in the region shelters and caves are found but scattered boulders not suitable for rock paintings. Keeping these points in view the remaining region is to be intensively explored for tracing not only rock art sites but also human settlements in the favorable geographical and geological situations. It is therefore necessary to constitute a team of experts comprising besides archaeologists, geologists, anthropologists and other appropriate scientists.

Secondly, it is to be noted that the region like most of the other regions in the country, is rich in tribal communities, their art and traditions. Selectively an attempt should be made to put them in chronological order and to





study accordingly their styles and characteristics as well as oral traditions associated with them. From them it is necessary to identify the common and new figures through the ages. It should be kept in mind that art and traditions of these communities have come down considerably from a remote past. Wherever such very ancient pictures and the associated traditions are available possibility of finding similar art pictures may be expected on rocks as well executed before the beginning of regular habitations. Nay, they will also help in understanding some of the rock pictures. I think keeping in view these two important factors; methods will have to be developed for exploration.

Prof. A. Sundara, born in 1932, is an eminent Indian Archaeologist. He held important positions in many institutions and universities during his tenure of service. He has published 15 academic books on Indian archaeology and culture. He has published more than 350 research papers in national and international journals and in edited books. He has delivered 100 keynote/presidential/inaugural address and more than 150 research papers presented in seminars. He has received many awards for his outstanding contributions to Indian archaeology. Some of the awards are Karnataka Puratattva Ratna, Dr. V. S. Wakankar award, Sam. Baa. Joshi Prashasti etc.

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Rock Engravings from Brahmaputra Valley Assam: Context and Preservation

Rock engravings of Brahmaputra valley in Assam has mainly been recorded from Uma Tumoni, Biswanath Ghat of Sonitpur district and Kanai Borosi and Dirgheswari of North Guwahati. Sporadic occurrence of engravings has also been reported from Hatisila, Sapaidong of Kamrup district and Mayong of Morigaon district. The Brahmaputra valley is marked by high occurrence of floods, erosion, sedimentation and also affected by seismic activities. Such an environmental condition has adversely affected the preservation of rock art sites. Association of worship with the sites is another issue that needs to be considered as far as the preservation of the sites is concerned. The engraved art form that has been recorded basically belong to the early historical period and contextualisation of the findings lead to many interesting historical as well as geological facts. The areas of Sonitpur where the engraved art from Uma Tumoni has been recovered was the abode of the Bana dynasty which has legendary connection with the Mahabharata. Other archaeological remains from the area also indicate the existence of a central political system centering Tezpur. The influence of Koch and later Ahom kingdoms is also known from the sources of history as far as Kamrup and Morigaon areas are concerned. Geologically, Uma Tumoni indicates a very

Dr. Dwipen Bezbaruah is an Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology, Gauhati University. His areas of research are Ethnoarchaeology, Stone Age Archaeology, ethnic issues of NE India. He also has sixteen years teaching experience in University. He has several articles in international and national journals to his credits. He has also attended many workshops and courses at national and international level.

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III

Rock Art in Manipur with Special Reference to the Ruangmei Tribe

P. Binodini Devi

Rock Art in India was discovered around 150 years ago, yet hardly a few archaeologists will be able to point to an instance of rock art in Manipur when enquired about it.

Manipur is one of the smallest hilly states of India. This part of India is archaeologically least known. This state is occupied by various ethnic groups like the Meiteis/Meeteis, the Meetei Pangals, the Naga groups and the Kuki-Chin-Mizo groups, and the other Indian communities. Some of these communities practiced carving drawing, and engraving works on different rocks having various motifs.

The present paper will try to focus more on the rock art of the Ruangmai Tribe. Most of the illustrations and photographs given here have not been published before and few of them discovered during my field work recently.

Dr. P. Binodini Devi, born in 1959, is one of the leading archaeologists of North-East India. Currently she is serving in P.G. Dept. of Anthropology, D. M. College of Science, Imphal. Her areas of research mainly are Megalithic Culture of North-East India, Ethno-archaeology and Indigenous Knowledge System. Currently, she is also working on rock art in Manipur. She has published many research papers in national and international journals. She has two more books in her credit.

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IV

Engravings on Monoliths of Dimapur: A Review of Hutton's Work

Garima Thakuria

The carved and decorated stone pillars at Dimapur have been significant since the prehistoric times. Though in ruins at present, the ornamental monoliths belonging to the ancient Kachari kingdom, have been regarded as a very rare form of art and studied by J. H. Hutton as early as in 1922. These monoliths are located at the foot of the Naga Hills in Dhansiri valley; are enormous in size; both round and forked shaped found in single stone obtained from the gorge of Diphu river, which Hutton believed to be due to the Austric (Mon-Khmer) element in the fused races inhabiting the area. The purpose of erection has been a matter for speculation because the Kachari kings who were driven away from that place in A. D. 1536, have left behind no written record. It was Hutton who speculated its significance by observing ceremonies like Lisü among the Angamis of Kohima in which wooden posts were used, and found that the post symbols have been associated directly or indirectly with the fertility of crops and cattle. Furthermore, he could trace a distinct evolution of shape among the stone pillars and Y-shaped monoliths at Dimapur. There, the cylindrical monoliths have been carved superficially only having a sort of knob on the top. Whereas, the rest are deeply cut into a design known as "enemies' teeth". The Y-shaped posts with inwardly and backwardly curved arms at the top

with a swelling on the inside of each arm have resemblance not only with the Naga monoliths but also with those found from the Kachari villages in north Kamrup where miniature wooden Y has been placed in front of the village naamghar that replaces the original morungor deka-chang owing to the partial Hinduization of the tribe. Elephants, deer, peacocks, tigers attacking elephants, circular representations of probably the sun or moon have been among the carvings. The present paper shall review the work of J. H. Hutton on the monoliths of Dimapur.

Garima Thakuria is a Ph.D. scholar in Dept. of Anthropology, University of Delhi. She is working on the topic "Neolithic Culture of Assam". She has presented research papers in seminars in India and abroad. She has published two research papers related to her area of research interest. She has also worked as Research Associate in NESRC, Guwahati.

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V

Engravings in Northeast India: Some Methodological Issues

R. K. Mohanty

Rock art in Northeast India is a developing area of research. The systematic archaeological research started in the region around 1960s when methodological excavation was undertaken at Daojali Hading. Since then archaeological researches are confined to locating and establishing the prehistoric culture, mainly the Neolithic cultural pattern, in the region. These researches were undertaken mainly by local universities and local scholars. The explorations and excavations established the distribution pattern of Neolithic sites, techno-typology and Southeast Asian cultural link. Besides evidence of Neolithic, the region is still to produce clear cut evidence on Palaeolithic cultures. Prehistoric rock art in the region is still an area of research to be taken up methodologically. So far no pictograph is known from the region, but there are reports of finding petrograph in the forms of cup-marks and engravings. Engravings are only on megalithic monuments and rarely on natural rock surfaces. The engravings on megalithic monuments have immense significance in understanding social and cultural behavior of the people who made those. Moreover, the tradition is still alive in certain geographical pockets in the region among some indigenous groups and the continuity of it provides a scope to conduct ethnographic studies on techniques and sociology of it. The paper therefore proposes some methodological

issues in studying and documenting engravings found in Northeast India.

Prof. R. K. Mohanty is former Head of Department of Archaeology, Deccan College PGRI, Pune. He has vast experience on the Iron Age Archaeology, Early Historic Archaeology, Indian Art and Architecture and Indian Bead Studies. He has directed many archaeological excavations at various places in India. His recent archaeological work in Odisha is an outstanding contribution to Indian Archaeology to understand the formation of Early Historic states and polity in eastern India from the early beginning of settled life in Odisha. He is co-author of two books- one is "Excavations at Sisupalgarh" and the other is "Indian Beads: History and Technology". He is also editor of the volume "Indian Megaliths". He has published more than 70 research papers and presented them in India and abroad.

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VI

Hominid Adaptations in Prehistoric North-East India with Special Emphasis on the Ganol and Rongram River Valley, Garo Hills, Meghalaya

Sukanya Sharma

North-East India is situated between two different environmental systems, the monsoonal tropics and the tropical rainforest zone. Hypothetically, the development of prehistoric culture in the area is attributed to the regional ecology. There appears to be a synthesis of two types of cultural traits, Indian and South-East Asian. These are adaptability conditions indigenous to the region. It explains the relationship between prehistoric human behaviour and observable archaeological record of the region, which consists of stone tools and pottery. A careful observation of the tool making techniques and types of tools produced reveals the modes of adaptation developed by prehistoric man. An archaeological site is defined as a particular locale within a habitat, together with its immediate setting. We have to study the surroundings of an archaeological site to understand the type of resources available. The types of resources govern the different modes of adaptation developed by the inhabitants of an area.

In this paper an attempt has been made to understand the adaptive strategies developed by the prehistoric inhabitants of the region, focusing on the Garo Hills, an area with the

highest concentration of prehistoric sites in North-East India, on the basis of site setting and typo-technological analysis of the stone tools.

Dr. Sukanya Sharma is presently Associate Professor in the Department of Social Sciences and Humanities in Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati. She is one of the leading archaeologists of North-East India. Her research interests are lithics of the prehistoric period of North-East India, archaeological pottery of North-East India and heritage studies. She has two books to her credit entitled "Celts, Flakes and Bifaces: The Garo Hills Story" and "A Source Book of Archaeology of the Himalayan Region Arunachal Pradesh". Besides, she has published many research papers in international and national journals and as chapters in edited books.

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VII

Rock Art of North-East India: Some Observations

V. H. Sonawane

For a long time, after the pioneering discoveries made in 1867 by colonial geologist Archibald Carlleyle in the forested region of 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, the discovery of Bhimbetka in 1957 by V. S. Wakankar brought a new momentum recognizing its archaeological potential. Since rock art constitutes natural surfaces within suitable rock formation is the foremost prerequisite for creation of rock paintings or engravings. Therefore, it is but natural to come across rock art by and large confined to those regions where suitable rock forms are found in plenty. Rock type is also a factor responsible in the survival of rock art. The caves and rock shelters often offered suitable temporary habitat to the nomadic hunter gatherers and provided the necessary canvas for the creation of rock art. In the light of above background this paper discusses some of the shortcomings of the investigations carried out by the rock art researchers working in this one of the most potential but lesser known regions of India, so far rock art studies is concerned.

Prof. Vishwasrao H. Sonawane had pursued his Ph. D. from Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, where he later served as a Professor of Archaeology and Ancient Indian History &

Culture, and Director of Field Archaeology. In his dedicated academic service of 36 years, he has worked on various aspects of Prehistoric, Proto-historic and Historic Archaeology besides Rock Art, and has been associated with important premier academic-governance bodies of the country. He carried out extensive research work encompassing a wide range of areas, including Rock Art of Gujarat and Harappan affiliated Chalcolithic settlements for the first time in Gujarat. Apart from his active involvement in achieving the World Heritage status for Pavagadh, Champaner and the discovery of intact zinc furnaces at Zawar in Rajasthan, his contributions for Gujarat securing her a permanent place in the field of Rock Art in the country is also recognized. He participated and made presentations at more than 100 national and international seminars and conferences. He had widely travelled to different parts of the world including countries like Australia, France, Italy, Iran, Sri Lanka, China, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia.

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VIII

Observations on Some Unique Rock Art Features of Nagaland

Ditamulu Vasa
Tiatoshi Jamir

Many historians have considered rock art to be representations of primitive source of writing. The rock carvings found in Nagaland seem impressive. They formed an important part of Naga cultural legacy as it bears evidence of prosperity, of artistic excellence and also contributes towards reconstructing scenes of the ancient way of life. Part of it has already been destroyed or lost over the past few years. The paper focuses on study areas covering tribes such as Angami, Ao, Chang, Konyak, Rengma and Zeliang. By virtue, the Naga traditional art mostly composed of carvings on wood of wide variety of subjects such as human, birds, animals, fish, reptiles etc. As such the evidence of Rock art that existed here is special; it also seems spectacular as it reflects ancient experience and spirituality. They stand where aspects of ceremony, belief and history are recorded in visual form. They also stand as testament of bygone years of indigenous culture and cultural interaction with other creatures, other people and the environment. Rock art forms a major component of art history and behaves as an archive of indigenous art.

Dr. Ditamulu Vasa teaches Archaeology in the Department of History and Archaeology Nagaland University, Kohima Campus. Her archaeological and ethnographic field experience involves field based research in various areas including Anthropology of technology in ceramic research

focusing on economic intensification, regional networks and landscape approaches. Some of her work is published in books. Her work of interest lies in heritage management, studying tangible and intangible culture of indigenous people and ethno-archaeology. She is currently a part of a research team on Carnelian Crafts of South Asia jointly undertaken by the School of Tourism, Kobe Japan and the Department of History and Archaeology, Nagaland University. She is also a part of research team involved in the study of Nagaland megaliths and the Neolithic monuments of northern-central Europe jointly undertaken by a team from institute for Pre-historic and Proto-historic Archaeology at the Christian Albrechts-University Kiel, Germany and German Archaeological Institute, Romisch Germanische Kommission Frankfurt, Germany and the Department of History and Archaeology, Nagaland University, Kohima.

Dr. Tiatoshi Jamir is Associate Professor in the Department of History & Archaeology, Nagaland University, Kohima Campus. He is one of the well-known archaeologists from North-East India. He obtained M.A. in Archaeology from Deccan College PGRI, Pune and later Ph.D. on Mortuary Archaeology from the same institute. His areas of research interest are History of Ideas, Archaeology of North-East India, Community Archaeology & Archaeological Heritage Management and Ethn-





-omusicology. Besides seminar presentations and publication of several research papers, he is the author, co-author and editor of books related to Archaeology and Culture of North-East India. Two of his recently published co-authored books are “Archaeology of Naga Ancestral Sites: Recent Archaeological Investigations at Chungliyimti and Adjoining sites (Vol-1)” and “Archaeology of Naga Ancestral Sites: Recent Archaeological Investigations in Phek and Kiphire Districts of Nagaland (Vol-2)”.

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IX

Petroglyphs at Pallong, Tamenglong District Manipur

Huidromcha Suraj Singh

Recent discovery at Pallong has brought to the petroglyphic world a new interesting clue about the Nagas' ways of life in the remote past. Pallong a one and half hours drive village from the district headquarter of Tamenglong represents a typical engraving of footmarks all over the surface of rock table. The site being deep into the jungle remained virgin for a long time unknown and untouched by the academics and specialists. There is a water body over the long rock surface which is believed to be a Female Goddess. Tradition goes like this- whenever the water body gets dried up, rains begin to start in a few minutes so that it fills up body and the persons who were involved in this met with a fatal death. Villagers believed that the water represents a wrapper (Feishoi) to cover the private part of the Goddess. Around the water body there are engravings of footmarks depicting a certain taboo. It was told that the footmarks were of the newly to-be-wed bride. The bride-to-be came over there with her close friends to seek the blessings of the Goddess. However, this very practice has gone down with the coming of Christianity in the village long back. After this, the villagers have never looked back. It remains

to be seen how much effort can be given to interlink and preserve the vanishing tradition by the academic world.

Huidromcha Suraj Singh is a Ph.D. research scholar in Manipur University. He is working on petroglyphs of Manipur and Mizoram in his Ph. D. research. He is an ICHR junior research fellow.

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X

Recent Discovery of Rock Art in Tawang, West Kameng and Upper Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh

Nabaji Deori

North-East India is an important geo-cultural area for anthropological and archaeological research. The region has tremendous scope in understanding cultural diversity, population migration and cultural affinities with East and South-East Asia. Arunachal Pradesh being a bordering state to East Asia holds significance in Prehistoric research and discovery.

Recent investigation made in Tawang district resulted discovery of series of cup marks on stone surface. These cup marks though difficult to define chronologically perhaps have prehistoric affiliation. Further work in and around the cup marks areas may reveal traces of prehistoric settlements.

Besides cup marks, there are engravings on natural rock surface. The engravings were noticed mainly in Tawang and West Kameng districts. The engravings narrated the *Jataka* stories and figures of Lord Buddha. Paintings of Buddha and Buddhists were noticed on natural rock surface during the investigation. The Upper Siang district also has engravings belonging to Buddhist traditions.

Arunachal has rich tradition of Buddhism and is still practiced in and around Tawang. Therefore, there is scope to find rock art in form of painting and engraving on natural

rock surface in Arunachal. These discoveries will surely help in understanding the nature and survival of Buddhism in difficult ecological situation in Arunachal. The present paper aims to highlight some of such recent discoveries from Arunachal.

Mr. Nabajit Deori, born in 1972, is currently working as Technical Officer in the Directorate of Archaeology, Assam. He obtained his Masters degree in Anthropology from Gauhati University and later PG Diploma in Archaeology from Institute of Archaeology, New Delhi. He started his career as Technical Assistant in the Directorate of Research, Arunachal Pradesh. During his tenure in Arunachal Pradesh, he carried out number of explorations and excavations. He is the co-author of a book entitled "Archaeological Heritage of Arunachal Pradesh". He has also explored and excavated archaeological sites in Assam after joining Directorate of Archaeology, Assam. Recently, he published another book entitled "Da Parbotiar Sowali Dujoni" in Assamese on archaeological remains of North-East, India. He has also wrote many research articles and presented papers in state level as well as national seminars on Archaeology.

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XI

Engravings on Megaliths in Mizoram

Malsawmliana

The practice of erecting megaliths is one of the striking features of the Mizo culture. In Mizo society, megaliths are closely connected with the feasts of merit. Erection of menhirs or upright stones is a common practice followed by the erection of other types of monuments, such as stone seats, platforms and heaps of stone (cairns), etc. Similar types of megalithic structures are also found in other north eastern states of India and even in some parts of Chin Hills, Burma (Myanmar), mainland South East Asian countries. Since the Mizos believed to have settled sometimes in South East Asian countries like Myanmar for a century, various numbers of such kind of stones can still be seen.

The important and striking feature of the megaliths in Mizoram is the engraving of figures. Megaliths are decorated with the engraving of figures such as human beings, animals, tools, weapons and prestige goods of the Mizo. The engravings on Mizo megaliths which include figures of humans, animals, weapons, tools and prestigious goods, provide valuable insights into the relationship between the megaliths and the Mizo society. The carvings of prestigious goods such as necklaces, gongs, guns etc., on the memorial stones of chiefs and thangchhuahpa are indicative of the high position of such individuals in the society

during their life time.

Thus the paper attempts to highlight the engravings made on the stone monuments in Mizoram and even in Chin Hills of Burma and different styles of carvings indicating the technological advancement of the Mizo in their earlier period.

Dr. Malsawmliana obtained his M.A in Ancient Indian History from NEHU, Shillong and Ph.D. from the same university. Currently, he is working as Assistant Professor in Govt. T. Romana College, Aizawl. He has published a number of research papers in journals and contributed chapters/articles in edited books. He has also edited two volumes entitled- "Social, Economic and Political History of the Mizo" (2011) and "Politics of Regionalism in North East India" (2014). He also published two books in Mizo language i.e. "South Sabual Chanchin" (2002) and "Thuziak Thlankhawm" (2002), besides publishing research papers in journals.

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Cup-Marks: A Prospect of its Study in North-East India

A cup-mark is a shallow and roughly circular depression which is generally pecked and then ground into a stone. Cup-marks are a specific group of monuments widely prevalent in many countries of the world at different periods. In Europe and American countries they have been widely studied. But the study on cup-marks in India is very scanty. Their existence is hardly known and neglected. Recently archaeological surveys were conducted by the Archaeological Survey of India, Guwahati Circle for locating archaeological remains in different areas of the North-East India. I was also one of the members of the survey team and came across the evidences of cup-marks at the sites such as Zemithang in Arunachal Pradesh, Umkon in Meghalaya, Dungtlang, Farkawn, and Cherhlun in Mizoram, Khonoma in Nagaland. The existence of holes on the rock surfaces are reported earlier from the excavated site at Chungliyimti in Nagaland. Finding of the cup-marks in the remote areas of this region paved a prospective path for research on the cup-marks which occasionally exist and hardly studied in Indian sub-continent. This paper is presented with a view to identify the nature of these cup-marks, their contextual study, their probable purposes and their periods/dates comparing with that of the areas where the cup-marks are widely studied including ethnographic information collected from the natives who have settled near these cup-mark-sites.

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XIII

Rock Art in Folklore: A Preliminary Study of Petroglyphs from a Garo Village

Queenbala Marak

The meaning and antiquity of rock art in the context of North-East India is still contestable. Nevertheless, there have been reports of petroglyphs on rock surfaces from different parts of the region. Oral history and folklore could go a long way in providing an alternative contextual interpretation, in the absence of any other. This paper will discuss the interface between folklore and rock art, and the various interpretations that can develop. As a case study, it will discuss the petroglyphs found in a village populated by Garos in the outskirts of Guwahati city.

On a rock in the midst of open ground, in the village of Achiksong, are found certain petrographic figures such as birds, bows, circular marks etc. The antiquity of this rock and the art therein is debatable, since no dating technique has been applied. However, of interest is the presence of a group of rock shelters above these stone with rich cultural lore and meanings attached. If the folklore surrounding the cluster of rock shelters is analysed, these petroglyphs assume a meaning of its own.

Queenbala Marak is a faculty in the Department of Anthropology, North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong. She has successfully carried out several research projects and her research areas have mostly been concentrated on the Garos of India and Bangladesh. She has published over 50 research papers in different Indian and international journals. Her research interests lie in Garo studies – from the prehistoric to the present times. Her published papers represent her interests on symbolic anthropology, mainly in the areas of food, rituals, and material culture, especially of the prehistoric times. She recently authored two books - "Food Politics: Studying Food, Identity, and Difference among the Garos" (2014) published by CSP, UK and "Doing Autoethnography" (2016) by Serials, New Delhi.

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Traditional Method of Preparing Lac and Pigments among Garos

Monika Kalita

Every household extract and produce lac for domestic consumption and also for commercial purposes. Even till date, lac is still being produced in small amounts in villages for domestic use and sold in local markets. In the northern part of Garo hills, the lac insects are still bought and sold in their local markets e.g. Nogol para bazaar, Daina dubi, North Garo hills.

The Garos have their own traditional knowledge of obtaining pigments or colours from plants and minerals. Variety of pigments – red, blue, black, saffron, white etc. is extracted from bark of a tree, petals of flowers and plants, fruits and also from minerals like clay and rocks. They procure the dye by using traditional method. Dyes are used to paint wooden carvings in bachelors dormitory called Nokpante or paint memorial post (erected in memory of the deceased) called Kma member of the family. During the British period some of the colours extracted from leaves and charcoal were used as inks to write.

There is a strong indication that these paints have been used in pre-historic rock painting which probably do not survive due to uniquely harsh climatic condition in the region.



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XV

Khasi Traditional Technology and Culture: A Probe in the Ri-Bhoi Area

Benora Batemon Masharing

The area of Ri-Bhoi in Meghalaya, is unique in character, its geo-political position on the trade routes to Assam and Kupli Valley, migration and settlement of various tribes such as the Karbis, Lalungs and others make it significant. These tribes brought along with them their own technology and culture. It is perhaps one of the best areas, in its own right to study both evolution and diffusion of technology. Though the impact of modernisation cannot be denied, the continuation of traditional knowledge system and use of indigenous resources are still practiced in and around the Ri- Bhoi area.

It is in this background that this paper focuses on some pre-Colonial techno-cultural practices that are still in practice. The main economic activity is agriculture, both slash and burn and wet cultivations are undertaken. Another such practice is extraction of colour from natural resources, dyeing of clothes and weaving, which forms the traditional textile industry.

The geographical location and climatic condition favour the development of textile industry which is well known among the Khasi, like the Khasi traditional silk products such as Ki Jain Ryndia or Ryndia clothes known as ryndia tlem, ryndia thohsaw, ryndia thoh saw thoh stem, ryndia khyrwang, etc. These are made from threads after they are stretched and

lined up, dyed in traditional natural colours. The paper will highlight the method of procuring available raw materials, the required means for extraction of colours and different activities involved in the complete process. This paper will also discuss the purpose of producing colour, the labour group associated with the mentioned art and the involved gender and economic dimensions.

Benora Batemon Masharing is an Assistant Professor in Government College, Tura, West Garo Hills. She is also pursuing her doctoral research on Iron in Khasi-Jaintia Society. She has participated and presented papers related to her research in several regional and national seminars. Some of her research papers are published in seminar proceedings.

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XVI

Tattoo Culture among the Nagas of Nagaland with Special Reference to Ao Nagas

Yilobemo Sangma

Tattoos have been related to the primordial human tendency of expression. This ancient practice of marking, designs and patterns on human skin has been an intrinsic art form amongst many cultures around the world. Among the Nagas, tattooing on the face and body was practiced as a form of body adornment and was also associated with head hunting. Tattooing was practiced by certain Naga tribes like Konyak, Ao, Phom, Yimchungrü, Chang, Sangtam and Khiamniungan prior to Christianity.

The Ao Nagas are generally classified into three major language groups viz, Chungli, Mongsen and Changki. Similar to the other Naga tribes, the art of tattooing among the Aos was also done as a mark of devotion, identity, determination and rite of passage to adulthood. Tattooing among the Aos however, was practiced only among the women folks, which was generally marked on the chin, chest, arms and legs. The chin had four vertical lines, a chain of lozenges on the lower part of the leg and a sort of arrow pattern on the knees. Slight variation in the patterns and its significance are found among the three language groups.

Although the practice of tattooing was a predominant culture in Naga society, with the advent of Christianity and western education, the practice of tattooing lost its importance and as a result, the values attached to it also

disappeared gradually. Earlier research works done by colonial researchers, British administrators, European anthropologists and the like, only provides an overview of the general tattooing culture. The present paper therefore intends to focus on an in-depth study of the Tattoo culture in Nagaland with special reference to the Ao- Naga tribe. It also proposes to provide facts on the role of tattoos to help reconstruct the past history and preserve the rich tattoo traditions.

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XVII

The Memorial Stones or Monoliths of Mizoram as Rock Art and its Stipulation

Aten Nungshi

The State of Mizoram hold promises of rich archaeological remains in the area around the south eastern region of Mizoram, which comprises of Serchhip, Champhai and Lunglei, and have abundance of monolithic/memorial stones. These stones are either filled with engravings of animals, birds and human figures or simply plain surface. Many gigantic monoliths have been reported during the last few years of exploration in these areas. These are very unique archaeological remains from North-East India. Mizoram hosts some of the best and unique monolithic engravings in North-East, if not, in India. The hero stones of the Western, Central and part of Southern India are unique, yet the monolithic engraving of Mizoram stands out. The engravings are not excellent. However, whatever tools the engraver used they try to signify and portray the culture and rich tradition of their own. Another interesting feature that signifies the uniqueness is that though the megalithic culture is found in Mizoram, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh, yet the monoliths are not carved with images (maybe Nagas does a bit). Though all are located in the same geographical region, Mizoram is ahead in

this arena. However, due to wet season throughout the year fungus and lichens have grown all over the stone, chipping and natural erosion is also noticed on most of the monoliths. Human vandalism is another major threat to these archaeological remains of Mizoram.

Aten Nungshi, is a passionate archaeologist, who loves photography and travelling. She completed Post Graduate Diploma in Archaeology from Institute of Archaeology, New Delhi. Currently, she is working as Assistant Professor of History in Jubilee Memorial College in Nagaland.

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XVIII

Wild Animals in the Prehistoric Rock Art of the Malaprabha Basin and Prospect for North-East India Rock Art

R. Mohana

The Malaprabha basin provides a favourable environment for not only human beings but also animals. Human beings depended on the animals for subsistence. The pictures of the animals and humans now known from the valley are more or less equal in number and animals are invariably wild. The depiction of animals in rock art is likely to indicate human-animal relationship in the past. In the region, 35 rock art sites including those noticed and studied by other scholars previously have been studied by the author.

The author has identified many wild animals in the pictures e.g. spotted hyena, fox, wolf, wild boar, deer, porcupine, monitor lizard, rabbit, wild mouse, wild cock, and snakes. In the basin, depiction of wild animals is far more in the Prehistoric stage. In the later stages their frequency is very low. On the other hand domestic animals are totally absent in this stage.

Dr. R. Mohana is a young scholar trained in prehistoric and rock art studies. He completed his Ph.D. from Deccan College PGRI, Pune on rock art of Malaprabha basin, Karnataka. He has discovered 76 rock shelters at Malaprabha basin with evidence of rock art in 32 shelters. Currently, he is working on the Tungabhadra valley for his Post Doctoral research. He has published 15 research papers in national and regional journals.

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XIX

An Approach to Rock Art Research

B. L. Malla

The present concern of all the rock art researchers is to explore the 'future of the past' and to look beyond the duty of discovering, protecting, and educating about archaeological treasures. Everybody is very curious to know that in which direction the discipline of archaeology is going, because the philosophy of research and technology/science is fast changing.

The concern for exploring new ways and means for rock art research and for deciphering rock art opened a new chapter in the history of research in prehistoric and tribal art, with new scope from the collaboration of archaeology with anthropology, art history, philosophy, semiotics, psychology, psychiatry, history of religion and cultural history. The new multidisciplinary approach aims at a global view of culture and of the very essence of the spirit of our species (*Homo sapiens*).

In the past, the rock art research has coupled archaeology and anthropology with the aesthetics and art history. By this approach a common research ground has been established between the prehistoric art and the history of religion. In this direction investigations have been made on the signs of myths and shamanism, logical and cognitive functions as revealed by art, and paradigms of semiotic and

graphic art, etc. But the present challenge is to widen the scope of multidisciplinary involvement, in order to understand human and his epic... that is, our epic. The need is to look beyond the context and read the messages. Because, prehistoric art narrates a piece of life, a thought or an emotion which has been a part of our tradition. It reveals changes in people's way of thinking, feeling, and sentiments, which can express at the same time the wish and the need for self-punishment. Such need allows to reduce sense of guilty, by using an expressive mean which can be, only formally, compared to the one used by primitive man in ritual and by the child in concrete logic stage.

It seems that there is an immediate need to study further psychology of iconicity; and to make distinction between 'mental and artistic representations'. It is believed that the 'abstract art' comes from the mind but 'representational art' comes from the natural forms.

It is clear from the above discourse that the need of an hour is to study palaeoart in holistic perspective while applying multidisciplinary approach. It is to be investigated as one of the greatest bio-cultural experiments of humanity. Even we would have to develop a formal grammar and unified theory for palaeoart studies.





Dr. Bansi Lal Malla, an Art Historian, with specialization in Indian art and cultural studies, is presently associated with the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi as Project Director. His areas of interest include both classical and vernacular traditions. He has been associated with IGNCA-UNESCO-UNDP project on 'Village India'.

He is the author of The Sculptures of Kashmir, Vaisnava Art and Iconography of Kashmir, Trees in Indian Art, Mythology and Folklore, Conservation of Rock Art (ed.), Global Rock Art (ed.), The World of Rock Art: An Overview of the Five Continents (ed.), Rock Art Studies (Volume I): Concept, Methodology, Context, Documentation and Conservation (ed.), Rock Art Studies (Volume II): Interpretation through Multidisciplinary Approaches (ed.), Rock Art of Andhra Pradesh: A New Synthesis by N. Chandramouli (General ed.), Cosmology and Cosmic Manifestations: A Study in Shaiva Art and Thought of Kashmir, Rock Art of India: Suitable Dating Techniques (ed.), Glimpses of India-China Rock Art (ed.), Silent Rock's An Eloquent Testimony: Rock Art Heritage of Odisha and of a

number of research articles published in professional journals. He is also in the editorial board of some of the important publications.

He has participated in many national and international conferences/workshops and has widely travelled in India, France, Italy, Iran and China in connection with his field studies and conferences.

Currently, Dr. Malla is engaged in documentation, ecological conservation and ethno-archaeological study of Indian Rock Art and also in Himalayan Studies.

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XX

Circles and its Variants in Indian Rock Art: A Synthesis

Riza Abbas

Indian Rock Art preserves a huge corpus of iconic and uniconic depictions that are found painted and engraved on the walls and ceilings of thousands of rock art panels. Among them, simple circle, circle with a central dot, spoked wheel, cross in a circle and spiked circles are the most commonly occurring symbols. However there are certain symbols like labyrinth and concentric circles that are uncommon and are only manifested at some select sites. A synthesis of these symbols suggests that these symbols are found associated with some other set of iconic and uniconic symbols. When seen in a context, these symbols hint towards some significance which is yet to be explored and interpreted. The paper aims to explore such context and symbolism of these in Indian rock art with special reference Northeast India scenario.

Dr. Riza Abbas presently holds the post of Senior Research Officer (Archaeology), in the Indian Numismatic, Historical and Cultural Research Foundation at IIRNS Campus, Nashik. He obtained his Ph.D. from Deccan College in Prehistoric Archaeology. He is actively conducting research in Archaeo-astronomy of Megaliths, Prehistory and Rock Art of Rajasthan.

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XXI

Recent Research on the Rock Art of Jwalapuram, Kurnool District, Andhra Pradesh

Ravi Korisettar

During the last decade a series of painted rock shelters were discovered in the Kurnool Sub-basin of the late Proterozoic Cuddapah Basin. The rock art sites are situated in the southwestern part of Andhra Pradesh. A variety of rock art features have been documented from rock shelter as well as cave wall surfaces. Two instances of this body of rock art have facilitated absolute dating and these dates suggest the presence of rock art ranging from late Pleistocene to Mid-Holocene. Although sporadic occurrence of rock art sites in this region, this systematic survey and documentation has identified more than 200 rock shelters. Such intensity of rock art sites was not anticipated. Taking the range of imageries into consideration it has been possible to organise five phases of rock art sequence. The presentation deals with the nature and verity of prehistoric art in this region.

Prof. Ravi Korisettar is retired Professor and Head of Department of History and Archaeology, Karnatak University, Dharwad. Prof. Korisettar is one of the seniormost and renowned archaeologists of India. He has contributed immensely for prehistory and rock art of peninsular India. He is the author of several research papers published from India and abroad. At present he is a senior fellow at Dr. V.S. Wakankar Archaeological Research Institute.

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