

# A Report



## India-China Rock Art Workshop 2016

Venue: Conference Room, C.V. Mess, IGNCA  
New Delhi

(24<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2016)



INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE ARTS  
New Delhi



Following the inauguration of 'India-China Rock Art Exhibition' on 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2016, a workshop titled '*Understanding the Rock Art of India and China*' was organized from 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2016 at Conference Room, C.V. Mess, Janpath, IGNCA. The Workshop was inaugurated by Shri K. K Mittal, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India who was the Chief Guest on the occasion.



Sh. K.K Mittal inaugurating the Workshop.



Chinese delegates registering for the Workshop.

The three day workshop on '*Understanding the Rock Art of India and China*' was a huge success in which 35 delegates from China and 15 scholars from India actively participated along with rock art enthusiasts and students from various colleges and institutions. During this three days intensive workshop several papers were presented by different scholars from both the countries on rock art and its allied subjects, it's research, documentation, survey and discovery etc.



Delegates and participants at the Workshop.

On 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2016 after the inauguration, the Workshop session chaired by Dr. B. M. Pande ‘*Survey, Documentation and Conservation*’ started and several papers were presented by Chinese scholars, highlighting the survey, research and documentation of rock art in china. A paper from the Indian section was presented by Dr. S. B. Ota of Archaeological Survey of India titled *Petroglyphs from Kimi and Sasoma in Nubra Valley, Ladakh, Jammu & Kashmir: Evidence of Possible Cultural Contact with China*, highlighting the investigations in high altitude Ladakh region that have brought to light a large number of rock art from different areas, mostly along the ancient routes and passes, establishing its link with surrounding areas during ancient times, particularly Central Asia.



Sh. S. B.Ota presenting his paper at the workshop.



The day one's session concluded with a special lecture ‘*Overview of Archaeological Discoveries of Greater Khingan Mountains Painted Cave Art*’ by Prof. Zhao Pingchun (China). The lecture elaborated on the archaeological investigations of the Greater Khingan mountains painted cave art, started since 1970s by the Heilongjiang Institute of Archaeology and it presented an overview of the investigations and results of the excavations at Huzhongbei cave site.



Prof. Zhao Pingchung delivering the Special Lecture.



The next day session (25<sup>th</sup> February, 2016) was more elaborative with presentation of papers by both Chinese and Indian scholars relating to rock art and its various aspects. In the morning session, chaired by Prof. R. Korrisettar, four papers were presented; two each by Chinese and Indian scholars; *Xinfu*

*Rock Paintings Group Preliminary Study* by Gao Feng (China), *The Conservation and Management of Jinsha River Rock Art, Southwestern China* by Wu Yun (China), *An Attempt at Comparing India-China Prehistoric Rock Art* by Ravi Korrisettar (India) and *Art Inspiration between Indian Rock-Cut Sculptures and Paintings and Dazu Grottoes, China* by B. R. Mani (India). While the paper of Prof. Korrisettar elaborated on the details of comparing the prehistoric rock art of India and China, Dr. Mani's paper highlighted the inspiration between Indian rock-cut sculptures and paintings and Dazu Grottoes of China.



Prof. Korrisettar and Dr. Mani presenting their respective papers.



The afternoon session of the day, 'Interpreting Rock Art' was chaired by Prof. Gao Feng. In this session, the interpretation of rock art in China was the major topic and several Chinese scholars presented their papers on the subject; *Analysis of Language Symbol Structure in Southwest China's Rock Art System during the Bronze Age: The Case Study of Huashan Rock Paintings, Guangxi* by Zhang Yasha, *The Rock art report of Tongtian river area in Yushu, Qinghai* by Nima Jiangcai, *Yin Shan Pictures: China, Mongolia, Russia Joint Investigation of rock art in 2015* by Wei Jian, *A Brief Introduction of Auspicious Elements in Yin Shan Rock Paintings* by Zhou Yi were some of the papers presented in the session. The session concluded with a special lecture *An Archaeological Exploration of the Regional Type and Chronology of Rock Art* delivered by Wei Jian (China). Prof. V.H. Sonawane was the chairperson during the special lecture.



Prof. Gao Feng chairing the session.



Prof. Zhang Yasha presenting her paper.

The concluding day of the workshop (26<sup>th</sup> February, 2016) saw an array of presentations on 'Interpretations of Rock Art' by both Indian and Chinese scholars. Prof. Ji Xueping from China was the Chairperson for the session. Some of the important papers presented during this session were; *The combination regular pattern of Central Plains* by Sun Baorui (China), *Adivasi Art: Genesis, Development and its Preservation* by R. C. Aggrawal and *Interpreting Rock Art of India* by V.H. Sonawane. At the end of the session the discussion and reviewing of the workshop was held for an hour in which delegates, scholars and participants actively participated.



Dr. Aggrawal and Prof. Sonawane presenting their respective papers.

The Valedictory session was held at 02:00 pm in the Conference Room, C.V. Mess, Janpath, IGNC, New Delhi. Dr. B. R. Mani was the Chairperson during the session. The Welcome Address was given by Mrs. Veena Joshi, Joint Secretary / Officiating Member Secretary, IGNC in which she thanked all the delegates from China and India for their active participation in the workshop. Mrs. Veena Joshi also stressed on organizing such academic ventures in the near future between the two countries. At last, she congratulated Rock Art Unit for a successful organization of the event.



Mrs. Veena Joshi giving the welcome address on the occasion.

Following Mrs. Veena Joshi's address, a brief summary of the presentations/papers presented during the three days workshop was presented by the Chairperson, Dr. B. R Mani.

Prof. A. Sundara gave the Valedictory Address on the occasion. In his address he observed that, after a review by the respective Chairpersons and Rapporteurs of all the sessions and papers presented by the scholars on different aspects of the Rock Art, there emerged four major issues that need immediate attention, namely; Documentation of unexplored sites by all means and methods; Dating of the rock art, particularly in India; Conservation of rock art sites and Joint ventures by both the countries in strategic and crucial areas such as Karakoram region etc.

Prof. A. Sundara highly appreciated the task undertaken by IGNCA for initiating a national multi-disciplinary project for documentation of rock art and it's allied subjects state-wise in a standard format. He emphatically stressed on the need to explore and document more such rock art sites in every nook and corner of the country before this precious heritage vanishes at the hands of natural hazards and human vandalism. While suggesting introduction of rock art as a subject at school and college levels in the country, he emphasized on involving students and scholars in various programmes/initiatives etc. at college and University levels.



Prof. Sundara giving the valedictory address.



Indian and Chinese delegates at the Workshop.

At last, Prof. Sundara addressed a pressing issue related to dating of Indian rock art and emphasized on an urgent need to establish a laboratory to scientifically date the rock art of the country. Lauding the measures taken by the Chinese counterparts in the preservation of rock art of china, he suggested on collaboration between the two countries for more such joint academic ventures in the study of rock art sites as displaying influence and impact of each side on the other will be very fruitful for better understanding of the heritage in far wider and significant perspective.

Concluding the three days 'India-China Rock Art Workshop', Dr. B.L. Malla, Project Director, IGNCA presented the vote of thanks. He thanked all the delegates and scholars from China, India and other observers for their active participation in the workshop. Dr. Malla, specially congratulated the organizing committee and his young team for successfully organizing the Workshop.



Dr. Malla giving the vote of thanks.



A view of the Workshop in session.

Thus, the three day Workshop on "India-China Rock Art" has been successful by providing a clear-cut direction necessary for further study and research on a larger scale with mutual co-operation and understanding in this important academic pursuit extending over a large part of Asia.



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