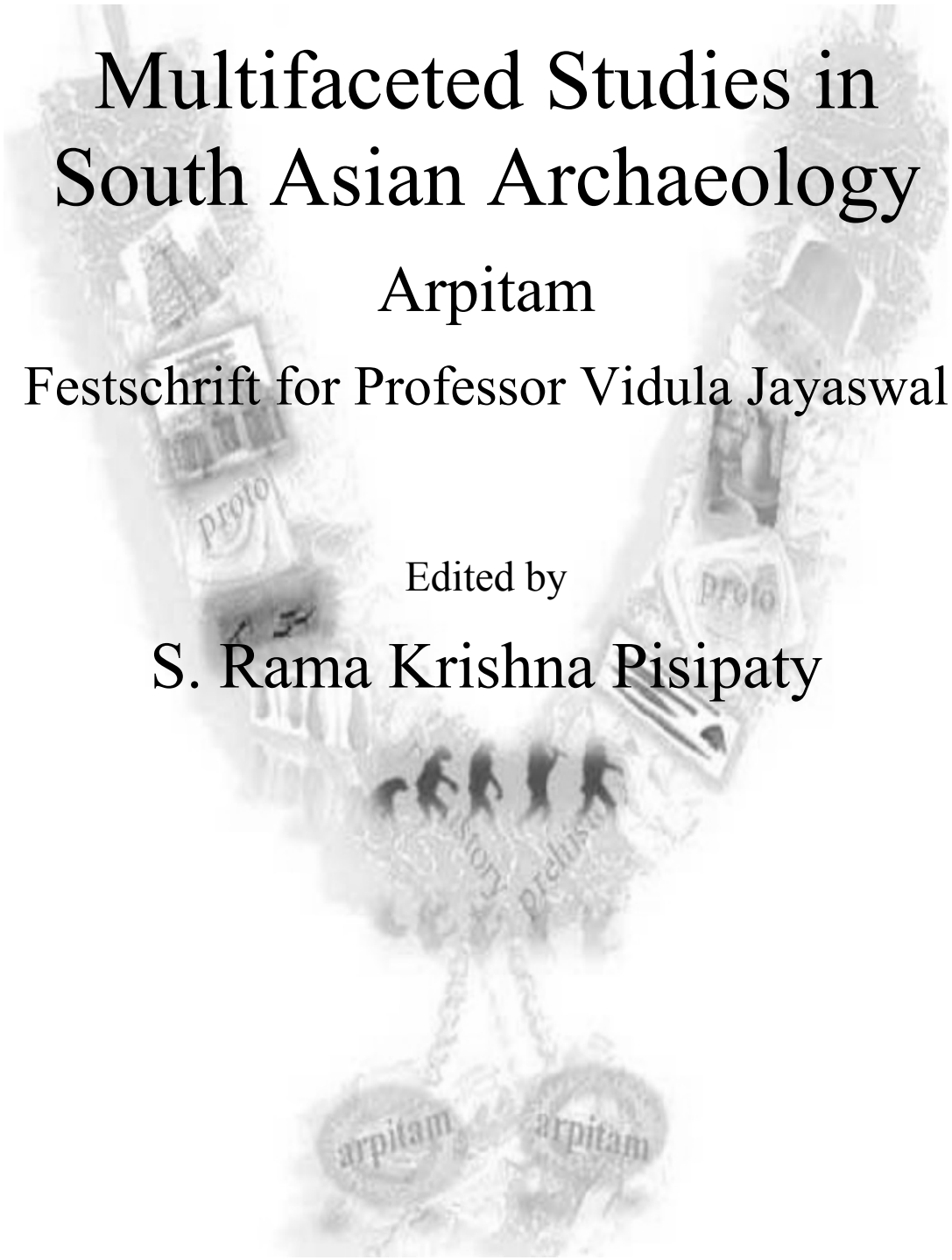
Multifaceted Studies in South Asian Archaeology

Arpitam

Festschrift for Professor Vidula Jayaswal



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An Integrated Approach towards the Rock art of Maharashtra

Kantikumar A. Pawar

Introduction

Rock art studies are one of the important steps towards understanding our ancestor's concept to depict rock art in the form of carvings, engravings, bruising and paintings. Prehistoric people have depicted their emotions, thought and nature's wonderful creativity through rock art. In India where rock art was found in various types in different regions, the study of which reveals various aspects of primitive man and his behavioral pattern. It is because of his wonderful creative faculty of expression that, man has been able to achieve supreme position among all other creatures. The process of this cultural development, covering a long span of time took a very gradual course and that is why the nature of development is not so easy to explain. One can only recognize this fact in the study of primitive art available in the form of rock-paintings of prehistoric times. Rock art starts from prehistoric times onwards and gradually developed further. The caves and the rock-shelters were the dwellings of the primitive people as was proved by the excavations conducted by the archaeologists and anthropologists, and have provided a comprehensive picture of the life-style of the prehistoric people. These caves or shelters have been found located in the forest regions. These shelters were generally close to water sources and the forests were full of wild flora and fauna some of which were the source of food.

A single factor of man's creative genius in the form of rock-paintings is prevalent throughout the world, and this aspect of human creativity is a fascinating theme of primitive world. Fortunately India is immensely rich in the treasure of pre-historic rock-paintings (Bednarik 1993).

Past research

Rock paintings in India were first recorded by the pioneering discoveries made in 1867 by Archibald Carlyle in Mirzapur district, Uttar Pradesh. F. Fawcett brought to notice the first rock engravings in South India from Kuppagallu, Karnataka in1892. Afterwards various scholars tried to study the painted rock shelters in systematic way. About 5000 painted rock shelters have so far been reported from the Indian Subcontinent grouped into central Vindhyan region, Chhota nagpur plateau, southern Deccan region of India, but surprisingly not a single painted rock shelter was reported or recorded from Maharashtra prior to 2004.

Though V. S. Wakankar had mentioned about the Rock shelters in some parts of Maharashtra, especially in Vidarbha region but he did not mention about the rock Paintings. Vidarbha which forms the eastern part of Maharashtra is surrounded by painted caves and rock-shelter sites in Nimar and Chindwara districts of Madhya Pradesh to the north, and Gupansar area in Chattisgarh to the east. Further south, we find rockshelters in Betamcherla and Adoni in Andhra; Balchaker and Hassan Patri, Hirebenekal in Karnataka; and Kilvalay, Settavarai, etc., in Tamil Nadu.

Map 1- Rock Art Sites in Indian Sub-continent.

For the first time, two sporadic discoveries of the painted rock shelters were made in Chandrapur district of Maharashtra from two different places at Parasgarh-Nagbhir hills. First at Waghai hill in Chimur tahsil of Chandrapur District in the Vidarbha region (Mane 2004) and recently in village Navtala in the close proximity of earlier mentioned place by the author. As well as in the Konkan region of Maharashtra large numbers of engravings were reported (Gogte, Shirvalkar and Pradhan, 2008).

Chandrapur district, of the Vidarbha region in Maharashtra is very well known to the scholars of Geology, Geography, Sociology and History. So far, this area is rich in mineral wealth in the form of Manganese and coal, which is famous throughout India. A single

district, Chandrapur, covers 34% forest area of the Maharashtra state. The region has presented evidences of life right from the Jurassic era as represented by Dinosaur egg shells from Pisdura, Takh & Nand (*IAR* 1994-95). In the geological map of India, it is known as the Gondwana land, from the ancient Gond kingdoms, south of the Narmada. Investigations in other parts the world viz., South Africa, Australia and even South America have brought to light a parallel group of formations, exhibiting much the same physical as well as organic characteristics. It has made known important paleontological discoveries in the Jurassic and Cretaceous systems in India (Wadia 1994; 123).

Environmental Background

Geography

Maharashtra is politically and geographically the second largest state in India occupying approximately 307,713 sq km area. 35 districts in the geographical boundary of Maharashtra further divided into five regions on linguistic basis viz Marathwada, Western Maharashtra, Khandesh, Vidarbha and Konkan regions.

Vidarbha, lying between lat. 19º-21º N and long. 76º-80º30' E is the eastern part of Maharashtra, presently comprises of eleven districts, occupying about 93654 sq.km in area. Geographical and climatic features divide this region broadly into two main zones i.e. Western Vidarbha and Eastern Vidarbha. Western Vidarbha, comprising of five districts, lies between the Ajanta (South) and Gawilgarh (North) hill ranges, and has considerably high plains (Chikaldara plateau top has a height of 1200 m above MSL) and hills (Melghat) throughout its region excepting, of course the nuclear portion of the Purna valley, while Eastern Vidarbha, comprising the remaining six districts of region, portrays a 'hummocky' landscape of low and irregular hills and sluggish streams. Ramtek hill, with a height of about 4oo mt. above MSL, is one such hill.

Geology

Parasgarh-Nagbhir hills, running with a north-north-east to a south-south-west strike for a distance of about 20 km., have an average width of about 10 to 12 km. This is almost a single ridge of a cuesta type, with an excellent cliff section facing west and in part, south; the dip slope faces eastwards and the ridge is flat-topped. This ridge is made up of almost horizontally bedded Vindhyan sandstones which is underlain by limestone of the same age. At the lower end of this hill, there is a large natural tank depression. The complete hill range is surrounded by various big and small lakes.

This hill range is further divided into different elevated portions, known locally by various names, *viz*., Pendhari peak (474 m), Sat Bahini (459 m), Siwap Hurki (383 m) and the Mugdhabai Pahar (411 m).

'Muktabai Pahar' (20^0 35' N & 79^0 33' E) is composed mainly of hillocks of rudaceous and ferruginous sand stones. Mineralogically, these sandstones are composed mainly of Quartz and some mica flakes, but the sandstone here is weak. Coarse grained mineral structure is the main reason for its weakness. Stratigraphically, this sandstone belongs to the 'Kamphti' formation of the Mahadeo group of the upper Permian to the lower Triassic i.e. 280-180 million yrs BP (Deshpande 1998).

Drainage

The entire region of Vidarbha is drained by three major rivers, the Purna (tributary of the Tapi river), the Wardha and the Wainganga (tributary of the Godavari river). The Wardha River divides the Vidarbha region into the above mentioned (two) zones.

Eastern Vidarbha is drained mainly by the Wainganga River, which originates about 12 Km from Mundara village of Seoni district in the southern slopes of the Satpura Range of Madhya Pradesh, and flows south through Balaghat in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra in a very winding course of approximately 360 miles. After joining the Wardha, the united stream, known as the Pranahita, ultimately falls into the Godavari. The river has developed extensive flood plains, with sweeping graceful meanders and low alluvial flats and meander terraces. The river has high banks, about 10 to 15 m on either side. The Wainganga River receives numerous tributaries on either bank and drains the western, central and eastern regions of the Chandrapur, Gadchiroli and Nagpur districts. The chief tributaries of the Wainganga are the Garhavi, Khobragadi, Kathani and the Potphondi on the western bank and the Andhari on the eastern bank (Deshpande 2002: 376).

Flora and Fauna

It is required to understand the present floral and faunal wealth of the region, especially in case of studying rock art, where most of the panels inside rock shelters executed animal world.

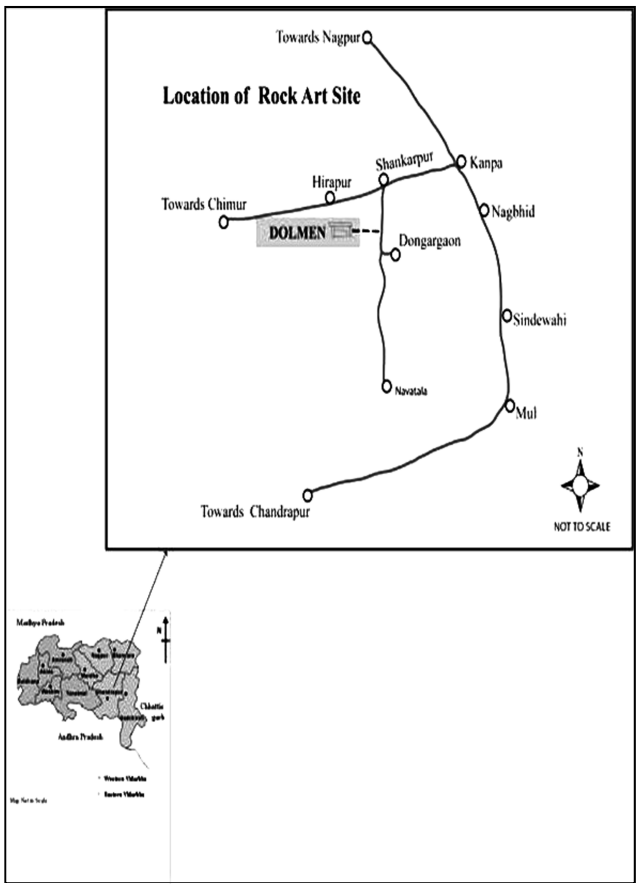
A number of varieties of plants were found in the dense forests of the Chandrapur district. They are Babul (*Acacia nilotica*), Bel, Salar (*Boswellia serrata*), Bans (*Dendrocalamus strictus*), Bahera (*Terminalia bellerica*), Jamun (*Syzgium cumini*), Mohwa (*Bassica latifolia*), Teak (*Tectona grandis*), Peepal (*Ficus religiosa*), Imli (*Tamarindus indiaca*), Charul (*Holopteica integrifolia*), Ber (*Zizybus jujube*), Palas, Khiar, Karanji, Umber, Ajan, etc.
They are mainly found in the hill sides and plain plateau.

Parasgarh- Nagbhir hill ranges are extremely rich in wildlife. Tiger (*Panthera tigris*), Panther (*Panthera pardus*), Wild boar (*Sus crofa*), Indian Black Bear (*Ursus labiatus*), Black Buck (*Antelope bezoartica*), Indian Gazelle or Chinkara (*Antelope Arabica*), Sambhar (*Rusa unicoler*), Cheetal (*Cervus axis*), wild Dog (*Cyon*

alpinus), Nilgai or Blue Bull (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*) Squirrel (Gunarubulus pennanoti), Monkey (Mecaca muiatta), Langur (Seinnopithecus entellus), Barasinga, Hare, Hyaena, wolf, Jackel, etc. are found in their wild varieties.

Location

'Waghai hill' (20^0 35' N & 79^0 33' E) painted rock shelters is perhaps the only known rock shelters in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra. This hill is a part of Perjagarh-Nagbhir range of Hills as mentioned above and locally known as "Sitamai dongar". Two different sites have been identified within the periphery of these hill ranges i.e. Dongargaon and Navtala.



Map 2 Location Map of the Sites

Distance of Waghai hill is105 km from Nagpur district. On the state highway leading from Nagpur to Chandrapur there is a small village Kampa about 88 km away from Nagpur. On Kampa-Chimur road about 8 km towards west of Kampa there is another village by name Shankarpur. About 6 kms towards south of Shankarpur village 'Dongargaon' is located. After walking 3 km in south direction from 'Dongargaon' through dense bushy forest the rock shelters are located on the top of the Waghai hill.

Navtala (20^0 41.2' N 79^0 30 63.3' E), is a small village situated on the foothills of the Parasgarh-Nagbhir hills, which itself is covered by dense forest. This village is approximately 14 km from Dongargaon, in the south-east direction, close to Chimur tahsil. The explorations at Navtala revealed significant evidences of rock-shelters with few paintings on its surface.

Dongargaon

Most of the painted rock shelters in India were found in densely forested regions. The rock shelters at Waghai hills are also located in the thick forest region, which covered the 60% land of Chandrapur district. On this Waghai hill the P.R.S divided into two parts Nagargota and Pandubara (Fig 1).

Nagargota rock shelters are situated on top the of Waghai hill, 1.2 km East of the village Dongargaon and Pandubara rock shelter is 3 km towards south of the same village. Even both shelters situated on the same hill, but they are found opposite to each other. The walking distance between both these is some 1.5 km. A natural depression like that of a lake is present at the foot of the Waghai hill, which is one of the major water sources in this area even today. Many domestic as well as wild animals use this lake for drinking water. The rich and varied topography of this district is almost unparallel anywhere else in the state.

This cluster is nearly 135 mt above the ground level, where the four rock shelters running from South-West to North-East are situated (Fig 2). This place is covered by huge sand stone blocks and deep grooves can be easily identified above it. The rock paintings at Nagargota are found on the ceiling, exterior side and cliff sides of the rock shelters. The total numbers of paintings are near about 35 of which animal figures are 22 in number whereas human figures are 13. Majority of these paintings were painted in dark red and purple red ochre whereas a few were painted in dull red colour. Presently due to weathering factors like rain, heat and insects, most paintings are not clearly visible. The animal figures depicted in these rock paintings are mainly Barasingha, Deer and humped cattle. Many animal figures were shown as grazing whereas hunting scenes are completely absent. Both wild as well as domesticated animal figures were depicted in the rock shelter. Human figures are shown in stick shaped and small in size, shown without weapons, but a few figures are big in size like horse rider (?).

Rock paintings of Nagargota can be categorized into two-stage sequence. A few of the rock paintings in dark red colour and relatively larger and crude seem to be the earliest rock paintings, whereas the other rock paintings in bright red colour are small in size and very well executed (Fig 3). Regarding the size of the paintings, animal figures having maximum height is 30 cm and length 40 cm whereas the other rock paintings are 7 cm in height and length is 4 cm. Out of thirteen human figures seven human figures depicted on ceiling portion of the rock shelter no. 1 and their size is about 4 to 5 cm. Four other human figures show average height of 18 cm. One human figure is shown as carrying arrows on the back.

Fig 1 Satellite Image of the Landscape

These human figures are painted in dark red colour. Most of the paintings are in flat wash, whereas the depiction of the horse rider (?) was drawn in outlines (Fig 4). The details of paintings are given below (Table 1). Since the remaining rock paintings are in fragmented condition and cannot be identified properly, it is difficult to understand the subject matter of those rock paintings.

Engravings

Other interesting feature at Nagargota rock shelter is vertical strokes engraved on one slab at the ground surface of rock shelter. On a small rectangular sandstone slab 11 vertical strokes were engraved (Fig 5). These strokes are crossing each other at some point. It is very difficult to understand specific pattern of this engraving. Probably these strokes were occurred during use of this slab for sharpening some tools kind of equipments.

Pandubara Rock Paintings

Four rock shelters are located at Pandubara cluster like Nagargota but out of these four rock shelters only rock shelter no. I & IV are painted. Rock shelters no. II & III are covered with semi dressed stone slabs (Fig 6). On the top of these rock shelters a few structures covered with huge boulders similar to the megalithic cairn circles (?) were noticed. Probably these shelters were used by the Megalithic/Early historical communities.

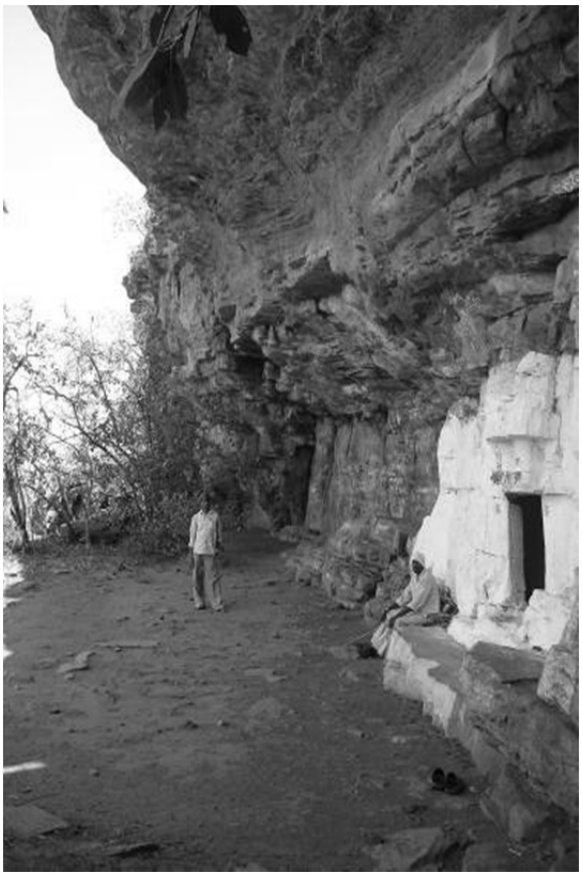


Fig 2 Rock Shelter at Nagargota

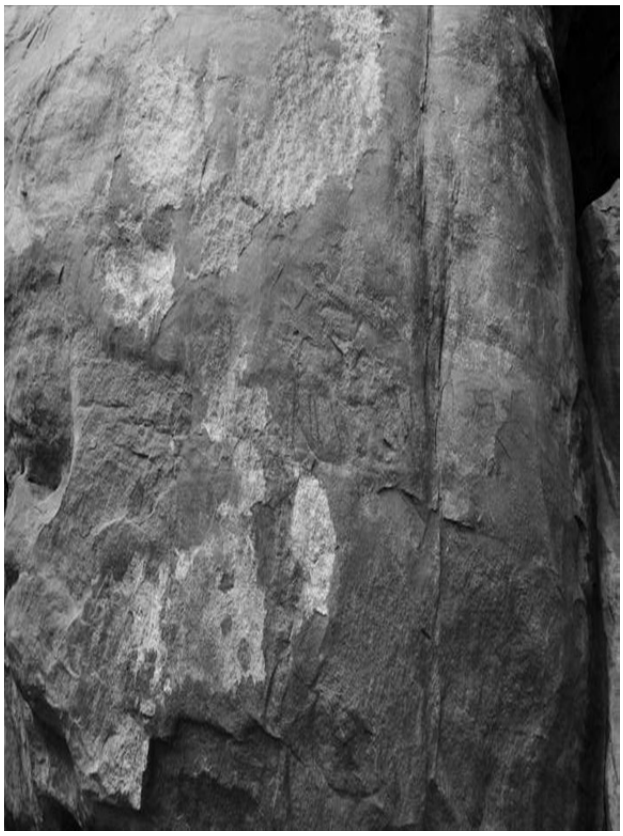


Fig 3 Paintings Drawn on the Surface of Shelter

Table 1 Description of Nagargota Paintings

S No	Subject matter of art	Colour
1)	Seven human figures	Dark red
2)	Four grazing deers (?)	Dark red
3)	Running deer	Dark red
4)	Two big Barasingha	Dark red
5)	Humped cattle	Bright red
6)	Human with arrows	Dark red
7)	Horse rider (?)	Faint red
8)	Antelope	Dark red
9)	Tree	Dark red
10)	Unidentified animal	Dark red

Fig 4 Depiction of Horse Rider (?)

Fig 5 Engravings on a Slab inside the Shelter

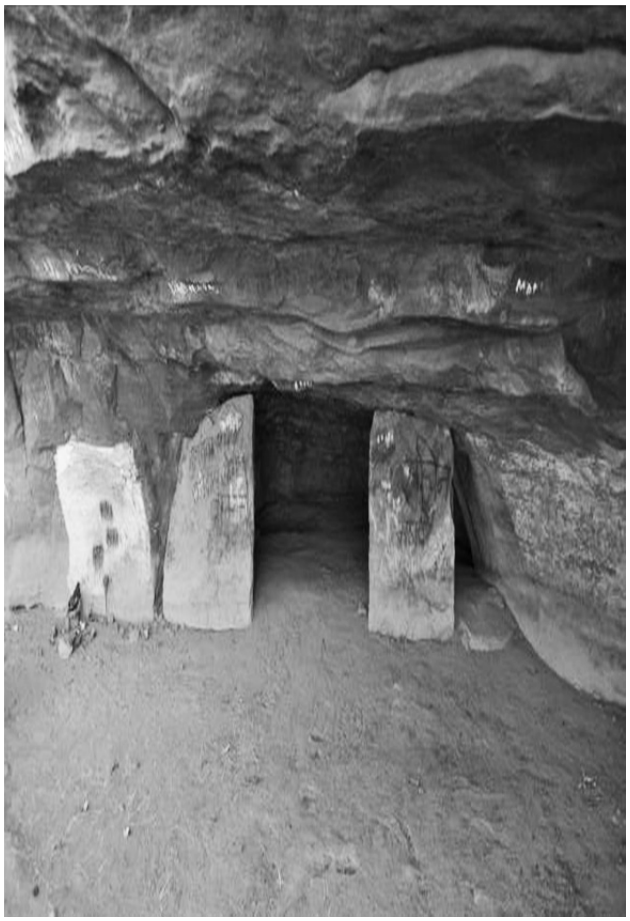


Fig 6 Rock Shelter at Pandubara

Total number of rock paintings is about 17, out of which 12 are clearly visible and remaining paintings are in distorted condition and could not be identified. Most of the paintings are painted in different shades of red ochre colour (dark red and reddish brown). A few rock paintings are in dark brown colour (Fig 7).

Two paintings are in red colour with the outlines in yellow colour. Paintings were drawn in various sizes. Smallest paintings are 6 cm in height and 9 cm in length but large paintings having 21 cm height and 18 cm in length. Here the paintings are fine as compared with those of Nagargota. In animal paintings Deer, Barasingha, elephant, rhinoceros (?), wild boar and Bovid are depicted. Other paintings are human figures with outlines in yellow colour, Swastika and two segmented figures, which is unique at this site (Fig 8). Two segmented figures showing that some creatures drawn with 3-4 segmented lines. Two geometrical patterns in which vertical rectangle was drawn and inside the figure two vertical strokes are clearly visible. Human figures were drawn in dancing posture. Some traces of swastika figure is visible on the ceiling of the rock shelter IV. Depiction of a deer figure has shown elegantly and the body portion was filled in with rectangular and semicircular designs. Most of the paintings were drawn on bare uneven rough surface of cliff side wall while only a few rock paintings had drawn on the ceiling portion of the rock shelter. The details of paintings are given below (Table 2).

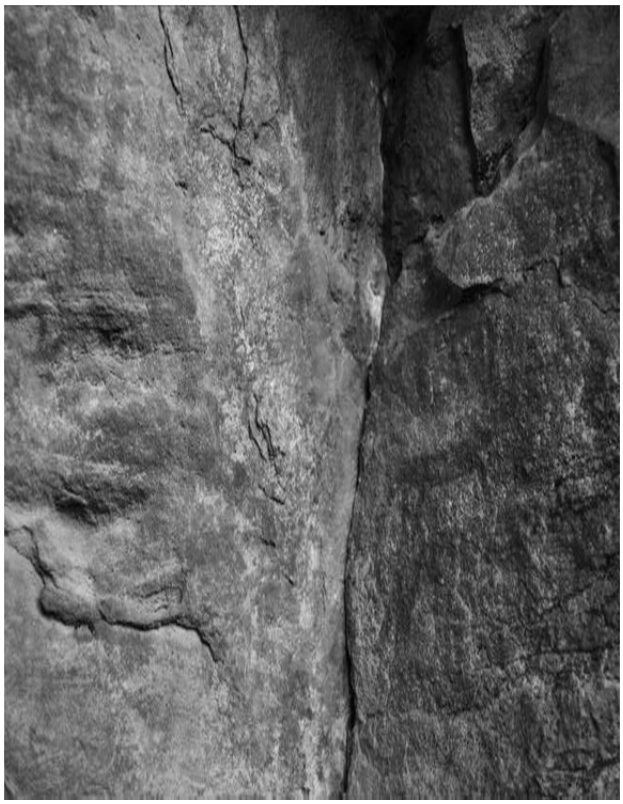


Fig 7 Paintings Drawn with Dark Brown and Yellow colour

Table 2 Description of Pandubara Paintings

S No	Subject matter of art	Colour
1)	Wild Boar	Dark red
2)	Rhinoceros (?)	Dark red
3)	Elephant	Dark red
4)	Human figure	Yellow ochre
5)	Reflection of Deer	Dark red
6)	Deer (Inside body rectangle & semicircle drawn)	Dark purple red
7)	Two segmented animals	Dark purple red
8)	Swastika figure	Bright red
9)	Barasingha	Dark red
10)	Geometric figure	Dark purple red

Style of Paintings

The study of style, patina, superimposition and theme of the rock paintings are considered as the parameters to study the rock paintings and their chronology. The study of the style of the rock paintings is an essential factor which can give information to assign a date to the rock paintings. Rock paintings at Waghai hill are classified

according to their art form. It should be divided into different types as given below.

a) Silhouette style b) Half filled drawings c) Decorative drawings d) Outline drawings e) Two coloured or bichrome drawings f) Spray paintings g) Segmented style h) Geometric style.

Fig 8 Depiction of Segmented figures, Swastika & Deer

The Authors of Paintings

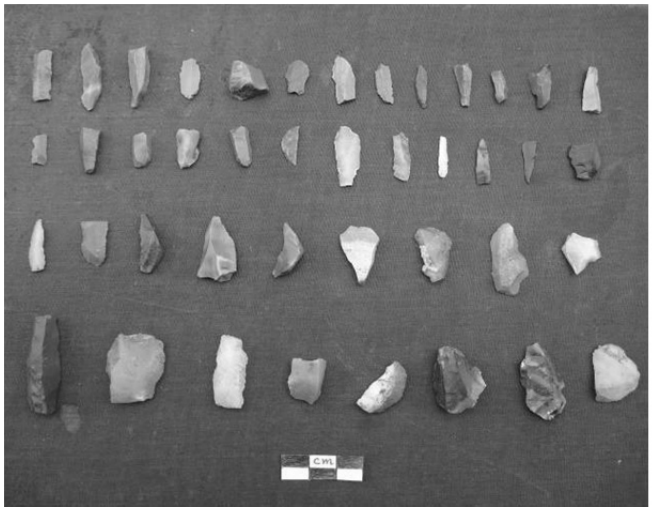


Fig 9 Collected Microlithic Assemblage from Nagargota

The authors of rock paintings can be found on the basis of paintings. Though the associated archaeological material, i.e., the microlithic assemblage at Nagargota suggests that these rock shelters were probably occupied by the Mesolithic communities (Fig 9). A few burial structures similar to those of Megalithic cairn circles were noticed on the top of the Pandubara and depiction of a Horse rider (?) suggests that it was drawn during the Megalithic or Early Historical period. The authors of rock paintings are culturally different. The continuous process of human development as well as art development can be observed here.

Chronology

The most vital issue of rock paintings is chronology (Pandey 1992.). Even then after various kind of scientific research work related to the rock art has been undertaken by different scholars but still controversies are continued about the antiquity of rock paintings. Dr. V.S. Wakankar and Ervin Neumayer attempted to describe these paintings on the basis of their style, pigment and superimposition. Painted designs on pottery, drawings and engravings of Chalcolithic-Neolithic periods have been taken into consideration for dating rock-paintings of these cultures. A significant evidence in the form of the Microlithic core having engraved design on its patinated cortex, helpful for dating the Mesolithic paintings was discovered by Prof. Sonawane in the Chandravati ? (Sonawane 1984).

The depictions of animal figures painted in dark red colour and life size and drawn in naturalistic outlines can be dated to the Mesolithic period on the basis of their style. A few paintings of stick-shaped human figures small in size and less stylized are shown without weapons, while the rock paintings of later phases are small in size and they were painted in various shades of red ochre colour.

Comparatively speaking, the first group of rock paintings at Nagargota shelters appears to be of Mesolithic period (10000–6000 BP). The most significant evidence in the present context is, however, that of the findings of microliths during the exploration, but in the case of Pandubara rock shelters not a single such type of microlithic implement was found. Though there are few Megalithic Cairns present on the top of Pandubara shelters and paintings of Pandubara are comparatively similar to those of Nagargota. In style, technique and colour depiction many similarities can be noticed with those of central Indian rock paintings. Pandubara paintings probably belong to Iron Age / Megalithic period. Depiction of the horse rider (?) at Nagargota was probably drawn during the Megalithic or Early Historical period. In Vidarbha region the Megalithic culture can be dated to *circa* 1000-200 BCE. Excavations of megaliths in Takalghat-Khapa, Mahurzari and Naikund have revealed horse bones and horse bits which suggested Megalithic builders close association with horse. The depiction of horse rider (?) possibly suggests that this painting belongs to Megalithic culture. So on the basis of style and material evidences, chronology of Waghai hill paintings can be put in the time-frame from Mesolithic to Historical period.

Associated Material Culture

While studying the rock paintings, it is necessary to note the material evidences of various cultural periods found in exploration at a particular site, because it helps to corroborate the significance of any site. It will also help

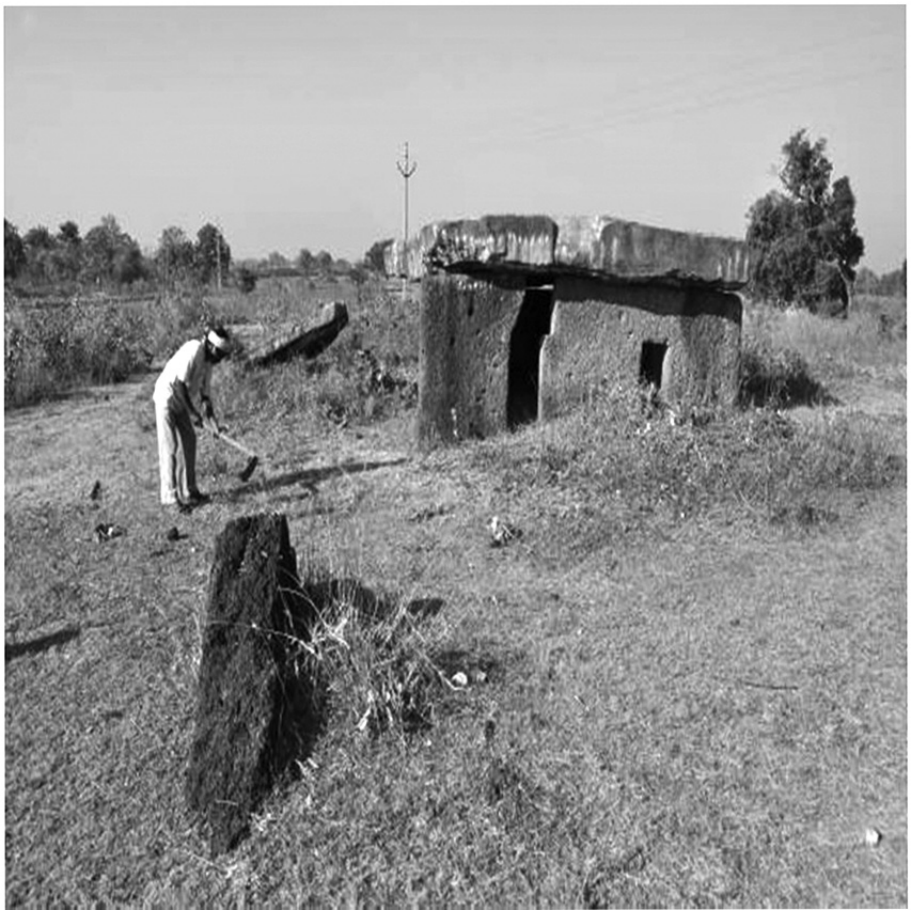


Fig 10 Double Chambered Dolmen at Hirapur

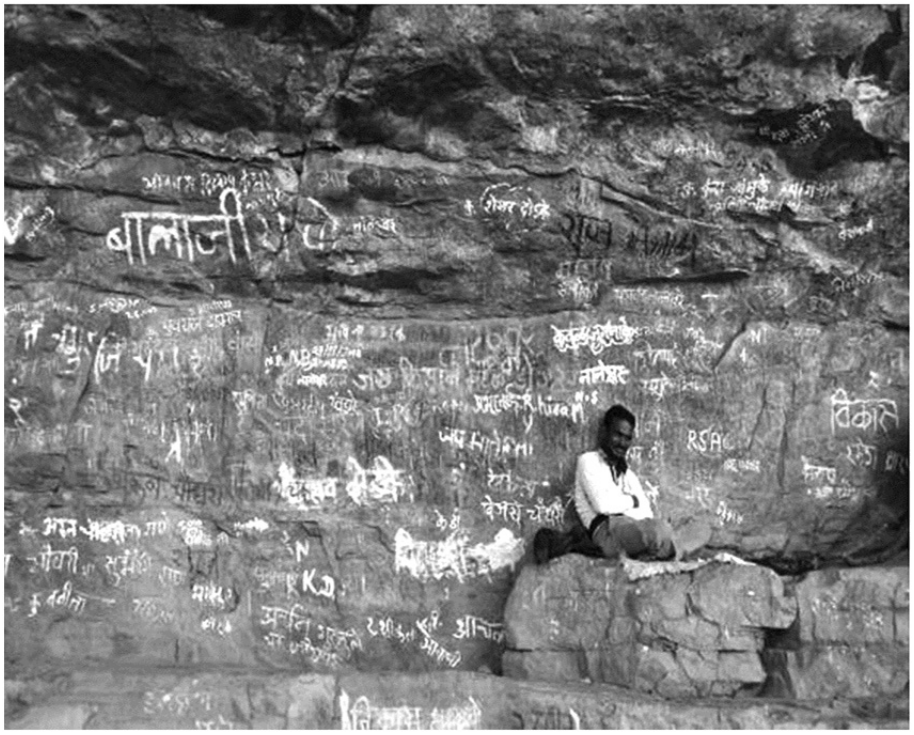


Fig 11 Malicious defacement inside of Rock Shelter Navtala

to know the cultural continuity of the site. This has amply been proved by the excavations at Bhimbetka where the findings of cultural material helped to assign a date to this site to thousands of years back to Lower Paleolithic period. This Waghai hill also gives the cultural continuity in the form of material evidence. During exploration at the site, Paleolithic tools were found between the areas of both rock shelters. These tools are heavily weathered, prepared on quartzite sandstone, which is abundantly available in this region. At the Nagargota rock shelter many non-geometric microliths made on chert, chalcedony, agate and jasper along with the debitage has been found. Largest Megalithic double chambered dolmen is situated just 4 km away from this site in Village Hirapur (Fig 10). In the Nagargota shelters a few potsherds belonging to early historical period were also found.

Current Defacement of Rock art

These important paintings are day-by-day deteriorating because of both natural and human factors. Natural agencies such as the weakened nature of the sandstone rock, weathering, rain, heat and insects are the main factors responsible for defacement of these paintings. Local villagers are also the cause for the damage, as they go to these rock shelters in a year and paint these shelters with lime for ritualistic purpose. In one shelter at Nagargota they placed a vertical stone and worshiped as a deity. Writing their name on the top of these paintings is another major cause for the destruction (Fig 11).

The rock shelters at Navtala are found 3km south-east of the present village on the top of the hill which is a part of the Parasgarh- Nagbhir hills. Sandstone formations of these hills have revealed nearly twenty eight rock shelters, divided in two rows, opposite to each other, divided by a long stream or Nullah (Fig 12).

The present rock shelters are 14 km away from the previously documented painted rock shelters at Waghai hill. A huge natural lake, called *Madnagarh,* is present at the foot of the hill, which is one of the major water sources in this area even today. Many domestic as well as wild animals drink water from this lake.

Most of the rock shelters at this site are closed by fallen boulders, perhaps because of a landslide. Two rows of rock shelters run parallel to both sides of the stream. Paintings have been found only in two rock shelters, on its surface. The paintings are drawn by using red ochre colour. Identification of these paintings is very difficult due to its weathered nature (Fig 13). A total numbers of paintings are four which is drawn into the surface of rock shelters, out of only one is identified as a fish motif. The others seem to be geometrical figures, but their exact shape could not be traced.

Comparison between Navtala & Dongargaon

Comparing it with the past discoveries at Waghai hill, there seems to be less potential with subject to the rock paintings, which are statistically more in the previously mentioned site. But the location of the rock shelters at Navtala is unique in the region till date. The division of rock shelters in two rows, running parallel to each other, along the stream is significant for understanding prehistoric psychology about habitation. There could be many more rock shelters had which have been painted but due to the fallen condition of the site, it is very hard to observe any paintings inside these rock shelters. Waghai hill rock shelters and their paintings are well preserved by nature, whereas in Navtala this situation is absent.

Fig 12 Rows of Rock Shelters at Navtala

Recent discoveries in the Konkan region

For the first time engravings of animal, aquatic, reptiles, geometric motifs and anthropomorphic patterns were found carved on the laterite surfaces were discovered at different places from Rajapur to Palshet (150 km stretch) in the Konkan region of Maharashtra. Five human figures carved in the form of an arc on the Laterite surface were discovered at Pomendi, which is 16 km from Guhagar. These human figures are surrounded by a few postholes which suggests about the presence of a superstructure in

the past. At present, the villagers worship these human figures as *Pach Pandav* (Gogte, Shirvalkar and Pradhan 2008: 115-121). These engravings were dated to early historical period. However, the style of a few animal figures shown in naturalistic outlines may suggest an earlier period. But in the absence of any archaeological material it is difficult to assign a relative date to these engravings.

Fig 13 Depiction of Fish & Geometrical Paintings

However, the recently developed new dating methods and techniques such as Focused Laser Extraction as well as Oxalate- Crusts dating methods will be useful to assign a date to these engravings by collecting carbonaceous samples formed on the engravings (Watchman 1985, Watchman & Lessard 1992).

Concluding Remarks

Rock paintings discovered at Waghai hill were drawn from the Mesolithic period onwards. The presence of microliths supports this view and these paintings continued till the Historical period. Depiction of the Rhinoceros (?) as well as the other animal figures gives information about the environmental conditions prevailing during the prehistoric period. Cultural continuity in material culture can be found at this site. So far in India, except Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh, very few sites have given proper material evidences for continuous cultural occupation at one place. This site gives the evidences of cultural occupation in the form of rock paintings as well as artifacts. It is again important to link between Maharashtra and Central Vindhyan region, because it is the first place in Vidarbha as well as in Maharashtra. The segmented figures, which is found in Pandubara shelters was not mentioned in any rock art literature about central Indian rock paintings. The prehistoric paintings essentially display the faunal world executed by prehistoric man, as he perceived them. The technique and style was adopted both in silhouette and outline. Lot of debitage of stone nodules from which microliths were prepared indicates that Mesolithic people have occupied these shelters for a long time and out of ritual and or aesthetic purposes the prehistoric people drew these paintings after watching their surroundings. Mesolithic people always occupy those areas where the water and food sources were available for long. The ancient lake at the base of the Nagargota hill which is still being used by the locals and the animals must have encouraged the Mesolithic communities to occupy this place. Whosoever might have occupied this hill after the Mesolithic people seems to have great respect for the paintings drawn by the first occupants as is revealed from the fact that these later people, to a larger extent, did not damage the earlier paintings by superimposing or overlapping them, and possibly avoided to harm these paintings.

An extensive survey followed by excavations at selected sites would definitely clear our doubts as to:

1. Nature and shape of microliths with thick habitation deposit within the shelter put up question that the Vidarbha Mesolithic are earlier than other sites like Bagor, Langhnaj etc.?
2. In the vicinity of Pandubara rock shelter Megalithic cairns and Dolmen were found. Did the Megalithic builders use these shelters for living purpose? Did they have depicted the rock paintings?

It is necessary to preserve these paintings because it is our duty to preserve the cultural heritage of our country as well as this is the first site so far discovered in Maharashtra region, which gives the full picture of continuous cultural occupation. So conservation and preservation, both works are essentially required here. Further detailed study in near future by the author will help to study about the rock art as well as the associated archaeological cultures.

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