


PAINTING STUDY MATERIAL FOR CLASS 11TH BASED ON NCERT

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Important for PA 2




4 Prehistoric Rock Paintings

Introduction


In India, first of all, the rock-painting was discovered in 1867-68 A.D. by an archaeologist **Archibold Corlleye. Cockburn, Anderson, Mitra and Ghosh** were the early archaeologists who initially took interest to discover a large number of sites where primitive men took shelter in the caves during the prehistoric period in Indian subcontinent.

Remnants of rock paintings have been found on the walls of the caves which are widely spread and situated in several districts of Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Odisha and Uttarakhand. But some of them have great importance to understand the human life of that period. These are as follows:

1. Prehistoric cave paintings of **Lakhudiyar** (means one lakh caves) in Almora district of Uttarakhand can be divided into three categories—man, animal and geometric patterns with white, black and red ochre. There are some superimpositions of paintings. The earliest are in black, over these are red ochre paintings and the last group comprises white paintings.



Rock Painting, Lakhudiyar (wave pattern)



Rock Painting, Lakhudiyar (Dancing figure)

- 2. The granite rocks of **Karnataka** and **Andhra Pradesh** provided suitable space to the Neolithic men for paintings. **Kupagallu, Piklihal** and **Tekkalkota** are the famous sites where three types of rock paintings have been found as—paintings in white, paintings in red ochre over a white background and paintings in red ochre. These paintings belong to late historical, early historical and Neolithic periods. Bulls, elephants, sambhars, gazelles, sheep, goats, horses and stylised human are mainly depicted figures of these sites.
- 3. Among these, the largest and most spectacular rock shelters of **Bhimbetka** are located in the Vindhya hills of Madhya Pradesh near Bhopal. Bhimbetka is forty five kilometres far away in South of Bhopal where about eight hundred rock shelters of stone-age have been

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discovered, in which there are five hundred bear paintings of stone-age people. These cave shelters are scattered in an area of ten square kilometres.

The caves of **Bhimbetka** were discovered by an eminent archaeologist, **V.S. Wakankar**, in 1957-58 A.D. and later on many more sites were also discovered. Wakankar spent several years here to study these paintings.

The paintings found here are of great variety in the subjects like events of daily life, hunting scene, dancing scene, playing musical instruments, honey collection, decoration of bodies and other household scenes. In spite of these, some animals have also been painted with human as horse and elephant riders, animal fightings, stag, tiger, bison, etc. On the basis of style, technique and time-periods, the rock art of Bhimbetka has been classified into seven groups as—

Period-I: **Upper Palaeolithic**, Period-II: **Mesolithic**, Period-III: **Chalcolithic**,
Periods-IV and V: **Early History** Periods-VI and VII: **Medieval**.

Upper Palaeolithic Period. In this period, the big size figures of animals such as bison, tigers, rhinoceros, boars and stick-like human figures had been delineated on the wall of the caves in green and dark red in which a few are wash paintings and mostly in geometric patterns. The dancers were painted in green and hunters in red.

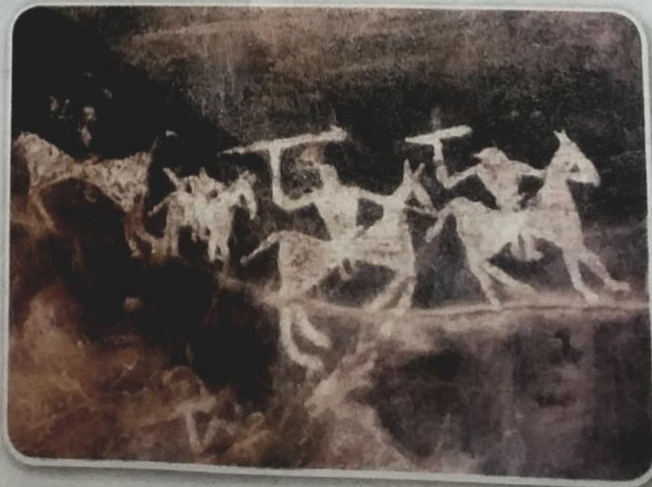


Big size animal



Prehistoric Rock-Painting of Bhoranwali, Bhimbetka (Upper Palaeolithic Period)

Mesolithic Period. The paintings of this period are comparatively small in size but more in numbers. There is the depiction of communal dancers, birds, human playing musical



Horse Rider (Hunting Scene), Bhimbetka

instruments, mother and children, pregnant women, men carrying dead animals. In addition to animals there are many hunting scenes which are giving a clear picture of the weapons they used like pointed stick, bow and arrows.

Chalcolithic Period. The paintings of this period are similar to that of the Mesolithic period. But during this period, the cave dwellers of this area came into contact with agricultural communities of the Malwa plains and they exchanged goods with them.



Human activities

Early History Period. The paintings of this period are schematic and decorative in style and painted mainly with red, white and yellow colours. The association of riders, depiction of religious symbols as figures of Yakshas, tree, gods and magical sky chariots are worth seeing.



Dancing Girls, Panchmarhi, M.P.

Medieval Period. The paintings of this period are more schematic, linear and geometrical in shape, but they show degeneration and crudeness in their style. The colours were prepared by combining manganese, haematite and wooden coal (charcoal).

The painters of Bhimbetka used many colours with various shades of white, yellow, orange, red ochre, purple, brown, green and black. These colours were made by grinding various rocks, minerals and pigments. *Geru* is used for red colour, chalcedony (stone) for green colour and limestone for white. To make them stable the artists used to mixed animal fat or gum or resin of trees. Plant fibres and hair of animals are used to make brushes. So, you can imagine why these paintings are in existence after passing thousands of years. The colours of these paintings are intact till now.

To be continues.....