



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Arts

ROCK ART IN ODISHA

KEY WORDS:

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ABSTRACT

Rock art as the term implies is the art on rock. But all works of art on rock is not rock art. However, it is applied to all types of artistic expression noticed on the natural rock surfaces of caves, shelters and boulders. It is also known as 'rock pictures'

At Tongo, the engraved motifs are triangles, serpentine, rhombic and honeycomb pattern, palm and footprints and cupules. Honeycomb is the dominant decorative motif at Tongo. In some places serpentine are getting transformed to female genital patterns.

Manikmoda

Both paintings and engravings occupy the rock shelter at Manikmoda. Here one comes across primitive motifs like triangles, humped cattle, deer, bison, standard bearers, geometric, non-geometric patterns as well as historic paintings like draped human figures with sword, shield and musical instruments. The humped cattle charged and dragged by man standing next to a tree is the popular and dominant motif. The figure of a woman is an unusual and unconventional motif in Manikmoda.

Lekhamoda

At Lekhamoda, there are twelve paintings sites, which are numbered from Lekhamoda I to XII. In these rock shelters the motifs comprise deer, lizard, frog, tortoise, bird, antler, human figures, humped cattle, snake and other geometric patterns like rhombus, harpoon marks, broom styles and cusped forms. Paintings are formed in all of the Lekhamoda group of rock art sites except engravings in only two, Lekhamoda III and IV. The paintings in Lekhamoda II, IV and X are recorded, as engravings by Neumayer but the illustrations given by Neumayer in Lekhamoda II, IV and X are not engravings but paintings. The paintings include a variety of geometric and non-geometric patterns, mostly in bichrome of red and white as in Lekhamoda II and IV. A series of zigzag, wavy (Lekhamoda II), crisscross and parallel lines drawn within a square, rectangle or a circle, also without any geometric formats feature the patterns. They look like carpets, harpoons, blades, saws, nets, honeycombs etc. as in Lekhamoda II, IV, V, VIII, X and XI. Animal figures like deer, monkey, humped cattle, goat, peacock, lizard, frog, turtle and snake are also depicted. Human figures are rarely painted in Lekhamoda VI, VIII, X and XII. Triangles, foot and palm are quite dominant. There is a herding scene painted in Lekhamoda X. This is the only narrative expression. The paintings of Lekhamoda II, IV, VIII, X and XII present a rich primitive aesthetics and creativity.

Chandili Ushakothi

In Chandili Ushakothi, both paintings and engravings have been executed. The motifs are deer, boar, geometric motifs, feet and cupules. Mostly hosts of intricate and enigmatic geometry constituted of spiral lines, cross hatches, zigzag lines contributing to the non-figurative and non thematic expressions are seen in Odishan rock shelter paintings. The intricate motifs are the independent abstract patterns in Odishan rock art sites. Human forms are very rare, not painted in realistic style. But the animal forms are comparatively more realistic.

CONCLUSION

The Odishan print making has its instinct in the rock engravings. Art is almost as old as man. It is a form of work, and work is an activity and a language peculiar to mankind. Art is such a tool which man used to express him and to communicate with others. Rock art that comprises paintings, drawings, scribbling, engravings, reliefs and sculptures is the first recorded expression of human beings. These expressions are both communicative and artistic.

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