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Rajasthan Board of Secondary Education*

Sanjiv

Refresher

Drawing 

Class-XI

An Introduction to Indian Art-1

For English Medium Students

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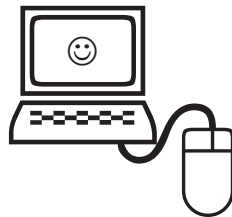
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Drawing–Class 11

An Introduction to Indian Arts-1

1

Prehistoric Rock Paintings

SUMMARY

1. The distant past for which no paper or language or the written word, and no books or written documents are available, is called **pre-history**. We often call prehistory **prehistoric times**.

2. The old tools, pottery, habitats, figures drawn by humans on the walls of caves, found from the excavation of prehistoric sites, reveal the living habits and lifestyle and thoughts and feelings of the people of that period.

3. **Palaeolithic Age** : The prehistoric period in the early development of human beings is commonly known as the Old Stone Age or the Palaeolithic Age.

4. **Prehistoric paintings** : Prehistoric paintings have been found in many parts of the world. Art objects of the **Lower Palaeolithic age** have not been found. Perhaps by the time of the **Upper Paleolithic age**, the artistic activities of man increased. Beautiful pictures of animals, pictures of humans and their activities and geometrical designs and symbols like circles, squares, rectangles have been found on the walls of many caves of this period.

5. **Rock paintings in caves of India** : The first discovery of rock paintings was made in India in 1867–68. Cockburn, Anderson, Mitra, and Ghosh were the early archaeologists who discovered such sites in large number in the Indian sub-continent.

(i) **Paintings of Lakhudiyar caves** : The rock paintings found in one lakh caves in **Lakhudiyar**, located 20 km far from Almora, can be divided into three categories – man, animal and geometric patterns. These paintings are in white, black and red.

One of the scenes depicted here is of hand-linked dancing human figures.

(ii) **Rock paintings of Kuppallu, Piklihal, and Tekkalkota** : Three types of paintings have been found from here—paintings in white, paintings in red ochre over a white background and paintings in red ochre. These paintings belong to the late historical, early historical and Neolithic periods. In these there are pictures of various animals, humans and tridents and plants.

(iii) **Rock paintings of Bhimbetka** : The richest paintings are reported from the Vindhya ranges of Madhya Pradesh and their Kaimurean extensions into Uttar Pradesh. The largest and most spectacular rock-shelter is located in the Vindhya hills at **Bhimbetka** in Madhya Pradesh.

The themes of paintings found here are hunting, dancing, music, horse and elephant riders, animal fighting, honey collection, decoration of bodies and other household scenes.

The rock art of Bhimbetka has been classified into various groups on the basis of

style, technique and superimposition. The drawings and paintings can be categorised into seven historical periods. The First Period is Upper Palaeolithic; Second Period is Mesolithic and the Third Period is Chalcolithic. After the Third Period there are four successive periods. The depiction of the first two periods is as follows :

(a) Upper Palaeolithic Period : The paintings of the Upper Palaeolithic phase are linear representations, in green and dark red of huge animal (bisons, elephants, tigers, rhinos and boars etc.) besides stick-like human figures. A few are wash paintings but mostly are geometric patterns.

(b) Mesolithic Period : During this period the size of paintings reduced. Hunting scenes predominate. Human beings are shown in many costumes. Along with big animals, small animals and birds have also been depicted. Women are painted both in the nude and clothed. Children are painted running, jumping and playing. Community dances provide a common theme. There are paintings of people gathering fruit or honey from trees and of women grinding and preparing food.

The artists of Bhimbetka used many colours, including various shades of white, yellow, orange, red ochre, purple, brown, green and black.

The artists here made their paintings on the walls and ceilings of the rock shelters.

In these pictures, general scenes of the then environment have been presented in an attractive form. In the pictures, humans and animals are shown fighting for their survival. In the pictures of animals alone, a realistic and balanced mixture of both color harmony and proportion is visible.

Conclusion : These pre-historic pictures help us to understand the then humans, their lifestyle, their food habits, their habits, their daily activities and their thinking.

TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS

Q. 1. According to your observation how did the people of prehistoric times select themes for their paintings?

Ans. In our view, the people of prehistoric times used to choose subjects on the basis of the events of their everyday life, animals, plants and tools related to everyday activities.

Q. 2. What could have been the reasons for depicting more animal figures than human figures in cave paintings?

Ans. Cave paintings have more animal figures than human figures because of the enjoyment involved in hunting animals, the dramatic way of hunting and the struggle for hunting was the main daily activity of that period. Secondly, the sense of power over animals was developed in the humans of this period. That's why many pictures have been depicted expressing love and harmony towards animals. In some of the paintings mainly animals have been carved.

Q. 3. Many visuals of prehistoric cave paintings have been given in this chapter. Among these which one do you like the most and why? Give a critical appreciation of the visual.

Ans. Out of the pictures given in this chapter, I like the picture on page 6 of the textbook called 'Hunting Scene'.

In this scene, a group of people is shown hunting a bison. Some injured men are depicted lying scattered on the ground. The hunters have barbed spears and pointed sticks in their hands, with which they are hunting bison.

These paintings show mastery in the skill of drawing these forms and depicts the nature of hunting activity of the then human.

Q. 4. Other than Bhimbetka, which are the other major sites where these prehistoric paintings have been found? Prepare a report on different aspects of these paintings with pictures or line drawings.

Ans. Major sites of prehistoric paintings other than Bhimbetka : Major sites of prehistoric paintings other than Bhimbetka are as follows :

(1) Lakhudiyar : Many pictures of prehistoric times have been found in the rock shelters found in Lakhudiyar located on the banks of Suyal river at a distance of about 20 km from Almora on the Almora–Barechina road. The paintings here can be divided into three categories– (i) picture of man, (ii) picture of animal and (iii) picture of geometric patterns. These pictures are in white, black and red colour.

(i) Picture of man : Humans are represented in stick-like forms. One of the interesting scenes depicted here is of people dancing hand in hand.

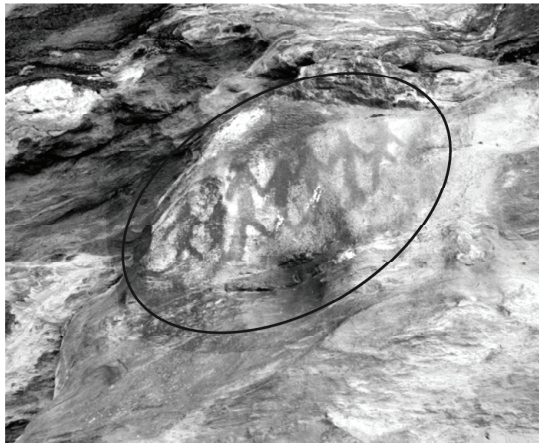


Image : People dancing hand in hand

(ii) Picture of animal : A long-snouted animal, a fox and a multiple-legged lizard are the main animal motifs.

(iii) Picture of geometric patterns : Wavy lines, rectangle-filled geometric designs and groups of dots can also be seen here.



Image : Wavy lines, Lakhudiyar

(2) Kupgallu, Piklihal and Tekkalkota : Three types of pictures are found in three locations – Kupgallu, Piklihal and Tekkalkota which is located in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. Some images are white, some are red and some are red on a white background.

These paintings belong to late historical, early historical and Neolithic periods. The subjects depicted are bulls, elephants, sambhars, gazelles, sheep, goats, horses, stylised humans, tridents etc.

Q. 5. In modern times, how have walls been used as a surface to make paintings, graphics, etc?

Ans. In modern time, two methods are prevalent as the surface of the walls for making pictures, graphics etc. :

(1) Alageela method : Illustration work on freshly plastered wall is the *Alageela* method. In this method, a thick coating of sand or marble powder is applied while making the wall itself. After the coating has set and dried, mineral colors are applied on the completely moist plaster in such a way that the color and the surface become one. There are also two methods of *Alageela* method : (i) Italian method, (ii) Jaipuri method.

(i) Italian method : In the Italian method, two parts of sand mixed with wet lime are plastered on the wall. On the wet surface itself, drawings are done with sharp wood or metal. A graph is made by putting the blueprint on the wall, putting ochre powder in a muslin cloth and pressing it. Graphs can be drawn free hand with the help of a grid. After this, only mineral colors are used in the painting. When applied to wet plaster, the colors are absorbed by the plaster and penetrate deeply and become an integral part of the plaster.

(ii) Wall Painting Method of Jaipur : The wall painting method of Jaipur is also similar. In this, after applying color on the wet surface, the surface is rubbed on it with *akik* stone or *openie*, it is brought to shine.

(2) Dry method : In the dry method, the wall is prepared by the above method and painted after it is completely dry. In this, glue, gelatin or egg yolk is used after the medium of colors.

OTHER IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

■ Multiple Choice Questions :

- The cave paintings in the Upper Palaeolithic period have more figures of :
(a) Animals (b) Humans (c) Geometric (d) Birds
- The distant past for which neither any book nor any written document is available is called :
(a) Modern Period (b) Medieval Period (c) Ancient Period (d) Prehistoric Period
- Rock paintings were first discovered in India in :
(a) 1867-68 (b) 1967-68 (c) 1767-68 (d) 1667-68
- The prehistoric period was commonly called :
(a) Misolithic Period (b) Palaeolithic Period
(c) Lower Palaeolithic Period (d) Chalcolithic Period
- It is situated in the Vindhya ranges in Madhya Pradesh :
(a) Kupgallu (b) Tekkalkota (c) Bhimbetka (d) Piklihal
- The caves of Bhimbetka were discovered by :
(a) Cockburn (b) V.S. Wakankar (c) Anderson (d) Ghosh
- Into how many periods are the drawings and illustrations of Bhimbetka categorised?
(a) Three (b) Four (c) Five (d) Seven
- The most favorite colors of the artists of Bhimbetka were :
(a) Black and Yellow (b) Yellow and Purple
(c) White and Red (d) Brown and Green

9. The most important remains as evidence of the development of human civilization of prehistoric times are :
 - (a) Many types of stone weapons
 - (b) Terracotta toys
 - (c) Bone fragments
 - (d) Rock paintings
10. The oldest paintings ever found in India belong to which period?
 - (a) Lower Palaeolithic Age
 - (b) Upper Palaeolithic Age
 - (c) New Stone Age
 - (d) Late Historical Period
11. What is the literal meaning of Lakhudiyar?
 - (a) One lakh caves
 - (b) Geometric designs
 - (c) Upper Palaeolithic phase
 - (d) Hunting scenes
12. Prehistoric people draw the pictures :
 - (a) To make their shelters more colourful.
 - (b) To make their shelters more beautiful.
 - (c) To keep a visual record of their day-to-day life.
 - (d) All of the above
13. The paintings of which phase are linear representation in green and dark red lines?
 - (a) New Stone Age
 - (b) Upper Palaeolithic Phase
 - (c) Late Historic Period
 - (d) Misolithic Period
14. From which stone did the artists of Bhimbetka prepare the green color?
 - (a) Chalcedony
 - (b) Limestone
 - (c) Haematite
 - (d) Geru
15. Into how many categories can the paintings found in Lakhudiyar Caves be divided?
 - (a) Two
 - (b) Four
 - (c) Three
 - (d) Five

Answers

1. (a)	2. (d)	3. (a)	4. (b)	5. (c)	6. (b)	7. (d)	8. (c)	9. (d)	10. (d)
11. (a)	12. (d)	13. (b)	14. (a)	15. (c)					

■ True or False

Select the true/false statements from the following :

1. The prehistoric period of early human development is commonly called the Paleolithic period.
2. A rock-painting of Kupgallu depicts human figures dancing holding hands.
3. The paintings found in Lakhudiyar can be divided into three categories – human figures, animal figures and geometric figures.
4. Bhimbetka was discovered in 1867-68 by Dr. V.S. Wakankar.
5. The drawings and paintings of Bhimbetka have been classified into seven periods.

Answers

1. True	2. False	3. True	4. False	5. True
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■ Fill in the Blanks

1. In India the earliest paintings have been reported from the times.
2. Remnants of rock paintings have been found on the walls of the situated in several districts of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Bihar.