

IFRAO Report No. 4

ROCK ART SOCIETY OF INDIA FORMED

On 24 February 1990, the last day of the successful U.G.C. National Seminar on Indian Culture in the Perspective of Rock Art and Inscriptions held at Agra, Indian researchers decided to form a second rock art association in India. This latest addition to the international community of rock art organisations, the Rock Art Society of India (RASI), almost immediately requested membership with IFRAO, becoming the federation's fourteenth member. At its helm are Professor Jagdish Gupt (Chairman) and Dr Giriraj Kumar (Secretary and Editor). Dr Kumar was the principal force behind the Agra seminar and intends to produce a journal, Prehistoric Art. The executive committee includes most of the leading specialists in India.

The new organisation has a firm commitment to rock art conservation, to working closely with the many authorities having an interest in this area, and to establishing and maintaining close relations with the world community of researchers in this field. Several specific initiatives are already underway, at least one of which involves international co-operation. Traditional research priorities will be reassessed and, with close involvement sought from geochemists and other specialists, research directions are changing dramatically.

Readers interested in joining RASI, in conducting research in India or in subscribing to the new journal are encouraged to write to:

Dr Giriraj Kumar (Secretary)
Rock Art Society of India (RASI)
c/o Dept of Indian Culture
Faculty of Arts
Dayalbagh Educational Institute
Dayalbagh, Agra-282 005
India

IIIrd INTERNATIONAL ROCK ART SYMPOSIUM IN BOLIVIA

(First Announcement)

The Sociedad de Investigación del Arte Rupestre de Bolivia (SIARB) is preparing for its IIIrd International Rock Art Symposium which will be held in June or July 1991 in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. Other agencies involved in the organisation of this premier event of South American rock art studies are the Bolivian Institute of Culture, the National Institute of Archaeology and the Community Centre of Santa Cruz. The program consists of:

- (1) Section 1: Management and conservation of rock art sites, convened by Nicholas Stanley Price.
- (2) Section 2: New studies of Bolivian rock art, convened by Roy Querejazu Lewis.
- (3) Section 3: New studies of rock art in other South American countries, convened by Professor Carlos J. Gradin.
- (4) Exposition: Rock art of the Depto of Santa Cruz, Bolivia, organised by Freddy Taboada T, llez.
- (5) Exposition of publications.
- (6) Excursions to rock art sites, co-ordinated by Roy Querejazu Lewis.

Registration fee is US\$10.00. Details of the actual dates of this conference are to be announced in due course, but the last week of June and first week of July are being considered. Participants should have a working knowledge of Spanish, and they may present one or two short (15 minutes) papers, or one long (30 minutes) and one short paper. For further details please write to:

Matthias Strecker
Secretary, SIARB
Casilla 3091
La Paz
Bolivia

ROCK ART - THE WAY AHEAD
SARARA CONFERENCE 1991
and IFRAO Meeting 1991

The Southern African Rock Art Research Association (SARARA) presents 'Rock art - the way ahead', an international conference on rock art conservation, recording and study. It will be held from 25 to 31 August 1991 at the Cathedral Peak Hotel Conference Centre, Natal Drakensberg, South Africa.

As reported in IFRAO Report No. 2, SARARA applied to have this event nominated as the IFRAO Meeting for 1991. The decision of the then eleven IFRAO representatives was seven in favour, two against (two abstentions). It should be emphasised that SARARA comprises members from the entire subcontinent, not only from South Africa, and that its constitution contains specific clauses addressing all forms of discrimination. Specifically, SARARA unequivocally con-demns the practice of apartheid.

The executive committee of the SARARA conference comprises A. Arnott, D. N. Lee, Professor J. D. Lewis-Williams, Dr J. Loubser, S.-A. Pager, D. Prins, A. R. Willcox and H. C. Woodhouse. The event will consist of academic sessions, displays and field trips. Suggested topics for papers are:

Recording methods; site management and visitor control; conservation and the environment; physical conservation methods; the role of promotion and publicity; removals of rock art; paint analysis; rock art and other disciplines; dating of rock art; the role of rock art in education; rock art archival storage and retrieval; global perspectives of rock art studies; specialist papers on recent work; rock art legislation.

Presentation of papers will not exceed 20 minutes, followed by 10 minutes of question and discussion time. SARARA will have first publication rights on papers.

The registration fee for SARARA members and members of IFRAO-affiliated organisations is R120 prior to 31 December 1990, and R150 after 1 January 1991. The current rates of exchange are R1 = US\$0.37, \$A0.49, DM0.63, œ0.22. Practically all major rock art organisations are affiliated with IFRAO. Participation is limited to 150, therefore early booking is advisable. The cost of accommodation with all meals ranges from R100 to R175 per day.

There will be an IFRAO session on international co-operation among the rock art organisations of the world, and the official IFRAO business meeting; both will be chaired by the representatives of the host organisation, SARARA.

For further details and registration form please write to:

S.-A. Pager
President, SARARA
P. O. Box 81292
Parkhurst 2120
South Africa

CAIRNS '92
IFRAO Meeting 1992

AURA's bid to have the Second AURA Congress nominated as the official IFRAO Meeting of 1992 has been unanimously accepted by the IFRAO member organisations. The 1992 IFRAO Meeting will be attached to the 1992 congress, and will take place in the first week of September in Cairns, Queensland, Australia.

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IFRAO Meeting 1994. The U.S.A. is likely to host this event. Details are to be decided by the IFRAO council.

AURA Exhibition. Readers are reminded that more submissions are still required for this major rock art exhibition. It is anticipated that, after completing the Australian circuit of the four or five major museums, this exhibition will travel to other continents under the auspices of IFRAO.

Rock art tour of India - a report

Two AURA members have suggested to me that I ought to provide a report about my recent tour of India. I have conducted many rock art lecture and study tours, in five continents, and have never thought of publishing a summary report on any of them; many of us conduct such tours in various parts of the world and this is not enough reason to provide a formal report. However, in this case an exception may be warranted. Not only is there an increased interest in Indian prehistoric art and a sudden flurry of activity, India does possess a great deal of rock art which remains

inadequately explored - although Indian rock art studies began well before those in the Franco-Cantabrian region - and which has certainly received incommensurate attention abroad. The vitality and optimism characterising current Indian rock art studies as well as the potential of the art itself to provide some unexpected surprises in the future make India one of the rock art regions to watch.

There are other reasons to provide this report: much of the tour was conducted in my capacity as the elected Convener of IFRAO; it included numerous encounters with the media requiring me to provide statements on behalf of the Federation; and it included the attendance of two major rock art seminars and the presentation of two series of lectures, besides numerous other lectures. Here, then, is a very brief itinerary of my lecture and study tour of India in February and March 1990:

20 February: arrival in New Delhi, received by John Zubrzycki, First Secretary of the Australian High Commission.

21 February: meeting with Professor Kapila Vatsyayan, Director of the Indira Gandhi National Centre of the Arts, and other officials.

22 to 24 February: U.G.C. National Seminar on Indian Culture in the Perspective of Rock Art and Inscriptions, at the Department of Sanskrit and Sanskriti, Dayalbagh Educational Institute, Agra. I provide the inaugural address, chair with Professor S. P. Gupta on the first and with Professor A. K. Ghosh on the second day, and present three papers. During the concluding session the Rock Art Society of India (RASI) is founded.

26 February: reception by the Maharaja of Kota, address and press conference. Visit of Chandrasal, an extensive Palaeolithic site where ostrich eggshell has been recovered, and four rock art sites at Chattaneshwar, with Dr Giriraj Kumar, Dr A. Pratap (IGNCA) and camera crew (the next four days of the tour are filmed).

27 February to 1 March: travel up the Chambal valley to study several rock art and archaeological sites, including the Acheulian site Ramnagar.

2 March: present lecture at School of Studies in Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, Vikram University, Ujjain, and then the Inaugural Lecture of the Professor Wakankar Memorial Lecture Series at the Ujjain Rock Art Institute.

3 and 4 March: visit 26 rock art sites near Bhopal with Dr Kumar and G. S. Tyagi, giving special attention to matters of conservation; the first petroglyphs of central India are discovered.

5 to 7 March: Indian Rock Art Seminar and First Conference of the Indian Rock Art Research Association. I chair the inaugural session with Professor Shankar Tiwari and deliver the concluding address. During the conference the rock art site complex of Bhimbetka is visited and a meeting of the Rock Art Society of India is held.

9 and 10 March: present lectures at the Department of Archaeology, Deccan College, Pune; microscopic examination of Palaeolithic and Mesolithic portable art objects, meetings with Professors V. N. Misra and K. Paddayya.

11 March: meeting with Professor M. L. K. Murty, Hyderabad.

12 March: present lecture at the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, Telugu University, Srisailam.

13 and 14 March: explore several Upper Palaeolithic limestone caves near Betamcherla, locating new rock art; with E. V. Rajendra Sarma, Dr G. Kumar and Dr D. R. Raju.

17 March: lecture in Allahabad is given by Dr Kumar in absentia.

19 and 20 March: present inaugural lectures of the lecture series by the U.P. State Archaeological Organisation, organised by Dr Rakesh Tewari, the Director of that organisation.

22 March: return to Allahabad to examine the Upper Palaeolithic so-called 'mother goddess' of the Belan valley; meetings with Dr J. N. Pal and Professor V. D. Misra.

26 March: present lecture at the Institute of Archaeology, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi.

27 to 29 March: intensive work sessions and planning meetings at the Indira Gandhi National Centre of the Arts, New Delhi, especially with Dr A. Pratap, Professor Kapila Vatsyayan, Professor S. C. Malik, and Dr O. Guillaume; initial preparations for the 'Robert Bednarik Collection' and for the Adi Drsyā (Gallery of Prehistoric Art) to be established at the IGNCA. Also two lectures at the IGNCA and one public lecture at the India International Centre, New Delhi.

30 March 1990: return to Australia.

In summary, I presented 16 lectures at 11 universities and other institutions; visited, studied and advised on the conservation of 45 rock art sites; examined many prehistoric sites, and all known Palaeolithic art objects of India; gave many media interviews; discovered new evidence in several instances; and travelled a total of about 6000 km by land. I helped design the most ambitious plans ever considered for a gallery of prehistoric art; represented IFRAO throughout the tour and established a close liaison between that organisation and the entire Indian research community in this discipline.

I express once again my deepest gratitude to the most dynamic scholar in Indian rock art studies, Dr Giriraj Kumar, who masterminded most of this tour and who accompanied me for almost four weeks. It was his boundless, inspiring enthusiasm and dedication that made this tour so thoroughly successful.

Robert G. Bednarik, Convener of IFRAO