

Early man and his artistic expressions

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Manifest Pedagogy

BEGINNERS MYOPIA

Petroglyphs discovery in Ratnagiri was extensively covered in ground zero page in the Hindu. Manifest Pedagogy puts it under those issues where a beginner who has just started his/her static portions may not find this issue important. (Beginners Myopia or lack of foresight) but such issues are important and will be covered and will put beginners on par with experienced candidates. As questions like Mesolithic rock paintings have been targeted by UPSC.

In news

The recent amateur explorations in Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra have yielded numerous Petroglyphs. The difference from other petroglyphs of India is these are made in laterite rocks. Here we can find enormous petroglyphs like the 50 ft elephant petroglyph which was made to look from an aerial view maybe a symbolic offering to a god in the skies.

In syllabus

Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of Art Forms, Literature and Architecture from ancient to modern times.

Dimensions

1. What are petroglyphs?
2. Where are they found?
3. How are they made?

4. What is their significance?

Petroglyphs

Petroglyphs are images created by removing part of rock surface by incising, picking, carving, or abrading as a form of rock art.

Examples in India:

Bhimbetka, Kupgal, Sindhudurg, Rajapur and Ratnagiri, Edakkal caves of Kerala, Unakoti (Tripura), Perumukkal and Kollur in Tamil Nadu. In Tamil Nadu the petroglyphs are found on Dolmens which are part of the Megalithic burial sites.

Made by:

Late Paleolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic and megalithic people.

Techniques and base material:

They are typically made on granite, sand stone and laterite rocks. The early man typically chose rock facets coated with patina which is a dark mineral accumulation on rock surfaces. In making the picture the outer patina is removed exposing the contrasting lighter rock interior. They are made by using stone chisel and hammer stone.

What do they represent?

- Some of them depict real life events like hunting and flora and fauna of the time.
- There were some abstract petroglyphs which represent religious or ceremonial purposes.
- They might be used for symbolic communication as a form of pre writing.
- Some of them represent geometrical patterns.
- Some depict the tools used by early man.
- A significant factor in Indian petroglyphs is presence of rock gongs which were used to generate music.

- Some represented abstract and fertility symbols.
- Some of them have religious-magical functions where simplistic magic is thought to ensure a certainty in life.
- Some of them also represent aquatic life.

Test Yourself: Mould Your Thoughts

1. Petroglyphs in India are artistic expressions of pre historic life. Critically examine the statement in the context of recent discovery of petroglyphs in Ratnagiri.