

Rock Paintings of Kewariya, Bundi, Rajasthan

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<https://doi.org/10.61410/had.v19i2.193>

The village Kewariya is located in the Bundi block of Bundi district, Rajasthan. It is approachable by a metalled road leading from Bundi to Bijauliya up to Bhopatpura, after that via branch road passing through Gararda and Guwar villages, leads to village Kewariya. It is about 52 kilometres south-west of Bundi district headquarters. Mangli, a tributary of Ghodapachad River flows in the east and west of village Kewariya located at Lat. 25^o14'17" North and Long. 75^o29'34" East, which is a village settlement of Gararda Gram Panchayat mainly occupied by bheel tribe. As per census 2011 Kewariya has a total population of 858 peoples out of which male population was 437 while female population was 421. The literacy rate of Kewariya village is 26.46% out of which 40.27% males and 12.11% females are literate. There are about 175 houses in Kewariya village. The total geographical area of village is 2340.37 hectares. It is 380 metre above to sea level. In the west side of village between two branches of Mangli River, there are hills of moderate height and its few rock- shelters bear painted motifs (Fig.1-2).

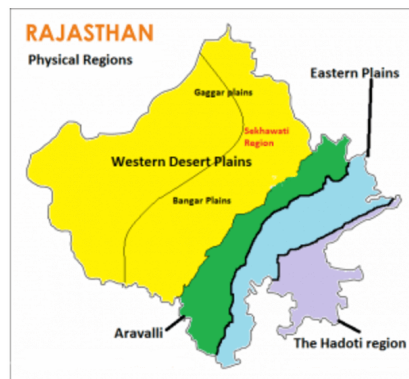


Fig. 1 Physical map of Rajasthan

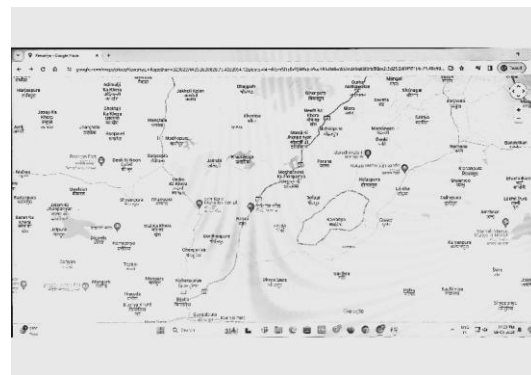


Fig. 2, Location of village Kewariya

Rock Shelter No. 1 is 12 meter in length, 2.30 meter in width and 1.60 meter high from the base surface. It is west facing and contains motifs on its wall and roof (fig.3). A flower in red



Fig. 3, General view of rock shelter-1



Fig. 4: Flower on ceiling of rockshelter

Fig. 5: Human Figures

colouris designed on its ceiling of which some leaves have been omitted due to weathering (fig. 4). Just in left to it three men in standing position are made in front of an animal. The human figures are tall. One of it has triangular shape with a crown on his head while others are made in linear form. These pictures may belong to late Chalcolithic period¹. The horn of animal figure is clearly visible while other parts of its body are faded due to seepage of water (fig.5). The man in front of this animal is shooting with bow and arrow to it. There is another animal figure depicted on the left corner of these depictions in alone with long horns and prominent hump in dark

brown colour. Its frontal part is clearly visible while the hind portion is weathered. It is depicted in running position and seems a depiction of a wild bull (fig.6).



Fig:6, Bull with long horn and prominent



Fig:7, human figure akimbo.



Fig: 8, Men with stretched hands

Just below to the bull there is again a human figure in akimbo. Its lower portion below waist is weathered and not visible (fig.7). Few other bold human figurines in an oblique line are painted in red colour with their stretched hands horizontally, but their head portion is not



Fig.9, Buffalo in standing posture



Fig.10, Inscription in conch script

visible (fig. 8). In the last interior part of wall of rock shelter, a buffalo with tiny circular horn is depicted in light red colour (fig.9). An inscription in one line in conch script is written at its right most portions also²(fig.10). It may be name of some people of historical period.



Fig.11, Cupules marks

There are some small and shallow spots cut in the floor of rock shelter and one of it is 4 cm wide may be identified as cupules marks³. Hope fully it was utilized by the authors of these paintings in grinding purposes (fig. 11).

Rock shelter-2 is comparatively lesser in height. Although its length is 15 meter and depth is 3.0 meter but its height is only 1.40 meter from the base surface (fig. 12). Mostly the figures of this rock shelter are dim and some of them have been eroded due to chipping in the surface of ceiling. Some rectangular figures in white pigment are drawn in a row but these are hardly identifiable. Sometimes it gives a look of a group of animals, below which a cluster of dots are found (fig. 13-15).



Fig. 12, Rock Shelter-2, General view

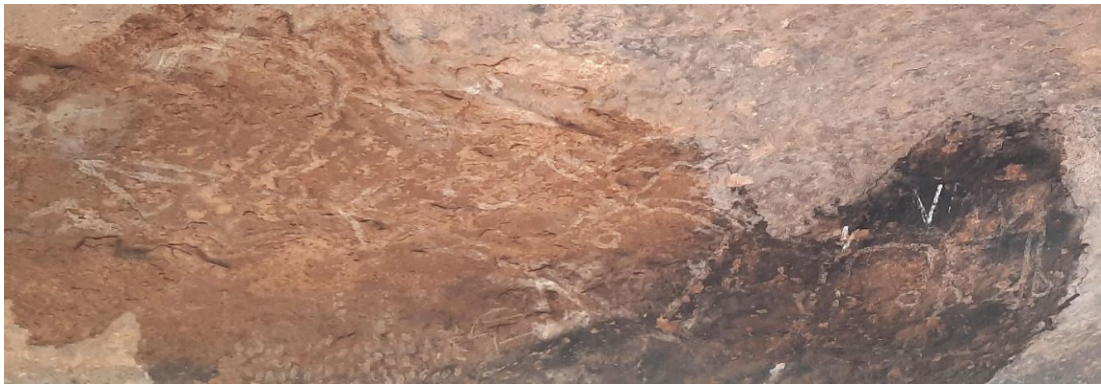


Fig. 13, Figures and dots in white pigment



Fig. 14, Dots in white pigment



Fig. 15, Figure in white pigment

Rest of the figures are painted in red ochre. Where a flower pot with its stem and leaves is very clear (fig. 16) but other human and animal figures are not so clear (fig. 17).



Fig. 16 Flowerpot

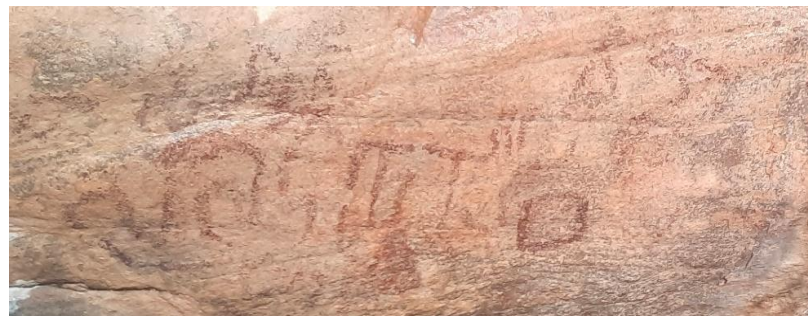


Fig. 17, human and animal figures

Other painted figures in red ochre are also dim and are hidden under the name of Kalulal and Devalal students of class 4th and 5th and Bhujyalal, Parmanand and Sultan

of class 8th who wrote their names on the paintings. As a result, the human, animal and floral figures made at this point became invisible (fig. 18).

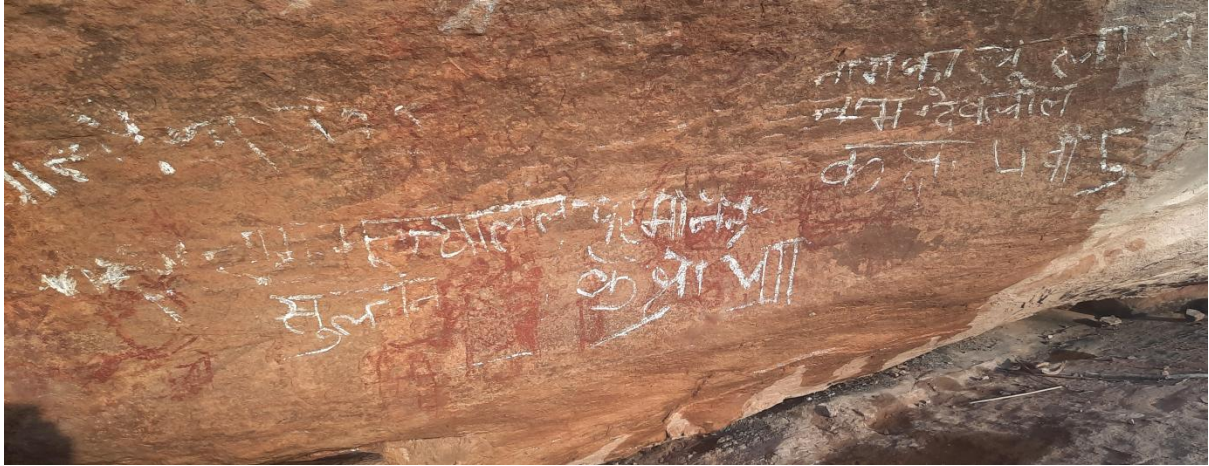


Fig. 18, Superimposition on figures



Fig. 19, General view of rock shelter-3



Fig. 20, Pictures on ceiling

Third rock shelter is a fallen part of hill from some height (fig. 19) and has a beautiful painting on its ceiling (Fig.20).Although it is very close to surface now and only observable in lie down posture. Here are depictions of multiple creatures like animals, human figures, houses and plants and can be easily identified. The figures are made with brownish colour and look very fresh. It has many humped bulls with long and sharp horn and upraised long tails (fig. 21), crocodile, lizard, man with harpoon, man with bow and arrow etc (Fig. 22).



Fig. 21, Bull with long horn and upraised tail.



Fig. 22, Man with harpoon, plant, and other animals.

The last rock painting of this group is at the end of this hill. It is made in a circular area of 80 x 120 cm of the wall of hill (Fig. 21)

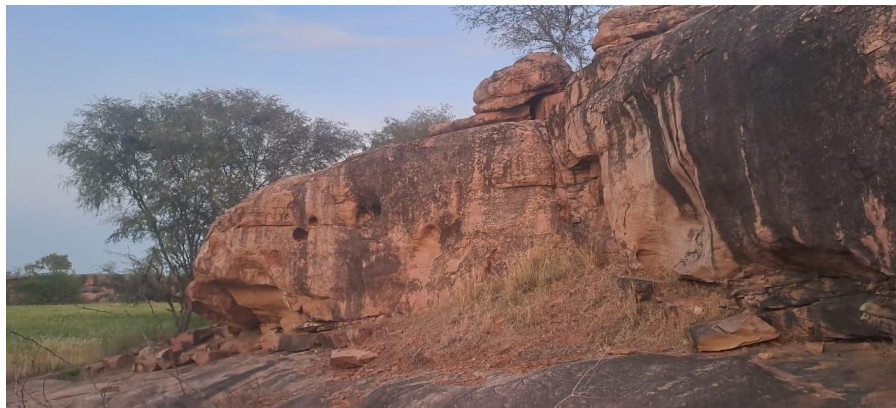


Fig. 23 General view of 4th rockshelter.

There are human figures and one of it is a man carrying yoke on his shoulders. The load is hanging on its both sides. Other three men are standing in a line and the first is shooting

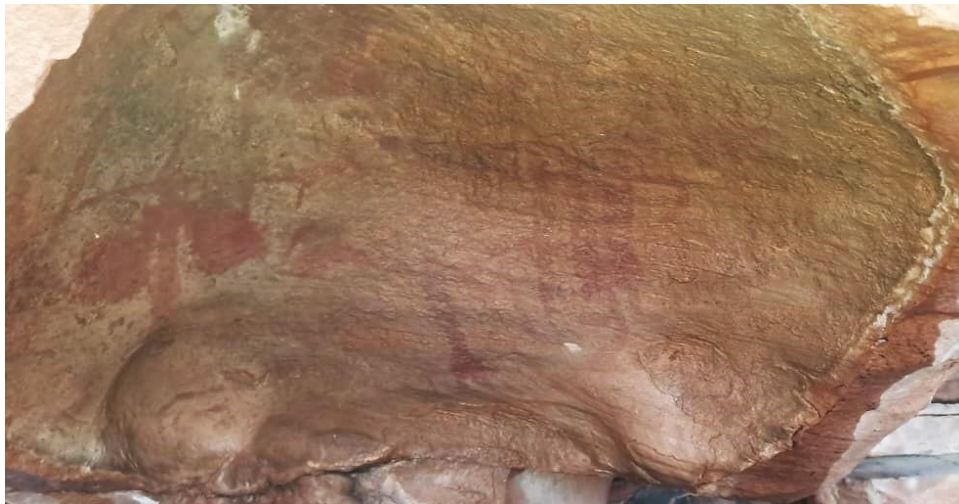


Fig. 24, Man with yoke and human figures practicing hunt.

arrow on an animal standing it front of him while other two are simply following him.

There is another site in Keshorai Patan tehsil of Bundi district near the village Jakhana after River Kurel namely Chhavani Borda at Lat. 25° 25' 37" North and Long. 75° 53' 3" East. A series of ravines in the form of bhor mixed with small particles of calcium carbonate, covered with babul plants and shrubs are here.



Fig. 25, Pieces of ostrich egg shells



Fig. 26, Broken pieces of microliths

Although no pot sherds and antiquities were recovered from these mounds but we got few pieces of ostrich egg shells (Fig. 25) and some broken microliths from these mounds (fig.26). Rest area have been destroyed by soil diggers of a brick kiln on

the spot. Ostrich egg shells are reported from Patne⁴ in Maharashtra and other places of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. The places in Rajasthan⁵ and other parts of country from where ostrich egg shells are found are Chandresal, Ken river site, Patne, Ashta, Kakorda, tisi, Shindi, Poona, Bhopal, Bhimbetka, Hoshangabad, Chhotabarda, Ratikhrda, Nagda, Dangawada, Rajota, Badanagar-1, Badanagar-2, Bherupachiana, Runija, Bodikheda-2, Chandresal-4, Lakheri, Phodgarh, Banyakhedi, Palayatha, Khajuma, Pagaria-awar, Nandikhera, Osama, Bhanpura, Garoth, Bhensoda, Ramnagar, Kherkhedi, Chechat, Kalyanpura, Kekodi, Janjalinaka, Ruthiai, Kunwargram-nanuk-chachnoma⁶ and few others⁷. Some of these bear engraved designs. The radiocarbon dates of some of these samples indicates that this flightless bird existed in India in a time bracket of 60,000 to 22,000 years BP and became extinct after the Upper Paleolithic period, about 20,000 years ago.⁸ Some of the rock shelters in India bear painted long necked bird and are identified as ostrich⁹. DNA study of partly fossilized eggshell from Chandresal, Rajasthan (38900+/-700BP) suggest that it matches 92% with African Ostrich¹⁰ and Patne eggshells appears to belong *struthio* genus. Ostrich eggs have a large shape and weight between 1 to 1.5 Kg which contains roughly 2,000 calories. It provides a rich source of protein and fat and hence was an important food source of hunters and gatherers¹¹.

Thus the area of Bundi District, Rajasthan has a long history of ancient settlement. Many acheulian sites are already reported from the area yielding lithic tools like hand axe, cleaver, scraper and blades etc. These are still found in good quantity in the Nalas originating from the hills and adjoining plateau. Painted rock shelters are scattered in a series mostly on the banks of rivers flowing in Aravali and Vindhyan hills. So far as the site of Kewariya is concerned, presently it is an inhabited village of Bheel tribe. The children frequently visit the site and write their names on the painted walls. The animal (fig.6) seems to be a depiction of Neolithic period while other (fig. 5) seems to be executed during late Chalcolithic period. The depiction of flower and a short inscription in conch script clearly indicates that these are the creation of historical periods.

This site was first time explored by Shri Om Prakash Kukki who guided us in this field visit and hence we are very thankful to him.

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