

# Wall paintings of India

- A historical perspective



Editor  
O. P. Agrawal

## PREFACE

Wall Paintings in India are available in plenty. We have with us wall paintings in different regions of the country, ranging from prehistoric times to the present day. Some sites are well-known like Ajanta, Ellora, Bagh and Badami. But there are hundreds which are not so well-known. In fact there are countless numbers of murals which are not known outside the localities where they exist. We had also observed that most of them are in dire need of conservation. We are also conscious that so far no worth-while and thorough scientific study of Indian wall paintings has been done. To rectify this situation, at least to a certain extent, a major programme for survey, scientific study and conservation of wall paintings has been launched. The programme which has been named as the National Project for Wall Paintings is covering various aspects of problems of wall paintings of India and has under its fold various types of studies. It has started operating in various States. The States which have already agreed to collaborate are Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

It was considered desirable that in the first instance, a seminar be arranged which would give a historical perspective of Indian Wall Paintings. The present Seminar was a result of this thinking. It is most gratifying that in this Seminar well-known scholars like Mr. M.N. Deshpande, Dr. M.S. Nagaraja Rao, Dr. P.L. Chakravarti and several others could take part.

I have always believed that the problems of conservation of wall paintings in Asia are different to those found in European countries. It was therefore most gratifying that we had with us from Thailand. Mrs. Wannipa na Songkhla who had started a programme of conservation of wall paintings in Thailand a few years back. From my personal experience I know that it has been a very successful Project and therefore I think it is to our advantage that Mrs. Wannipa presented two papers on wall paintings in Thailand.

Cave paintings form a class by themselves. Mr. M.N. Deshpande who has a wide knowledge of the subject was kind enough to cover it. Later, we had papers on wall-paintings in various States of India.

Dr. I.K. Bhatnagar's paper describing the problems of conservation of wall painting of Karnataka is also very timely and

enlightening.

The Seminar was organised jointly by the Intach Conservation Centre and NRLC—the financial burden being taken care of by Intach and facilities for the Seminar being provided by NRLC.

At this point I will like to express our grateful thanks to Intach (U.K.) Trust for supporting the National Project on Wall Paintings in general and this Seminar in particular. Support for the Project is also being provided by several States, including U.P., Kerala, and Karnataka. Thanks are due to all of them.

I received assistance from Mr. S.K. Bhatia and Miss Rashmi Tiwari in various editorial jobs. My thanks are due to both of them. I will also like to thank Miss Mamta Misra for preparing the cover design and the lay-out of the book.

O.P. Agrawal

INTACH