

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

**COGNITIVE NEUROSCIENCE AND ROCK ART: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL
PERSPECTIVE FROM CENTRAL INDIA ROCK-SHELTERS**

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Abstract: *It is well known that hunter-gatherer rock art and aspects of cognitive neuroscience are directly related. In this conceptual research paper, there is an attempt to demonstrate how rock art and the production and consumption of rock art have direct relationships with cognitive neuroscience and analyze the issue from an anthropological perspective. Two central questions have been addressed here. Can artistic experiences in rock art advance our understanding of individuality and individual processes via neural activity and how vision and emotions shape our memory, colour symbolism and overall belief systems? **Methods:** The themes, subject matter, colour composition, style of rock art, techniques, superimposition, time-frames and spatial distribution of the paintings on the canvas of the sandstone rock-shelters have been identified, analysed and interpreted deploying the core concepts from cognitive neuroscience. **Results:** This study reported rock art from a few newly discovered rock-shelter sites by the author from Central India and introduced a few previously discovered sites by various other researchers to interpret the subject matter of rock art implementing the mechanisms of cognitive neuroscience. The study as general principles postulates that the creation of rock art generates discreet cognitive capacities which are directly mediated by the interactions with their surrounding environment constructing social realities. **Conclusions:** Brain activities and vision are directly related to different forms of emotions. People synchronise their brain activities while producing art and/or paintings when they communicate between each other. This patterned communication has certain advantages and disadvantages both in the past and present irrespective of technological advances and socio-cultural differences. Hence, emotions are social reality. Cognitive neuroscience informs us how the brain works and what happened in the ancient times with the ancient minds when they learned to produce rock art.*

Keywords: Rock art, emotion, vision, colour, memory, symbolism.