



THE CULTURES AND ETIQUETTES
OF WESTERN COUNTRIES

西方文化礼仪



◆ 主 编 唐德根

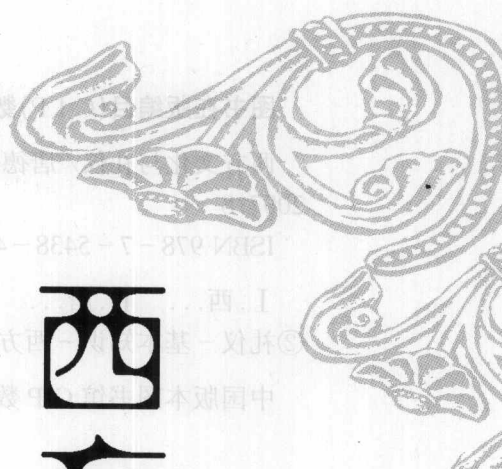
◆ 副主编 潘利锋 彭石玉

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Modernism described twentieth-century artistic developments in painting, sculpture, and music. Rapid communications resulted in cross-cultural exchanges and the assimilation and transformation of themes and techniques from many different cultures. A popular culture also developed, led by the United States and transmitted by the mass media.

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◆ 主 编 唐德根 ◆ 副主编 潘利锋 彭石玉

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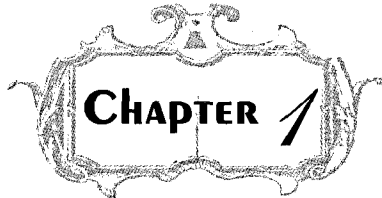
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CHAPTER 1 THE ORIGIN OF WESTERN CULTURE



THE ORIGIN OF WESTERN CULTURE



1.1 THE PREHISTORIC CULTURE OF EUROPE

Stone Age is the first known period of prehistoric human culture, during which work was done with stone tools. The period began with the earliest human development, about 2 million years ago. During those millennia, two developments provided the bedrock foundation for all later history. One was the gradual transition from hominid to Homo sapiens, or thinking human being. The other was the transformation of the human newcomer from a food gatherer who was dependent on the bounty of nature to a food producer who became increasingly independent of nature — the master of its own destiny. It can be divided into two periods: Paleolithic Period and Neolithic Period—based on the degree of sophistication in the fashioning and use of tools.

◆ 1.1.1 Cultural Modality and Features of Paleolithic Period

The Paleolithic period, or Old Stone Age, was the first period in the development of human technology of the Stone Age. It was the longest phase of human history. It began with the introduction of the first stone tools by Homo sapiens and lasted until the introduction of agriculture.

Living conditions were hard and the nature was cruel to human being. The life was totally wild. They lived in the caves or occupied the rock and wood shelters. They tended to stay in large groups and had to share their food with other family members. If we had had a chance to take a look at those people, we would have seen a crowded flog

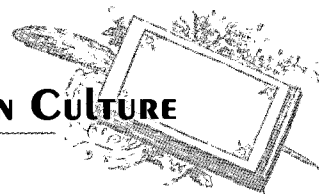
of people living like animals. Basically their living conditions depended on their hunting and fishing abilities, or collecting edible plants from the nature around them. In this sense, we can say these earliest groups were just consumers as they didn't know yet to produce any thing and they always tried to take advantage of the nature. The remains of bones and other remains of wild animals have been found in the caves in large quantities, so we understand that these people just ate their food and left the remains there in their caves. Also, they didn't have a settled life yet. Whenever the food sources around them diminished, they had to move on to other locations. The natural conditions were quite equal for human and wild animals.

By far the most outstanding feature of the Paleolithic period was the evolution of the human species from an apelike creature, or near human, to true *Homo sapiens*. Paleolithic peoples were generally nomadic hunters and gatherers who sheltered in caves, used fire, and fashioned stone tools. Their cultures are identified by distinctive stone-tool industries. This development was exceedingly slow and continued through the three successive divisions of the period, the Lower, Middle, and Upper Paleolithic. The most abundant remains of Paleolithic cultures are a variety of stone tools whose distinct characteristics provide the basis for a system of classification containing several tool making traditions or industries.

In the Lower Paleolithic Period, the oldest recognizable tools made by members of the family of man are simple stone choppers. These tools may have been made over 1 million years ago by *Australopithecus*, ancestor of modern man. Fractured stones called eoliths have been considered the earliest tools, but it is impossible to distinguish man-made from naturally produced modifications in such stones. Lower Paleolithic stone industries of the early species of humans called *Homo erectus* represented at various sites in Europe, Africa, and Asia from 100,000 to 500,000 years ago. Stone tools of this period are of the core type, made by chipping the stone to form a cutting edge, or of the flake type, fashioned from fragments struck off a stone. Hand axes were the typical tool of these early hunters and food-gatherers.

The Middle Paleolithic period includes the Mousterian culture, often associated with Neanderthal man, an early form of man, living between 40,000 and 100,000 years ago. Neanderthal remains are often found in caves with evidence of the use of fire. Neanderthals were hunters of prehistoric mammals, and their cultural remains, though unearthed chiefly in Europe, have been found also in Africa, Palestine, and Siberia. Stone tools of this period are of the flake tradition, and bone implements, such as needles, indicate that crudely sewn furs and skins were used as body coverings. Since the dead were painted before burial, a kind of primitive religion may have been practiced.

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In the Upper Paleolithic period Neanderthal man disappears and is replaced by a variety of *Homo sapiens* such as Cro-Magnon man and Grimaldi man. This, the flowering of the Paleolithic period, saw an astonishing number of human cultures, such as the Aurignacian, Gravettian, Perigordian, Solutrean, and Magdalenian, rise and develop in the Old World. The beginnings of communal hunting and extensive fishing are found here, as is the first conclusive evidence of belief systems centering on magic and the supernatural. Pit houses, the first man-made shelters, were built, sewn clothing was worn, and sculpture and painting originated. Tools were of great variety, including flint and obsidian blades and projectile points. It is probable that the people of the Aurignacian culture migrated to Europe after developing their distinctive culture elsewhere, perhaps in Asia. Their stone tools are finely worked, and they made a typical figure eight-shaped blade. They also used bone, horn, and ivory and made necklaces and other personal ornaments. They carved the so-called Venus figures, ritual statuettes of bone, and made outline drawings on cave walls.

The hunters of the Solutrean phase of the Upper Paleolithic entered Europe from the east and ousted many of their Aurignacian predecessors. The Solutrean wrought extremely fine spearheads, shaped like a laurel leaf. The wild horse was their chief quarry. The Solutrean as well as remnants of the Aurignacian were replaced by the Magdalenian, the final, and perhaps most impressive, phase of the Paleolithic period. Here artifacts reflect a society made up of communities of fishermen and reindeer hunters. Surviving Magdalenian tools, which range from tiny microliths to implements of great length and fineness, indicate an advanced technique. Weapons were highly refined and varied, and along the southern edge of the ice sheet boats and harpoons were developed. However, the crowning achievement of the Magdalenian was its cave paintings, the culmination of Paleolithic art. At the end of the Paleolithic period, modern humans (*Homo sapiens*) made such specialized tools as needles and harpoons. In the Cro-Magnon caves of Europe, wall paintings and evidence of both religious cults and possible social stratification point to the complexity of the cultures.

Although this late Paleolithic technology was advanced compared to that of the early Paleolithic a million years ago, it still was primitive in the sense that productivity was low. Food gatherers had no formal political structure with full-time political leader gatherers. Rather they formed autonomous bands that usually numbered twenty to fifty persons. Larger groups were possible, and some did exist in areas that yielded plentiful food supplies, such as the American Northwest, with its inexhaustible salmon runs, and the Dordogne valley in southern France, with its great reindeer herds in Magdalenian times. Judging from contemporary hunting societies, authority in Paleolithic times was rigidly limited and lacked an established and recognized power to control people. Leaders arose naturally for specific

purposes. An old man might be the accepted planner of ceremonies because of his ritual knowledge, whereas a young person with proven skill in the chase might take the lead in hunting parties. But the important point is that all such leaders were persons of influence rather than authority since there were no institutions for imposing one's will upon others.

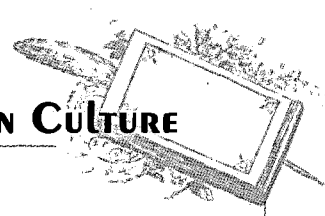
Social organization necessarily was as simple as political organization, if indeed the two can be distinguished at this stage. The basic unit was the family, consisting of the parents and their immature and unmarried children. Extra wives usually were permitted, but in practice polygamy was rare. Relations between the sexes were more equal during the Paleolithic millennia than at any time since. The chief reason seems to have been that women contributed to the food supply of the band as much as did the men, if not more so. Consequently for most of human history there was none of the dependence and inferior status that is commonly associated today with the "weaker" female sex.

Not only was there sex equality among the food gatherers but there were also strong kinship ties gatherers. Each person had duties toward the other tribal members and in turn enjoyed rights and privileges. All helped each other in the quest for food and in providing shelter from the elements and defense from their enemies. Some fighting between tribal groups arose from personal feuds and from competition for hunting and fishing grounds. But Paleolithic society lacked both the manpower and the resources essential for large-scale warfare, which did not become possible until the rise of agriculture, with its greatly increased productivity and correspondingly increased population. In short, the essence of Paleolithic social organization was cooperation. Families and bands were primarily mutual-aid societies working together in the harsh struggle for existence.

After observing the daily life of food gatherers in various parts of the world, anthropologist R. B. Lee (1977:21-22) concludes: "A truly communal life is often dismissed as a utopian ideal, to be endorsed in theory but unattainable in practice. But the evidence for foraging peoples tells us otherwise. A sharing way of life is not only possible but has actually existed in many parts of the world and over long periods of time."

Turning our discussion from social institutions and practices to general beliefs, we find that primitive humans were basically ahistorical and nonevolutionary in their attitudes toward themselves and their society. They assumed that the future would be identical to the present, as the present was to the past. Consequently there was no notion of change, and hence no inclination to criticize or to tamper with existing institutions and practices. To their way of thinking, everything, including themselves, their culture, and their habitat, had appeared with the creation and was destined to continue unaltered into the future. The creation myths of hunting peoples are strikingly similar, involving heroes who fashioned the landscape, stocked it with game, brought forth the people, and taught them the arts and

CHAPTER 1 The Origin of Western Culture



their customs.

There are many myths about this period. The following origin myth of the Andaman islanders is fairly typical. The first man was Jutpu. He was born inside the joint of a big bamboo, just like a bird in an egg. The bamboo split and he came out. He was a little child. When it rained he made a small hut for himself and lived in it. He made little bows and arrows. One day he found a lump of quartz and with it he sacrificed himself. Jutpu was lonely, living all by himself. He took some clay from a nest of the white ants and molded it into the shape of a woman. She became alive and became his wife. She was called Kot. They lived together at Teraut-buliu. Afterwards Jutpu made other people out of clay. These were the ancestors. Jutpu taught them how to make canoes and bows and arrows and how to hunt and fish. His wife taught the women how to make baskets and nets and mats and belts, and how to use clay for making patterns on the body (Radcliffe-Brown, 1948: 192).

Primitive humans were very knowledgeable concerning nature. They had to be, for their very existence, depended on it. Their knowledge was passed on orally from generation to generation, and much of it is only now being recognized and utilized.

Despite their abundant first-hand contact with and knowledge of nature, early humans had little explanatory knowledge; they could give no naturalistic explanation if floods or droughts came or if the hunting or fishing was poor. Not knowing how to cope with nature by naturalistic means, they had to resort to the supernatural. They turned to magic and spent much time in efforts to persuade or fool nature into yielding a greater abundance. By making each useful animal or plant the totem of a particular group, and by using images, symbols, and imitative dances, primitive people believed that the animal or food could be encouraged to flourish and multiply. As long as the rules of the totems were strictly observed, the reproduction of the group and of its food supply could be assured.

All group members seem to have participated at first in the ritual ceremonies, but toward the end of the Paleolithic, part-time specialists in the form of medicine men or shamans seem to have appeared. These people were thought to have peculiar relations with the forces that were supposed to control those parts of the universe or environment that mattered — primarily food and fertility but also health and personal luck. More and more, as they were relieved from the full-time work of food and tool production, they used their magical arts for the common good. The earliest pictorial representation of these shamans is the “Sorcerer” of the cave in France. This “terrible masterpiece”, as it has been called, is a Paleolithic painting of a man clad in a deerskin, with the horns of a stag, the face of an owl, the ears of a wolf, the arms of a bear, and the tail of a horse. Other nearby paintings suggest that the cave was a meeting place where a sorcerer invoked animal

spirits for success in the hunt and worked up his audience to the emotional pitch necessary to face danger.

Paleolithic technology, however, was not productive enough to support anything approaching a hierarchy of priests, so no cohesive theology could be developed. Conceptions of gods and spirits were hazy, and much emphasis was placed on individual visions. Religion was not used as a method of social control. Benefits did not depend on the morality of the individual. People begged or bargained with the supernatural, as we can see from the following statement made by an Eskimo to the Arctic explorer Knud Rasmussen: We believe our Angakut, our magicians, and we believe them because we wish to live long, and because we do not want to expose ourselves to the danger of famine and starvation. We believe, in order to make our lives and food secure. If we do not believe the magicians, the animals we hunt would make themselves invisible to us; if we did not follow their advice, we should fall ill and die (Rasmussen, 1980:124).

Fear of what couldn't be understood and the desire to bring the supernatural under human control were expressed in art as well as religion. By far the outstanding example of Paleolithic art consists of its extraordinary cave paintings, the best of which are located in southern France and northwestern Spain. The subjects of the drawings are usually the larger game: bison, bear, horse, woolly rhinoceros, mammoth, and wild boar. The best of the drawings are in full color, remarkably alive, and charged with energy. Despite their extraordinary artistic quality, the cave drawings apparently were designed for utilitarian reasons. They were drawn in the darkest and most dangerous parts of the caves, although the people lived only in or near the cave entrances. The artists also commonly painted one picture over another, with no apparent desire to preserve their works. Hence it appears that the reason these Paleolithic artists made their way to the depths of the earth and created the most realistic reproductions possible of the animals they hunted was the belief that they thereby gained some sort of magic power over their game. In conclusion, the recent findings of scientists in various fields have led us to recognize and appreciate the achievements of our prehistoric ancestors as constituting a major and decisive element in our total human heritage. Even in the realm of technology, where we consider ourselves today to be especially successful, the hunter-gatherers acquired a vast amount of data that is basic for us to the very present.

In coping with illnesses, prehistoric people were by no means wholly dependent on magic. They knew how to set broken bones with splints, to use tourniquets, to employ poultices and bandages, to use steam baths and massage, to practice bloodletting as therapy, and to administer enemas (which South American tribes did with rubber syringes). Pre-literate people also had knowledge of heavenly bodies, distinguishing and naming constellations of

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stars. Finally, oceanic navigation was achieved in prehistoric times by the Polynesians, who made regular voyages between Hawaii and Tahiti, a distance of 2,350 miles. After reviewing these achievements in all phases of life, anthropologist Leslie A. White (1959: 271-272) concludes: "The accumulated knowledge, skills, tools, machines, and techniques developed by primitive, preliterate people laid the basis for civilization and all the higher cultures... It is indeed remarkable to see how close to the present day, primitive people have come at many points on the technological level..."

◆ 1.1.2 Cultural Modality and Features of Neolithic Period

When humans became food producers, a new world with limitless horizons opened before them. They left behind them the Paleolithic period and entered the Neolithic period. The Neolithic period or the New Stone Age designates a stage of cultural evolution or technological development characterized by the use of stone tools, the existence of settled villages largely dependent on domesticated plants and animals, and the presence of such crafts as pottery and weaving. The time period and cultural content indicated by the term varies with the geographic location of the culture considered and with the particular criteria used by the individual scientist. The domestication of plants and animals usually distinguishes Neolithic culture from earlier Paleolithic hunting, fishing, and food-gathering cultures. The termination of the Neolithic period is marked by such innovations as the rise of urban civilization or the introduction of metal tools or writing. Again, the criteria vary with each case. The earliest known development of Neolithic culture was in southwest Asia between 8000 BC and 6000 BC. There the domestication of plants and animals was probably begun by the Mesolithic Natufian people, leading to the establishment of settled villages based on the cultivation of cereals, including wheat, barley, and millet, and the raising of cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs. In the Tigris and Euphrates river valleys, the Neolithic culture of the Middle East developed into the urban civilizations of the Bronze Age by 3500 BC. Between 6000 BC and 2000 BC, Neolithic culture spread through Europe, the Nile valley (Egypt), the Indus valley (India), and the Huang He valley (China). The formation of Neolithic cultures throughout the Old World resulted from a combination of local cultural developments with innovations diffused from the Middle East. In Southeast Asia, a distinct type of Neolithic culture involving rice cultivation developed, perhaps independently, before 2000 BC. In the New World, the domestication of plants and animals occurred independently of Old World developments. By 1500 BC, Neolithic cultures based on the cultivation of corn, beans, squash, and other plants were present in Mexico and South America, leading to the rise of the Inca and Aztec civilizations and spreading to other parts of the America by the time of European contact. The term Neolithic has also been used in

anthropology to designate cultures of more contemporary primitive, independent farming communities.

Neolithic humans differed from their Paleolithic predecessors in two aspects: they made stone tools by grinding and polishing rather than by chipping and fracturing; and, even more important, they obtained food wholly or primarily from agriculture and/or stock raising rather than from hunting animals or gathering plants.

The most obvious impact of the agricultural revolution was the new sedentary existence. Humans now had to settle down to care for their newly domesticated plants and animals. Thus the Paleolithic nomadic band gave way to the Neolithic village as the basic economic and cultural unit. Indeed the village remained the basis for a pattern of life that was to prevail until the late eighteenth century and that persists to the present day in the vast underdeveloped regions of the world.

It is easy to romanticize Neolithic village life, but to do so would be grossly misleading. Everyone — men, women, and children — had to work, and work hard, to produce food and a few handicraft articles. Productivity was low since people learned slowly and painfully about soils, seeds, fertilizers, and crop rotation. Despite hard labor, famine was common; it often followed too much or too little rain or a plague of pests. Epidemics swept the villages repeatedly as sedentary life introduced the problem of the disposal of human excreta and other refuse. Although dogs helped with sanitation and personal modesty presumably caused people to deposit stools away from habitation, neither of these was sufficient to prevent the various diseases that follow the route from the bowel to the mouth. Furthermore, malnutrition was the rule because of inadequate food supply or unbalanced diet. Life expectancy under these circumstances was exceedingly low, but the high birth-rate increased village populations everywhere until famine, epidemic, or emigration restored the balance between food supply and number of mouths to feed.

Yet Neolithic village life was not all misery and suffering. It was a time when people made technological progress at an infinitely more rapid rate than in the preceding Paleolithic period. Primarily, it was not because they had more leisure time than the hunters. Rather, the new sedentary life made a richer material existence physically possible. The living standards of the nomadic hunters were limited to what they could carry, whereas the Neolithic villagers could indulge in the building of substantial housing together with furnishings, utensils, implements, and assorted knickknacks. They learned to make pottery out of raw clay, at first imitating the baskets, gourds, and other containers of preagrarian times. Gradually they grasped the potential of pottery materials and techniques and began to fashion objects that no longer resembled the earlier containers. By the end of the Neolithic period, people in the Near East were building kilns, or ovens, that could fire

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pottery at a higher temperature and so allow for glazing. The glazed surface sealed the pottery and prevented seepage or evaporation. The agriculturist then had vessels that could be used not only for storing grain but also for cooking and for keeping liquids such as oil and beer.

Similar progress was made with textiles. Late Paleolithic peoples may have twisted or spun wild mountain sheep, goat dog, or other animal fibers into coarse threads and woven them to make belts, headbands, or even rough blankets. Indeed they probably also modeled clay into crude containers. But it was during the Neolithic that people developed the textile art. They used fibers of the newly domesticated flax, cotton, and hemp plants and spun and wove the fibers on spindles and looms they had gradually evolved. Neolithic villagers also learned to build dwellings that were relatively substantial and roomy. The materials varied with the locality. The Iroquois of northern New York were known as the people of the long house because they lived in huge bark and wood structures that accommodated ten or more families. In the Middle East adobe was used for the walls, whereas in Europe the most common material was split saplings plastered with clay and dung. The roofs were usually of thatch. Dwellings were furnished with fixed beds that might be covered with canopies. Also there were modern-looking dressers with at least two tiers of shelves and various wall cupboards. Light and warmth were provided by an open fire, generally placed near the center of the room. There was no chimney to let out the smoke — only a hole in the roof or a gap under the eaves.

Sedentary life also made possible a tribal political structure in place of the individual bands of the hunting peoples. Tribes were made up of the inhabitants of the villages of a given region, and they were identified and distinguished from others by distinctive characteristics of speech and custom. Some tribes, usually those with primitive economies, were so loosely organized that they were almost at the hunting-band level. Others boasted powerful chiefs and primitive nobilities distinct from the commoners, though the lines were blurred and never reached the exclusive class structures characteristic of the later civilizations.

The distinctive feature of the Neolithic village was social homogeneity. All families had the necessary skills and tools to produce what they needed, and, equally important, all had access to the basic natural resources essential for livelihood. Every family was automatically a component part of the village community, which owned the farmlands, pastures, and other resources of nature. Hence there was no division between landed proprietors and landless cultivators in tribal society. “Hunger and destitution,” reports an American anthropologist (Morgan, 1881:45) “could not exist at one end of the Indian village ... while plenty prevailed elsewhere in the same village...”

Precisely because of this equality, tribal societies, whether of Neolithic times or of today, have a built-in brake on productivity. Output is geared to the limited traditional needs of the family, so there is no incentive to produce a surplus. This in turn means that labor is sporadic, diversified, and correspondingly limited. The daily grind — the eight-hour day, five-day week — is conspicuously absent. The typical tribe member worked fewer hours per year than a modern man or woman and, furthermore, worked at his or her pleasure. The basic reason was that a person then labored and produced in a specific social role — as a husband or father or brother, a wife or mother or sister, or a village member. Work was not a necessary evil tolerated for the sake of making a living; rather it was a concomitant of kin and community relations. One helped one's brother in the field because of kinship ties and not because one might be given a basket of yams. This tribal society was a comfortable egalitarian society. But for precisely that reason it was a low-productivity society, as can be seen from the work schedule of the Bemba tribe.

The equality in tribal social relations extended also to tribal gender relations. This equality was firmly grounded in the free access to land that tribal women enjoyed along with the men. An anthropologist who observed the Siang rice growers of central Borneo reported that widows continued to cultivate their own plots after losing their husbands. "On the whole, the women can swing an axe as effectively as the men." If the widow was encumbered by small children, "she is usually assisted by the others in the village, through gifts of rice and wild pig or by help in clearing her field, at least until such time as the children have become old enough to help her" (Provine 1937:80-91). Women had equal rights not only in agriculture but also in the new village crafts. Excavations at Catal Huyuk, a seventh-millennium-BC settlement in Asia Minor, reveal that women cultivated indigenous plants, baked bread in communal ovens, wove wool and cotton textiles, made mats and baskets out of the wheat straw, and fired pottery for cooking and storage. In this particular settlement, women appear to have enjoyed not merely equal status but a superior one. Pictorial representations, house furnishings, and burial remains all indicate that the family pecking order was first the mother, next the daughter, followed by the son, with the father in last place.

Turning finally to religion, the new life of the soil tillers gave rise to new beliefs and new gods. The spirits and the magic that had been used by the hunters were no longer appropriate. Now the agriculturists needed, and conceived, spirits who watched over their fields and flocks and hearths. Behind all these spirits stood a creator, usually vaguely defined. But most important, almost everywhere there was a goddess of the earth or of fertility — the earth mother. She was the source of productivity of plants and animals and of the fecundity of women. Life and well-being, the annual cycle of death and birth,