

A photograph of a steep, dark rock face. A prominent, lighter-colored, layered rock formation runs diagonally across the upper left. On this formation, there are several panels of ancient Chinese rock art, including what appears to be a large, stylized figure or character. The background is a dark, textured rock surface.

THE ROCK ARTS OF CHINA

中国岩画



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中国古代岩画论略

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—

岩画，国外学者一般泛称“岩石艺术”(Rock Art),也有使用“岩刻”(Petroglyphs或Rock Caving)或“岩画”(Rock Printing)两个术语的，还有因岩画所处地理环境之不同分别称做“崖壁画”或“洞穴画”的。从目前我国已发现的大量岩画来看，其制作方法不外乎两种：一种是用不同工具刻划或磨刻岩石表层来表现形象，可称做“岩刻”；另一种是用矿物颜料涂绘于岩石表层来表现形象，可称做“岩画”。尽管制作方法有别，但都离不开在岩石上作画的基本手段，故通称为“岩画”也无不可。

世界上不少岩画学者认为，世界岩画的首次发现是17世纪挪威人彼得·阿尔弗逊(Peder Alfsson)在北欧波哈斯浪(Bohuslaan)发现的岩画，因而也“是岩画艺术近代研究史的开始”。其实，早在公元6世纪初，我国北魏地理学家酈道元在其名著《水经注》中所记载的岩画点已多达二十余处。如在该书的河水、沁水、漆水、漾水、瓠子水、淄水、沔水、淮水、肥水、江水、若水、夷水、沅水、湘水、漓水等诸多条目中，就直接或间接地提到分布于该处的岩画，所涉及的地域当包括今天的新疆、青海、宁夏、内蒙古、河南、山西、陕西、山东、安徽、广西、四川、湖北和湖南等省(区)。从《水经注》中可以得悉酈氏所见所闻所记之岩画也有两种：一种是用工具刻划或磨刻的；一种是用颜料涂绘的。岩画发现孰早孰晚乃属世界岩画发现史上的争辩课题，毋庸在此多叙。可喜的是当前欧、亚、非、美、澳等五大洲岩画的发现是大量的。如法国、西班牙的洞窟岩画，俄罗斯贝加尔湖岩画，非洲撒哈拉沙漠岩画，澳大利亚的昆士兰州岩画，美国得克萨斯州岩画等，迄今已在150多个国家发现了岩画。但是由于语言的阻隔和缺乏相互交流等种种原因，直至1983年在美国《考古学》杂志上所公布的一幅《世界岩画分布图》中，竟茫然不知中国有着丰富的岩画遗存。这不能不说是国际范围内岩画研究的缺陷。鉴于此，本书竭力择选我国已发现或新发现岩画中最精彩的图像公布于世，旨在参加国际范围内的岩画大家庭。

二

我国近代学者对境内岩画的调查、发现和研究应始于1915年岭南大学黄仲琴教授对福建华安汰溪仙字潭岩刻的调查和研究，尽管当时黄氏并未充分意识到该处的岩刻应是岩画。仙字潭岩刻究属什么性质，现时学者颇有异议，但认定其中大部分是岩画看来大致不误。稍后的1929年，有瑞典人贝格曼对我国新疆库鲁克山岩画的考察。在此后的20余年里，岩画的调查仍在断断续续地进行，如1938年徐松石先生对广西桂平县南都合地方的调查，1938年起陈公哲先生对香港沙岗背地方岩刻的调查，1946年石钟健、芮逸夫先生对四川珙县“夔人悬棺”崖画的考察。我国岩画的大量发现与研究是在中华人民共和国成立之后的事了。如50年代对广西左江岩画的大规模调查，60年代对云南沧源岩画和宁夏贺兰山岩画的调查，70年代对内蒙古阴山岩画、乌兰察布岩画和甘肃黑山岩画的普遍调查，80年代对新疆阿勒泰山岩画、呼图壁岩画以及内蒙古巴丹吉林沙漠岩画的深入调查等等，都曾取得可喜而惊人的成果。我国目前发现岩画的省区有黑龙江、辽宁、内蒙古、山西、宁夏、甘肃、青海、新疆、西藏、云南、贵州、四川、广西、广东、福建、江苏、浙江、台湾，另外还有香港和澳门。中国岩画分布范围辽阔，它东起大海之滨，西至昆仑山口，北达大兴安岭，南傍左江沿岸，岩画点近千处，画面近百万幅。中国岩画所处地貌极其复杂，大体有山地岩画、平原岩画、草原岩画、沙漠岩画等，也有各种地貌相互交错、相互接壤者。若从分布的地区、作品的内容与风格来归纳，中国岩画大致可划分为北方、西南、东南三大系统。北方系统的岩画点，著名的有黑龙江的牡丹江岩画，内蒙古的大兴安岭岩画、白岔河岩画、阴山岩画、渤海湾桌子山岩画、乌兰察布岩画、巴丹吉林岩画，辽宁的朝阳岩画，宁夏的贺兰山岩画，甘肃的黑山岩画、祁连山岩画、马鬃山岩画，青海的青海湖岩画，新疆的阿勒泰岩画、呼图壁岩画、哈密岩画、托克逊岩画、米泉岩画、库鲁克塔格岩画、昆仑山岩画、和田岩画、克孜尔岩画；西南系统的岩画点，著名的有云南的沧源岩画、耿马岩画、它克岩画、麻栗坡岩画，西藏的鲁日朗卡岩画、任姆栋岩画、恰克桑岩画，贵州的关岭花江岩画、开阳画马崖岩画，四川的珙县岩画、昭觉县岩画、巴县岩画，广西的左江岩画、右江岩画；东南沿海系统的岩画点，著名的有江苏的连云港将军崖岩画、卧龙岗岩画，浙江的仙居淡竹岩画，福建的华安汰溪仙字潭岩画、石门坑崖画、草仔山岩画和南靖南坑岩画和东山铜陵岩画，广东珠海的高栏岛宝镜湾岩画，台湾的高雄万山岩画，香港的东龙洲岩画、大浪湾岩画、长洲岩画和濠洲岩画，澳门的寇娄(Coloane)岛卡栢(KaHo)湾岩画等等。

中国岩画所反映的内容丰富多彩，其作画形式，如粗线条地去归纳，大致有实体的图像、符号、图形、图案以及与岩画相关联的少数文字。实体图像以野生动物、家养动物为大宗，也有零星的植物，人物形像和人面像也为数不少，还有建筑、村落、车辆、船只等。以图形表现的有太阳、月亮、星辰、云朵以及手印、脚印、蹄印、小圆穴等。若从社会经济角度去概括，有生产经济活动和社会生活方面的场景，诸如狩猎、放牧、畜牧、农耕、舞蹈、杂技、繁殖（包括人类本身繁殖的交媾）、格斗、战争等等。也有直接反映精神心态的崇拜图像和祭礼图像。

岩画是一种特殊的文化现象和造型艺术。它以图像形式记录了人类为生存而斗争的连续性篇章，记录了原始氏族、部落、部落联盟乃至各历史时期人们生活中的感受，揭示了人类发展史中各阶段的劳动方式、经济活动、社会生活实践、心理状态、思维方式、信仰活动以及人类与大自然间的种种关系，汇成了人类历史活动信息的源泉。岩画和别的艺术形式一样，既反映了创造者们的物质生活状况，又反映了人类内在的精神奥秘。

从世界范围来看，文字的产生以及使用文字记录人类活动，在整个历史长河中为时极其短暂。世界上的几个文明古国，包括中国在内，以文字记录的人类文明史，至多也不过五六千年左右。而凿刻或涂绘在岩石上的岩画，有些却历经万年乃至数万年的风风雨雨。在考古学未兴起之前，人们从文献上仅能见到有关史前人类活动的星星点点的记载，但终究是一些间接的模糊认识。自从考古学兴起之后，作为历史科学的一个组成部分，它通过人类遗留下来的大量实物资料，去了解、复原人类遥远的过去，使人们对史前史有了更具体的形象认识。中国各地大批岩画的发现，引起了一批考古学家的极大兴趣。他们通过对岩画各方面的研究，探知未被文字记录的人类活动的空白点，获得了人们过去从未有过的最大容量的新知识，概括起来大致有以下几个方面：

（一）为研究我国少数民族的历史提供了重要资料。目前我国已发现的岩画，分布地点以少数民族聚居区为主，有些地区目前虽已非少数民族居住地，但在遥远的作画年代，这里曾有不同的氏族、部落、部落联盟活动。因此，我们可以这样理解，岩画在我国大多数是少数民族的作品。研究我国的岩画，实际上是在研究少数民族及其先民在各个时期的劳动方式、经济生活、社会生活、信仰活动、心理状态以及他们与大自然

之间的关系。

(二)为研究我国狩猎业和畜牧业的历史开辟了新途径。从目前情况来看,我国历史学和考古学往往局限于对农业民族历史的研究,而对狩猎业史和畜牧业史的研究,常常囿于资料的欠缺而语焉不详。由于岩画的大批发现,更因其中大量与狩猎业和畜牧业有关画面的存在,为研究狩猎业与畜牧业的发展史提供了极为丰富而又十分形象的第一手资料。待条件逐渐成熟,很可能把我国的狩猎畜牧史的研究推向一个新的阶段,并有所突破。

(三)是研究动物群落分布和自然生态变迁的最可靠资料。在岩画所反映的内容中,动物题材约占目前已发现各类题材的80%左右。岩画中所表现的动物,无疑是作画者对所处时代和所处地区活动着的动物属种的实际记录。动物的生存,往往与一定的气候条件和自然环境相适应,凭着动物属种的变化,凭着对动物群落分布的新知识,便可以推论出作画时代当地动物群落、植被、气候、干湿度以及生态环境的变化。通过对生态环境变化的研究,便可了解史前人类如何适应、利用他们所居住的山地、草原、沙漠、河川等自然环境,了解他们如何与大自然作斗争的详情细节。

(四)对作画人心态的研究。只要到岩画现场实地考察一番,不难发现这些画面无不笼罩在一片奥秘的气氛之中。有的,在狭窄的山道上,断崖直冲云霄,石壁上无数影像似在虚实有无间冉冉升向苍天。每当夕阳西斜时,日光直射崖壁,景象更显得飘渺无定。若是用颜料涂绘的岩画,因壁面受阴晴、干湿、冷暖等自然因素的影响,图象色彩产生无穷变幻,令人望之敬畏。有的,位于面向湍急河流一侧的高崖之上,对岸一片开阔地,是祭拜最为理想的场所。有的岩画刻在茫茫大草原一条条裸露地面的岩脉上。透过岩画所处的地理环境和岩画内容,人们可以觉察岩画并非出于审美需要,大多是巫术祭祀活动和原始宗教的产物,或者带有记事性目的,蕴含着较强的功利意味。然而创作者不是机械地复制现实,而是按自己的美好愿望去塑造形象、组织画面、把握世界的。因此,那些凿刻于岩石上、涂绘在崖壁上由数不清的形象构成的岩画长廊,向我们展示着人类童年时代审美意识的产生及其演变轨迹,一些画面还提供了远古造型艺术的优美典范。

岩画实体的存在,是人类历史上遗留至今数量最多、分布最广的一种艺术现象。世界上没有哪一种美术作品比岩画的数量更多,没有哪一种美术作品比岩画的分布更广,也没有哪一种美术作品比岩画的延续时间更长、作画人数更多。朱狄在《艺术的起源》一书中(39页)曾说:“岩画艺术遍布世界的各个角落,几乎只要那里有人生存,

有利用价值的岩石表面就会被画、被刻、被雕上许多形象。在史前人那里岩石的表面是经常作为普遍的露天的礼拜场所服务于人类的，直到农耕文化产生后，随着神殿在村落和城市中的建造，岩画传统才逐渐消失。”这话是符合历史实际的。的确，岩画随着历史的进步逐渐消亡了，而不断发现的岩画为我国美术史宝库增添了无限的光辉，注入了新鲜的血液。

四

要判断每一幅岩画的具体创作年代是极其困难的，可又是人们最感兴趣的。困难在于岩画处于旷野的崖壁、岩脉之上，可供断代的直接材料几乎等于零。因而岩画断代至今仍是一个世界性难题。各国的岩画研究专家都不遗余力，想方设法试图找出与岩画有关联的蛛丝马迹，以期得到岩画创作年代的信息。譬如在我国，有人研究岩画上的人面像，便与新石器时代陶器上的、骨器上的、玉器上的类似的图像进行对比，以期得出人面像的相对年代。但仍有不少研究者对此类对比研究持谨慎态度。近年来，有研究者采用动物考古的手段，分析岩画中存在的已灭绝的动物形象，去探索岩画的创作年代。如对阴山岩画部分画面的研究，认为鸵鸟和大角鹿形象的存在，可将这部分阴山岩画的年代上限推至距今约一万年左右，因为在我国北方，几乎所有的旧石器晚期遗址中都有鸵鸟化石，但在新石器遗址里却未曾见过。大角鹿的出现是在更新世早期，距今约一百多万年前，大约在距今一万多年前的更新世晚期就已绝灭。又有研究者对广西左江宁明花山部分岩画采用碳十四年代测定法，去鉴定它们的年代。他们采集覆盖于岩画上的钟乳石样品进行测定，测试结果认为被钟乳石覆盖下的画，其创作年代应在1680年前到4200年前的时间内。为求得岩画断代的相对准确性，我国学者当前大致采用下述方法进行探析：根据文献记载、岩画的保存情况、刻痕和石垢的颜色、岩画制作方法、岩画的风格、岩画的题材、岩画的叠压现象、比较学的方法、对画面中动物属种的鉴定以及自然科学中各种技术成果的运用，等等。今后对岩画年代的研究能否有突破性进展，世人拭目以待。

中国岩画应该成为全人类的文化遗产，值得世人去重视它、研究它。

Brief Accounts of Rock Paintings in China

by Gai Shanlin and Lou Yudong

I

The rock painting is generally called “Rock Art” by overseas scholars, also termed as “Petroglyphs” or “Rock Carving” or “Rock Printing”. The rock painting is also known as “Cliffside Painting” or “Cave Painting”, which are determined by geographical conditions. Judging from the rockpaintings discovered in quantity, they can be grouped as “Rock carvings” as they are carved or polished and engraved on the rockfaces with different implements to express images, and “Rock paintings” as they are painted on the rocksurfaces in mineral pigments to express images. No matter how they are done, they suggest being painted on rocksurface and hence “Rock painting.”

Quite a few scholars who specialize in rock paintings in the world hold that it is Peder Alfsson— a Norwegian living in 17th century who first found rockpaintings at Bohuslaan in the northern Europe and thus marks the beginning of the modern history of rock art studies. Actually, as early as in the 6th century, scores of rockpainting points are recorded in the famous Shui Jing Zhu (Commentary on the Waterways Classic) by Li Daoyuan, a geographer in the Northern Wei Dynasty. For instance, in entries such as the Heshui River, Qinshui river, Qishui River, Yangshui River, Huzi River, Mianshui River, Huaishui River, Xiangshui River, Lishui River, all refer directly or indirectly to rock paintings that are scattered in these areas, which include modern Xinjiang, Qinghai, Ningxia, Nei Monggol, Shanxi, Henan, Shanxi, Shandong, Anhui, Guangxi, Sichuan, Hubei and Hunan. From the book Shui Jing Zhu, People can learn that the rock paintings Li Daoyuan saw and heard of fall into two categories: the carved or polished and engraved with different implements and the painted in pigment. Who on earth first found rockpaintings remain a controversial problem in the history of the world rockpaintings, which calls for no details here. To our delight, numerous rockpaintins have been discovered so far in Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia . Up till now rockpaintings have turned up in over 150 countries and regions, for instance, the cave rock art in France and Spain, Bajkal rockpaintings, Sahara Desert rockpaintings in Africa, Queens-land rockpaintings in Australia , Texas rockpaintings in the United States. For reasons such as language barriers and lack of interflows, a sketch map showing the distribution of rockpaintings in the world in American Archaeology (1983) should ignore the

fact that China abounds in remains of rockpaintings, which is every bit a defect in the worldwide studies of rockpaintings. For the very reason, this book includes the choice figures from the rockpaintings discovered or newly found in China with a view to entering the big family of the world rockpaintings.

II

Chinese scholars' investigations, discoveries and studies of rockpaintings got started in 1915 when Huang Zhongqin, a professor with Lingnan University made an investigation and study of rock carvings at Xianzitan on Taixi River in Hua'an county, Fujian province, though he didn't fully realize that the rock carvings should be rockpaintings. The contemporary scholars take objection to the ascription of the nature of the Xianzitan rockcarvings, but they definitely hold that most of them can be roughly related to rockpaintings. It is interesting to note that Bergman, a Swede, made an investigation of the rockpaintings in Kuruk Mts in Xinjiang in 1929. In subsequent 20 years, investigations were made intermitently of rockpaintings. For example, Mr. Xu Songbai made an investigation of rockpaintings at Nanduhe in Guiping county, Guangxi in 1938; Chen Gongze made an investigation at Shagangbei in Hong Kong in 1938; Shi Zhongjian and Rui Yifu made a survey of the cliffside paintings on "the Bo People's hanging coffins". It is only after the founding of the People's Republic of China that rockpaintings have been discovered in quantity and studied in earnest. For instance, a large-scale investigation of rockpaintings was conducted along the Zuojiang River in Guangxi in 1950's; investigations of rockpaintings were made at Cangyuan in Yunnan and in Helanshan Mountains in Ningxia respectively in late 1960; a general investigation was made of the rockpaintings at Yinshan and Ulanhabu in Nei Monggol and at Heishan in Gansu and deepgoing investigations were made of the rockpaintings in Altaj Mts and Hutubi, Xinjiang, Badanjilin Desert, Nei Monggol, all such work has yielded gratifying and surprising results. Rockpaintings have so far turned up in China's provinces or regions such as Heilongjiang, Liaoning, Nei Monggol, Shanxi, Ningxia, Gansu, Qinghai, Xinjiang, Tibet, Yunnan, Guizhou, Sichuan, Guangxi, Guangdong, Fujian, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Taiwan and plus Hong Kong and Macao. The distribution of China's rockpaintings covers a vast territory reaching as far as the coastal areas in the east, the Kunlun Mountains Pass in the west, Greater Xing'an Ranges in the north and the Zuojiang River in the south, with points of rockpaintings totalling about one thousand and nearing about one million rockpaintings. The landforms with rockpaintings are very complicated. Roughly there are hillside rockpaintings, plains and desert rockpaintings, some of which are interlaced or bordered. Based on the

distribution, content and style, the Chinese rockpaintings can be classified into three major systems: the northern, the southwestern and the southeastern: The renown points of the northern rockpaintings include the Mudanjiang in Heilongjiang, Baichahe and Yinshan, the Great Xing'an Ranges, Zuozishan near Boahi Bay, Ulanhabu in Nei Mongol; Chaoyang in Liaoning, Helanshan in Ningxia; Heishan, Qilianshan and Mazongshan in Gansu; Qinghai Lake in Qinghai; Altaj, Hutubi, Hami, Toksun, Miquan, Kurukstag, Kunlun Mts, Hotan and Kesirk in Xinjiang. The well-known rockpainting points of the southwestern system include Cangyuan, Genma, Take and Malipo in Yuanan; Rurilangka, Renmdong and Qiaksang in Tibet; Guanlinghuanjiang, Kaiyanghuamaya in Guizhou; Gongxian, Zhaojue county and Baxian county in Sichuan; Zuojiang, Youjiang in Guangxi. The famous rockpainting points of the southeastern system include Jiangjunya in Lianyungang, Wolonggang in Jiangsu; Xianjudanzhu in Zhejiang; Xianzitan in Hua'an county, Shimenkeng, Caozishan and Nankeng in Nanjing county, and Tongling on Dongshan Islet, Fujian; Baojing Bay of Gaolan Islet in Zhuhai, Gaoxiongwanshan at Shiwan Bay, Guangdong; Donglongzhou, Dalang Bay, Changzhou and Jiaoxizhou in Hong Kong and Coloane Islet and Kaho Bay in Macao.

III

The contents the Chinese rockpaintings reflect are very rich and colourful. To sum up roughly, the ways of drawing, the Chinese rockpaintings consist of images, graphs, symbols, designs and a few scripts relating to rockpaintings. In terms of substantial images, most of them are wild animals and domestic animals; a few of them are plants; quite a few of them are human figures and human masks. In addition, there are buildings, the moon, the sun, stars, clouds and hand prints, footprints and small round caves expressed in graphs. Viewed from the angle of social economy, there are scenes showing productive and economic activities such as hunting, herding, farming, dancing, acrobatic showing, reproducing (including human sexual intercourse), fighting and being engaged in war. Finally, there are scenes directly reflecting worshipping state of mind and sacrificial offering.

The rockpainting is a special cultural phenomenon and modelling art. Having recorded in the form of image, the continuous chapters on the mankind struggle for survival, the experiences and feelings in life of the primitive tribes, clans, allied tribes and even people through all historical ages, and expressed the ways of labour, economic activities, social life practice, state of mind, way of thinking, belief activities in the history of humankind development and all sorts of relationships between man and nature, the rockpaintings combine to form a source of information on man's historical activities. Like other art forms, the rockpaintings reflect both the conditions of labourers' material life

and the spiritual profound mystery of the inner world of mankind.

Viewed from the known records in the world, the creation and usage of writing scripts to record man's activities remained but a very short duration in the long process of history of mankind. Of the several civilized ancient countries (including China) in the world, the recorded history of human civilization is at the best a span of five thousand years or so. Nevertheless, some of the rockpaintings carved or painted on rocksurfaces have survived the elements for ten thousand years and even several ten-thousands of years. Before the rise of archaeology, people can only see or read of bits of records relating to pre-historical activities of mankind, which represent some indirect and vague knowledge. Since the rise of archaeology, which is a component part of history, based on large quantities of material objects handed down by men through ages, the remote past has been understood and restored, enabling people to have a graphic knowledge of the pre-history. Numbers of rockpaintings have been discovered all over the world, in which many an archaeologist is interested. Through the studies of every aspect of rockpaintings they have found out the gap of human activities and acquainted themselves with voluminous new information they have ever known. The rockpaintings can be roughly summed up as follows:

I. The rockpaintings that provide important materials for the study of the history of the minor nationalities in China. Judging from the distribution of the discovered rockpaintings in China in the scattered regions where the minorities inhabit were seen activities of different clans, tribes and allied tribes. Therefore, we may take it for granted that most of the rockpaintings in China are works of the minorities. To study rockpaintings in China is actually making a study of her minorities and their forefathers in the respects of economic life, social life, mode of labour, belief activities, psychological state and their relations with nature.

II. The rockpaintings that open up new ways of researching into the history of hunting, herding and livestock husbandry in China. The historical and archaeological studies have been confined to the history of farming nations while the studies of the history of hunting, herding and livestock husbandry and minor nationalities are far less detailed owing to lack of materials. Thanks to the fact that rockpaintings have been discovered in quantity and many of them are related to or deal with hunting, herding and animal husbandry, rich and yet vivid first-hand materials have been furnished for the study of the history of the development of hunting and livestock husbandry. Once the conditions ripen, it is very likely to push the study of hunting and animal husbandry to a new stage in China.

III. The rockpaintings that serve as the most reliable materials for the study of the distribution of the animal colonies. Of the contents displayed in

rockpaintings, the subject matter of animals covers 80% among others so far known. The animals in rockpaintings are the real records of the animals that used to live and to run about in times when the painters were living. Animals always adapt themselves to a particular climate and natural circumstances. Based on the change of animal breeds and fresh information of the distribution of animal colonies, it is possible to know the date of making the rockpaintings, the local animal colonies, vegetation, climate, humidity and the change of ecological environment. A study of the environmental change makes it possible to understand how the pre-historical people adapt themselves to and make use of the natural conditions such as hills, grasslands, deserts and rivers and to know details of how they fight against nature.

IV. The rockpaintings make it possible to study the state of mind of the painters. An investigation on the spot helps find that all the rockpaintings are enveloped in mystery. Some are located on narrow-pathsciffs shooting towards the skies, countless figures on precipices looking as if rising slowly in void or reality to the blue skies. Whenever the sun shines directly at cliffsides at sunset, the scene seems even more dimly discernible. If the rockpaintings are painted in pigment, they look awful as the colours of the images are ever changeable with the affection of the weather, dryness and moisture as well as cold and heat on the cliffsides. Some rockpaintings lie on high-hanging rocks over surging river bends and opposite an open expanse of land, which combine to provide an ideal place to hold a sacrificial rite. Some rockpaintings are carved on exposed veins of rocks on vast grassland. From the geographical conditions in which the rockpaintings lie and the contents of rockpaintings, it can be inferred that the rockpaintings are results of sorcery worshipping activities and primitive religion out of the aim of recording events and strong sense of utility instead of aesthetic need. However, it is worth noting that rockpainting makers did not copy the reality mechanically but created figures and arranged images of their own wish for beauty. Therefore, the "long corridor" of rockpaintings with countless images and figures carved or painted on rocksurfaces displays the earliest aesthetics of mankind.

In the world no works of fine arts other than the rockpaintings rank first in quantity, spread the most widely in distribution, last the longest in duration and are done by the most numerous people. Zhu Di writes in his Origins of Art (p39): "The Art of rockpaintings are spread at every corner of the globe, wherever existed the human beings, there are many images carved or painted on the surfaces of usable rocks. In pre-historical ages, rock surfaces used to serve as open-air sacrificial altars for the primitive people. Not until the emergence of farming culture did the legends of rockpaintings disappear gradually with the setup of temples in villages and cities.", which is of course consistent with historical facts. On the other hand, the rockpaintings that

have constantly turned up within Chinese territory have added much brilliance to her treasure house of fine arts, bolstering it up with new ideas and imagination.

IV

Extremely difficult is it to determine the exact date of a rockpainting created and yet in which people are most interested. The difficulty lies in the fact that rockpaintings are distributed on cliffsides in the wilderness and the direct materials to date them almost amount to naught. For this very reason, to date rockpaintings still remains a problem to be solved in the world. Scholars and experts who are devoted to the studies of rockpaintings in many countries have spared no efforts to find some clues or traces that should be related to rockpaintings so as to obtain any information on rockpaintings. Take China for example. Some scholars have studied human-face pictures in rockpaintings in comparison with their counterparts on pottery vessels, bone implements and jade ware with a view to obtaining a relative date of the human-face pictures. But quite a few scholars take a cautious attitude towards such a comparison. Recently some scholars have turned to the approach of animal archaeology in analysing images of the extinct animals in rockpaintings with the view of researching into the date of the creation of rockpaintings. Take the study of part of the rockpaintings in Yinshan Mts. It is held that existence of the ostrich and deer with big antlers will push the upper-limit of the absolute date of the rockpaintings back to B.P. 10,000 years or so for all the late Paleolithic sites in North China have yielded fossils of ostrich but none of which has ever turned up in Neolithic sites. The deer with big antlers was believed to have come into being in early Pleistocene Epoch (B.P. 1,000,000 years). Some scholars have taken to carbon-14 dating to determine the date of making the rockpaintings in Ningminhuashan Mts in Zuojiang, Guangxi. They tested the samples of stalactites covering rockpaintings which were created 1680 years ago or done B.P. 4200 years. To achieve a relative accuracy of dating, the Chinese scholars have at present based themselves on literature and records, the preservation of rockpaintings, marks engraved and colours of rock dirt, methods of making rockpaintings, the style and subject matter of rockpaintings, superimposition, comparative approach, the determination of animal species in rockpaintings and application of various results of natural science. The world will wait and see whether or not any breakthrough is likely to be made in the study of dating rockpaintings in days to come.

The Chinese rockpaintings are expected to become a component part of the cultural heritage of the world. The study and catching importance.

Indexes to the Sketch Map Showing the Distribution of the Rockpaintings in China

Heilongjiang Province

1. Qunli village at Chaihe township(zhen) in Hailin county
2. Yagou township (xiang) in Achen county

Liaoning Province

3. Shuanmiao township (xiang) in Chaoyang city

Nei Monggol Autonomous Region

4. Jiaolaodao in Ergun Zuoqi
5. Aniangnihe in Ergun Youqi
6. Sumchabugatu at Wulijin Moron in Jarud Qi
7. Bayan Tal Sumbaiyinwendu village in Jarud Qi
8. Sumbayergeqishan in Jarud Qi
9. Ganggensum Jiangjunshan in Barin Youqi
10. Badaihe in Hexigten Qi
11. Dalai Nur in Hexigten Qi
12. Xianghuang Qi
13. Ulanchuru in Sunid Youqi
14. Huhechuru in Sunid Zuoqi
15. Bahaodi township (xiang) in Huoqi, Chahar Youyi
16. Tuilamamiao (Tuilamasum) in Darhan Muminglianheqi(Bailingmiao)
17. Shagen in Darhan Muminglianheqi
18. Nanjibandeng in Darhan Muminglianheqi
19. Chanxianghure in Darhan Muminglianheqi
20. Deligerhua in Darhan Muminglianheqi
21. Zuanzishishan at Damiao township (xiang) in Guyang county
22. Urad Huoqi
23. Hulestajigonghai, Lestai, Baiqigou, Dilihare in Urad Zhongqi
24. Shihenmudu in Urad zhongqi
25. Hurutai in Urad Zhongqi
26. Nuomenwenger in Urad Zhongqi
27. Dabagou in Urad Huoqi
28. Molehtugou in Denkou county
29. Zhaoshaogou in Wuhai city
30. Shuanheshan in Alxa Zuoqi
31. Jilantai township (zhen) in Alxa Zuoqi
32. Mengenbulagesum Mandelashan in Alxa Youqi
33. Menggenbulagesum Suhaisai in Alxa Youqi
34. Biqigetü in Alxa Youqi
35. Arigelentai in Alxa Youqi
36. Hairihan shan in Alxa Youqi
37. Xialem in Alxa Youqi
38. Yabulaishanbubu in Alxa Youqi
39. Longshoushan in Alxa Youqi
40. Gashunzhadegai in Alxa Youqi

Shanxi Province

41. Lingchuan county
42. Fangfengya in Jixian county

Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region Province

43. Heishimao, Xiaozao, Shulingou in Shizuishan city
44. Helankou, Xiaoxifokou, Suyukou and Huihuigou at Jinshan township (xiang) in Helan county
45. Guangwukou, Siyanjing and Kouzimegou at Guangwu township (xiang) in Qingtongxia city
46. Huanghaiwan at Yuding township(xiang) in Zhongning county
47. Damaidi and Kujinggou at Tongluo township(xiang) in Zhongwei county