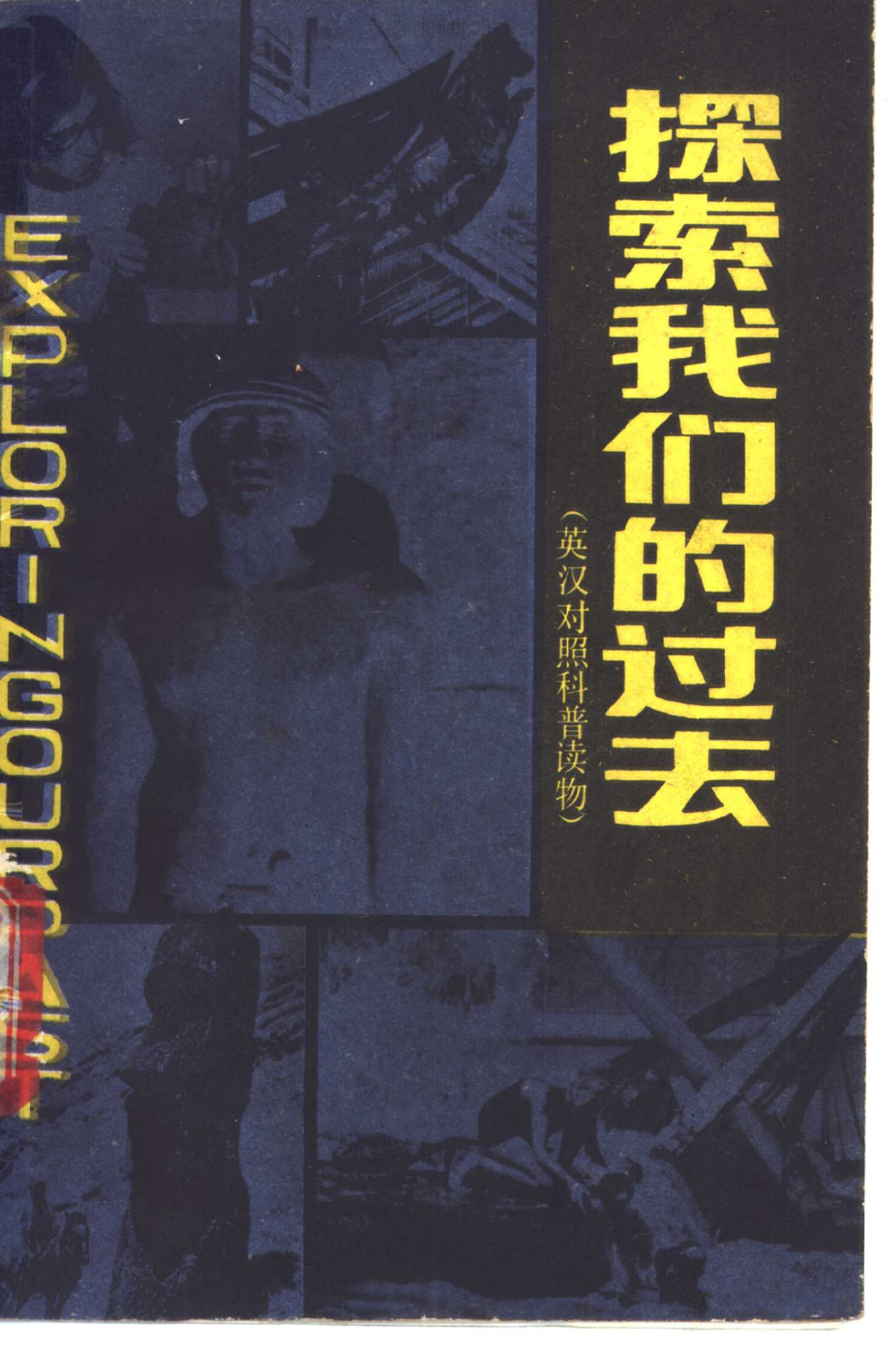


# 探索我们的过去

(英汉对照科普读物)

EXPLORING THE PAST



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〔美〕 琼·马辛托什 著

冯大安 张 明 译注

平 原 校

江苏科学技术出版社

Joan Macintosh  
EXPLORING OUR PAST

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本书根据麦克米伦出版有限公司1984年版翻译

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出版：江苏科学技术出版社

发行：江苏省新华书店

印刷：南京人民印刷厂

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开本787×1092毫米 1/32 印张5 字数108,000

1986年10月第1版 1986年10月第1次印刷

印数1—4,300册

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书号：17196·032 定价：0.88元

责任编辑 吴美玲 高楚明

## 前 言

本书为英汉对照的科普知识读物，根据美国琼·马辛托什(Joan Macintosh)所著的 EXPLORING OUR PAST (美国麦克米兰出版有限公司1973年版)一书译注。全书分六章，每章后附短语、注释和参考译文，书末附人名、地名对照表。可供大学低年级和高中学生以及具备一定英语基础的业余英语训练班学生和自学英语者阅读。

书中简要地介绍了前人和考古学家们在世界各地的考古发现，包括英国的斯冬亨治、古代的特洛伊城、埃及的金字塔、复活节岛上的巨型石雕像，直至海底和沙漠中的种种发现。这些发现千奇百怪，价值无量，为我们揭示人类社会的古老文明，解开了许多不解之谜，读起来趣味横生，引人入胜。

由于水平所限，译注中错误不当之处在所难免，请读者批评指正。

译注者

1985年10月

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## 1. THE BEGINNING

We do not know when the history of man began, but we are getting closer to that knowledge. Every year archaeologists are finding new examples of the work of ancient men. Bones and stones carefully carved by the hands of men have been found in caves. Men lived in those caves for thousands of years. We can observe the improvement in their work during those years. They were always trying to make things better and finer. We can observe the improvement of their tools, for example. The earliest ones are rough stones<sup>[1]</sup>. After thousands of years the tools became fine and beautiful. There were stone tools that were as sharp as knives.

Using new tools men could do more difficult work<sup>[2]</sup>. They began farming as well as hunting. Then men learned to use metal and to work with this. They rapidly improved their tools and everything else they made.

People who live by hunting are always moving from place to place, following wild animals<sup>[3]</sup>. People who live by farming stay in one place near their farms. Men began living in larger groups<sup>[4]</sup>.

They began building real houses. They began making pots to hold their food and drink. Their power of speech was growing too. Perhaps they had more things to talk about. They advanced further and began to put speech into writing<sup>[5]</sup>.

Reading the words written above doesn't take long. But making those changes took nearly a million years<sup>[6]</sup>! We talk of men advancing through the Stone Age, the Bronze Age and the Iron Age. Each age lasted many thousands of years. In some places groups of men are still living in the Stone Age! The first step was always the longest. When men had metal tools they advanced much more quickly.

One hundred and fifty years ago we knew little of man's long history. Most people in Europe believed that men had been placed on earth by God a few thousand years ago. The date of this important event was believed to be 4004 B.C. The idea that men had the same ancestors as monkeys was not easily accepted<sup>[7]</sup>. People did not want to believe it. It wasn't easy to make them accept the truth<sup>[8]</sup>.

How did the archaeologists know the great age of the stone tools they were finding? How could they make people believe that they were really ancient? Was there any proof that those rough stones hadn't been broken yesterday by small boys

playing<sup>[10]</sup>?

Men who studied rocks helped the archaeologists to prove that the things they found were indeed very old<sup>[10]</sup>. Underneath the ground there are different levels of rock, one below the other. As you dig deeper you find that every age has left a different level of rock. Plants and bones have turned to stone at the bottom levels.

If you know the age of one level you know the age of everything found in that level. The men who study rocks, called geologists, know the age of every level of rock for millions of years. Archaeologists found the bones or tools of men at a rock level which was, for example, fifty thousand years old. So they knew that their finds were at least that old.

Now we have scientific tests to discover the age of ancient objects. But proving their age is easier if the archaeologist knows where they come from<sup>[11]</sup>. At first archaeologists weren't very careful in collecting things. When they found a treasure they dug it out of the earth and took it home to study. Now diggers don't move anything until they have studied the earth where it lies<sup>[12]</sup>. Every tiny piece of stone may be important. When they see the tip of a stone or bone they use a small brush for removing the earth around it. They want to see every-



thing exactly as it first lay there thousands of years ago.

Many discoveries are not very exciting to people who are not archaeologists. We cannot always recognise the interest of things they admire. For example, many stone tools which are fifty thousand years old look like ordinary stones. Broken pots which are thousands of years old look like pots broken yesterday. We have to learn how to recognise each tiny example of men's work.

Other things left by our ancestors instantly excite us. We know at once that they are especially important. For example, anyone can recognise the interest of one of the oldest human burials. It was discovered by three French priests in 1908 in a cave in the south of France.

It was a tiny cave, only twenty feet long. The priests found that groups of men had lived there for thousands of years. For three years they dug deeper and deeper. Tools and bones of many ages were collected. At last they found signs of a hole which had been dug 35,000 years earlier. Someone long ago had been digging here. Opening the hole they discovered the bones of a man. He had been about fifty years old, short, with a very large head. His eyes were deep and wide. The bone of his forehead was very large. His appearance was cer-

tainly not like ours. He was an early type of man but he must have been a great leader in his day. He was buried with great honour. Beside his body were the bones of animals hunted by his people. We are not sure why they were buried with him. Perhaps this was food for his life after death. There were also arrow-heads and spears beside the body. Were these for helping the hunter in his future life? Then his people were already thinking and dreaming humans<sup>[13]</sup>. They thought of the future as well as the present. They knew that the body dies, but they believed in a life after death.

Because men believed in life after death many precious things were buried with them in the earth. Men expected to need the same things after death that they needed during their life. So they were buried with the things they valued.

The graves of ancient men contain the things they treasured.

Finding buried treasure is one interest in archaeology, but archaeologists are more interested in finding buried cities. Our ancestors seem to live again when we find the actual houses and the actual streets they knew.

At first men only built rough wood huts. But, real houses built eight thousand years ago have been found in Jericho. The walls are still as strong

as when they were built<sup>114</sup>. The actual marks of the builders' fingers can still be seen.

Men did not only build houses to keep themselves warm and dry. They wanted to build temples for their gods. Often we do not know what gods they believed in. But we can always recognise a holy place when we see it. There are many grand examples. One of the grandest is Stonehenge in the south of England.

Stonehenge is a circle of huge stones standing in open, empty country. About four thousand years ago this country was farmed by people using stone tools. They were still living in the Stone Age. These first builders of Stonehenge used their tools to dig a great bank. They made this bank in a huge circle. Some of their people were buried inside the circle. They raised a huge stone called the Hele Stone and dug holes in which offerings may have been put. The place was already holy.

A few centuries later new people came. These men used metal tools to build great things. They knew more about building than the Stone Age men and they had grand ideas for their temple. Some of these ideas may have come with traders from Europe. Civilisation there was far advanced.

This second Stonehenge had a great road leading to the centre of the temple. Inside the old bank

they raised two circles of tall stones. Across the tops of these big stones they put other stones. Nothing like this had ever been seen in England.

Huge stones called blue-stones were used for the new Stonehenge. But they did not come from any place near the temple. They actually came from Wales, hundreds of miles across the mountains.

We can admire the grand ideas of these people who were determined to get those stones for their temple. No one knows why they chose them. Perhaps they had some holy quality which the builders demanded. But carrying them across the mountains seemed impossible.

In 1954 a British archaeologist thought he knew how they had done it. In order to prove his ideas he got the boys of an English school to test them. He got them to make part of the same journey that the builders of ancient Stonehenge had made. Dragging huge stones behind them the boys proved that his ideas were possible.

First the stones were dragged from their place in the Welsh mountains to the nearest river. Then they were floated in deep boats to the sea. At the sea the stones were carried on flat boats along the coast to a river nearer Stonehenge. Many stones must have been lost in the sea or the rivers.

At last the stones were landed on a river bank

near Stonehenge. Each of them had a weight of six or seven tons. Now hundreds of men had to drag them over land to the temple. It could be done. Thirty schoolboys managed to drag a smaller stone.

This second Stonehenge was grander than the first. But new people came who thought it was too small. The third Stonehenge which they built is the one we admire today. Another great ring of stones was raised. These stones were very much heavier than the blue-stones. They had to be dragged twenty-four miles across rough hills. Archaeologists think that a thousand men would need seven weeks to drag each stone by means of ropes and rolling logs. The whole great work must have taken ten years.

Having brought the huge stones to Stonehenge the builders then pushed them up on their ends<sup>[15]</sup>. Nobody can be sure how they did this work. Possibly a great hole was dug and one end of the stone was slipped into this. Slowly the other end was raised, little by little. Hundreds of men were pulling on ropes and pushing logs under the rising stone. When the stone was straight it was fixed firmly in position. But still the work wasn't finished! Now more huge stones had to be lifted on top of these! Nobody knows exactly how this was done without tools like ours. Perhaps logs were pushed

under the stones, one by one, until they reached the right height. It is wonderful that anybody could do it. But the stone circle was complete.

The men who built Stonehenge must have been a powerful and wealthy people. Their leaders could make thousands of men work at the holy place. They had big ideas and did great things. The stones were cut so perfectly that we still admire them. The position of the stones has proved that these people knew a lot about the movement of the sun and stars. On mid-summer night hundreds of people still come to Stonehenge to watch the sun rise. After thousands of years they still see the first sunlight shine straight down the great line of ancient stones and strike the centre of Stonehenge. The old priests knew what they were doing. Yet these people could not write and had no great cities.

We are learning more about how men and their ideas travelled nearly four thousand years ago. We know that the kings of the Stonehenge people were buried with precious things from foreign countries. So we know that there were traders from far places travelling here. These foreigners came from the great cities of the Mediterranean where civilisation was advancing faster.

On one of the great stones of Stonehenge is cut

a faint picture of a knife. It is not like any knife used by the Stonehenge people. It looks like a knife familiar to people in one of the greatest cities of that age—Mycenae in Greece.

Could a man from Mycenae have visited Stonehenge? It was a long way from the great, gay cities of Greece to the wild and lonely coasts of England. But in a Mycenaean grave a piece of jewellery from near Stonehenge has been found. We know there was trade from one end of Europe to the other.

## Phrases and Expressions

get close to...

接近……

as well as 也, 又

put...into..

把……变为……

talk of 谈及

at least 至少

have to + 动词

不得不……

in the south of...

位于……的南边(部)

at last 终于

believe in...

相信……, 信仰……

be interested in...

对……感兴趣

be determined to + 动词

决心……

in order to + 动词

为了……

by means of...

采用……方法(办法),

使用……手段

far from... 远离……

## Notes

[1] The earliest ones are rough stones.

ones 是代词 one 的复数形式, 用来代替上句中的“tools”, 以避免重复。

[2] Using new tools men could do more difficult work.

using new tools 是一个现在分词短语, 作句子的状语, 表示方式方法, 修饰谓语动词 could do。

[3] People who live by hunting are always moving from place to place, following wild animals.

who live by hunting 为主语 people 的定语从句, 意即“以打猎为生的人们”; following wild animals 是一个现在分词短语作状语, 说明谓语 are moving, 表示动作的目的。

[4] Men began living in larger groups.

living in larger groups 意即“以较大的集群居住”, 这儿的 in 用来表示方式方法。

[5] They advanced further and began to put speech into writing.

“put...into...”是“把……转变为……”的意思。

[6] But making those changes took nearly a million years!

making those changes 为动名词短语, 在句中用作主语。

[7] The idea that men had the same ancestors as monkeys was not easily accepted.



that引导的从句是主语idea的同位语从句，用来进一步解释主语的内容，意即“那种认为人跟猴子属于同一祖先的见解”；在that从句中，as是连词，它所引导的句子的谓语等跟men的一样，故被省略，原句应为that men...as monkeys had...; was...accepted为句子的谓语(被动态)。

[8] It wasn't easy to make them accept the truth.

句中的动词不定式短语to make them accept the truth为句子的真实主语，it为句子的形式主语，在主语较长的情况下，常用这一句型。

[9] Was there any proof that those rough stones hadn't been broken yesterday by small boys playing?

that引导的从句是主语proof的同位语从句，从句中的动作发生在谓语动作之前，故动词用(过去)完成式；by small boys playing表示被动态谓语动词的行为主体。

[10] Men who studied rocks helped the archaeologists to prove that the things they found were indeed very old.

本句主句是Men helped the archaeologists to prove that...，其中the archaeologists (to) prove that...为复合宾语；本句是一个包含三个从句的复合句。who studied rocks是主语men的定语从句；that引导的从句是主句中动词不定式prove的宾语从句；在that从句中，they found是主语things的定语从句，但先行词things后面的关系代词“which(或that)”被省略了。

[11] But proving their age is easier if the