欧洲的岩洞艺术

The earliest discovered traces of art are beads and carvings, and then paintings, from sites dating back to the Upper Paleolithic period. We might expect that early artistic efforts would be crude, but the cave paintings of Spain and southern France show a marked degree of skill. So do the naturalistic paintings on slabs of stone excavated in southern Africa. Some of those slabs appear to have been painted as much as 28,000 years ago, which suggests that painting in Africa is as old as painting in Europe. But painting may be even older than that. The early Australians may have painted on the walls of rock shelters and cliff faces at least 30,000 years ago, and maybe as much as 60,000 years ago.

迄今为止，发现的最早的并且有迹可寻的工艺品是珠链、雕刻还有是绘画，人类在旧石器时代晚期的遗址上发现了它们。虽然，我们可能会认为早期的艺术成就都是不成熟的，但西班牙与法国南部的岩洞画显示出了高超的技艺，在非洲南部发掘出的自然石板画也是如此。其中的一些石板画看上去像是在 28000 年前画出的，这表明非洲绘画与欧洲绘画一样时间久远，但可能更早些。至少 30000 年前，也可能追溯至 60000 年前，那会儿早期澳洲人就已经在岩石遮蔽的墙上和悬崖断面上作画了。

The researchers Peter Ucko and Andree Rosenfeld identified three principallocations of paintings in the caves of western Europe: (1) in obviously inhabited rock shelters and cave entrances; (2) in galleries immediately off the inhabited areas of caves; and (3) in the inner reaches of caves, whose difficulty of access has been interpreted by some as a sign that magical-religious activities were performed there.

研究人员彼特·阿寇 和安德烈·罗森菲尔德指出西欧洞画的三个主要地点：（1）在明显有遮蔽可供人类居住的岩石和洞穴入口处，（2）在居住的洞穴一出门的走廊上，（3）在洞穴所能及的最深处，有人认为之所以在最深处作画是因为当时的人们曾在这里进行神秘的宗教活动。

The subjects of the paintings are mostly animals. The paintings rest on bare walls, with no backdrops or environmental trappings. Perhaps, like many contemporary peoples, Upper Paleolithic men and women believed that the drawing of a human image could cause death of injury, and if that were indeed their belief, it might explain why human figures are rarely depicted in cave art. Another explanation for the focus on animals might be that these people sought to improve their luck at hunting.█ This theory is suggested by evidence of chips in the painted figures, perhaps made by spears thrown at the drawings. █ But if improving their hunting luck was the chief motivation for the paintings, it is difficult to explain why only a few show signs of having been speared. █ Perhaps the paintings were inspired by the need to increase the supply of animals. Cave art seems to have reached a peak toward the end of the Upper Paleolithic period, when the herds of game were decreasing.█

这些绘画的主题大部分都是动物。这些画画在裸露的岩石上，没有任何背景和环境装饰。或许，同许多当代人一样，后石器时代的人们也相信画人物像会引起伤害或死亡。如果这确实是他们的信念，那就解释了为什么在洞穴绘画中很少描绘人物。对于画中以动物题材为主的另一个解释是，人们在探索如何提高打猎的命中率。墙上所画的动物身上有一些伤口，很可能是原始人向它们扔矛时留下的，这个证据也证实了以上判断。但如果提高打猎命中率真的是岩壁画的主要动机，那么就很难解释为什么只有少数画上有被矛戳过的痕迹。或许是出于增加猎物的需求而画的画。在后期旧石器时代猎群数量减少时，岩洞画艺术似乎达到了顶峰。

The particular symbolic significance of the cave paintings in southwestern France is more explicitly revealed, perhaps, by the results of a study conducted by researchers Patricia Rice and Ann Paterson. The data they present suggest that the animals portrayed in the cave paintings were mostly the ones that the painters preferred for meat and for materials such as hides. For example, wild cattle (bovines) and horses are portrayed more often than we would expect by chance, probably because they were larger and heavier (meatier) than other animals in the environment. In addition, the paintings mostly portray animals that the painters may have feared the most because of their size, speed, natural weapons such as tusks and horns, and the unpredictability of their behavior. That is, mammoths, bovines, and horses are portrayed more often than deer and reindeer. Thus, the paintings are consistent with the idea that the art is related to the importance of hunting in the economy of Upper Paleolithic people. Consistent with this idea, according to the investigators, is the fact that the art of the cultural period that followed the Upper Paleolithic also seems to reflect how people got their food. But in that period, when getting food no longer depended on hunting large game animals (because they were becoming extinct), the art ceased to focus on portrayals of animals.

也许研究者帕特丽夏·赖斯和安·派特森所做研究的结果更清楚地揭示了法国东南部的岩洞画的特殊象征性意义。研究显示，绘画者喜欢食用的动物或喜欢用作兽皮的动物是岩洞画中经常被描绘的动物。比如，野牛（牛）和马的出现比我们预料的更为频繁，可能因为它们比其它动物更大更沉（肉更多）。另外，画作主要描绘了绘画者害怕的动物，它们的体形、速度、与生俱来的武器如长牙和角，以及它们行为的不可预知性都令绘画者感到恐惧。于是，和鹿、驯鹿相比，猛犸、牛和马会更经常画在墙上。因此，在后旧石器时代人的经济中，岩洞艺术与打猎的重要性有关，这些画作也与这个观点相符合。看起来接下来的后旧石器时代文化期的艺术也反映了人们如何得到食物，根据调查者的研究，这一事实也与前文的想法一致。但在那个时期，当不再依附于猎取大型猎物获得食物时（因为它们开始变得稀少），岩洞艺术便不再以描绘动物为主了。

Upper Paleolithic art was not confined to cave paintings. Many shafts of spears and similar objects were decorated with figures of animals. The anthropologist Alexander Marshack has an interesting interpretation of some of the engravings made during the Upper Paleolithic. He believes that as far back as 30.000 B.C., hunters may have used a system of notation, engraved on bone and stone, to mark phases of the Moon. If this is true, it would mean that Upper Paleolithic people were capable of complex thought and were consciously aware of their environment. In addition to other artworks, figurines representing the human female in exaggerated form have also been found at Upper Paleolithic sites. It has been suggested that these figurines were an ideal type or an expression of a desire for fertility.

后期旧石器时代的艺术不仅仅局限于洞穴绘画。许多矛杆和与其类似的东西上都画了动物作为装饰。人类学家亚历山大·马斯哈克对后旧石器时代时期的一些雕刻品有一个有趣的解释。他认为在公元前 30000 年，猎人们可能使用了一种刻在骨头或石头上的标志法来标记不同的月相。如果此论述是真的，这就意味着后旧石器时代的人们已经有了复杂的思维并对他们的环境有了一个理性的认识。人们还在后期旧石器时代的遗址上发现了以夸张的形式描绘妇女的小雕塑。这也暗示了这些小雕塑是一种理想型，或者说表达了当时的人类期望多生育的愿望。