



# The Analysis of Impacts for Ancient Rock Painting on Modern Pictures: the Case of Mongolia

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## Abstract

*The main goal of our study to investigate the manner in which rock paintings continue to serve as the foundation for visual art, as they were an essential component of intellectual culture for ancient humans.*

*The symbols and imagery of the ancient petroglyphs found through Mongolian territory basically convey the ancient people's understanding of the world. Their creative perceptions were evidence and artistic in their imagination. By analyzing and studying the characteristic differences of shapes, types of symbols and carvings expressed in rock paintings, rock paintings have become the basis of modern paintings.*

**Keywords:** Rock Paintings, Culture, Ancient Humans, Modern Paintings.

## 1. Introduction

Bayartur B (2001), said that Man has developed two methods of representation: real and abstract, through the process of using the language of art to express his thoughts and ideas. Throughout thousands of years, the techniques for visual expression that emerged from these disparate styles coexisted and spread to all other genres of art. Because material and spirit are intertwined, real images and abstract expressions share a common origin [Bayartur, B., 2001, x-18].

Chultem and et all (1988) explored it is amazing that incredible how realistically he could describe things from everyday life, and how he could read and comprehend abstract representations of complex mental concepts like triangles, squares, numbers, and squares, which go beyond his ability to describe in detail. Through his geometric motifs, which have been carried over to our day, the key to understanding ancient art has been transmitted.

Enkhdavaa D (2018), designed the so-dubbed "rock painting" is a stunning monument that depicts the form and silhouette of an enormous animal species. These not only mark the beginning of the Iron Age and the emergence of patterns in animal models, but also the unexplained accomplishments of the oldest people, such as the drive to create patterns, sketch patterns on rocks, and

decipher mysterious recipes for magical arts [1].

Boldbaatar, Ch. (2000, p-33), "When classifying the structure of petroglyphs as pictorial, geometrical, or lineal, the term "pictorial composition" is the external aspect of "appearance and chance" of things [2]. But the lines with "conditional lines" become the side of the inner world in spiritual consciousness. "Graziosi classified the visual representation of icon models as "natural" or "physical" representations on the one hand, and "abstract-geometric" representations on the other hand, highlighting the fact that stone age shadow paintings have developed separately in terms of modeling from a long time ago.

Bayarsaikhan, J. said on his public website that A.K. Akishev, E.E. Kuzmina, D.S. Archaeologists such as Raevsky have repeatedly attempted to treat signs as systematic expressions and texts. In other words, ancient images, like texts, convey certain information, but they are created in visual rather than linguistic form [3].

As the French scholar A Leroy Guerana explains, the abbreviated symbols found in Paleolithic art are not a common occurrence, and symbols of visionary ideas appeared along with them. The visionary signs with the images of beasts on the cave walls are

a reflection of the abstract thinking of the ancient people, and according to scientists, the myth that occurred at the time of the union of the umbilical cords was the basis of such images [3].

Paintings, lines, spots, dots, and patterns left on ancient rocks and monuments are the works of visual art or intellectual cultural values of the ancient people, and are not only modern visual arts, but also all types of arts such as handicrafts and decorative arts. affected the development.

## 2. The Literature Review

Although the earliest literary mentions of rock art are from China, no publication about Chinese rock art had appeared in English until 1984. The philosopher Han Fei (280–233 BCE) provided the first known reference to rock art, while the geographer Li Daoyuan (386–434 CE) described numerous rock art sites in China and even mentioned occurrences in India. In South America, Captain De Carvalho found rock art in 1598 in what is now Brazil and published his recordings in 1618. In Europe, the first known recordings, made by Peder Alfssön in Denmark in 1627, were not published until 1784. More determined scholarly efforts commenced during the 19th century, focusing initially on Russia, Scandinavia and northern Africa, later on, southern Africa, parts of South America, Australia and eventually India [4].

Scientist Tsultem N. Said that it can be seen from the works of artists of the Paleolithic period that people of that time were also paying attention to the complex issues of life and death, while thinking about the organization of the world.

For example: There are many finger print patterns in the North Blue Cave paintings. Also, the difference between the upper and lower worlds is represented by animals. The meaning of connecting the two worlds by flying to the other world is expressed by the image of the deer in the deer statue of the period.

Researcher Batchuluun S. (2011) in his book *Tracing the Paths of Nomadic Art and Culture*, in addition to the depictions that directly reflect reality, when expressing abstract thinking such as spiritual development and worship, he believed that the source of the depiction of abstract thought represented by symbols with mystical formulas was placed, and on the other hand, this in turn is real [5,6].

It is believed that the conditions for developing together in an inseparable union with the state and the abstract nature have begun to form. He also said that the spiritual movement expressed its abstract thinking with symbols such as dots, lines, numbers, triangles, squares, and circles, which have been preserved in folk art until our time.

Researcher Ekhdavaa D, in his book "Tumen Patterns", Enkhdavaa carefully studied the traces of ancient sheep, and for thousands of years, he described the "shadow patterns" of people, animals, and animals in the rocks and created unique, mysterious and precious things[7].

It has been proven by science that Mongolia's Great Gobi, steppes, and taiga regions are the cradle of the world's Balearic Rock Shadow Patterns. According to this, it is the fact that the foundation of modern patterns has been laid.

## 3. The Study

In the oldest paintings, the wall painting of the Northern Blue Cave in the Dunes of Khovd Province, the Bugat Sum inscription rock paintings of Bulgan Province, the picture of the mouth of Great Sky, and the rock paintings of Mandal Mountain in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, we can observe the meaning expressed by images, symbols, dots, and spots.

**Figure 1. A picture of the mouth of the Great Sky**



When depicting animals on the wall of the North Blue Cave, the general shape, shape, and main features of their bodies (horns, beaks, tails, beaks, male sex) were highlighted, and finger-sized spots were repeatedly drawn to show the herds of some animals. It is an indication of abstract and brief summary (Bayartur, B., 2001,

p-21). Also, scientist Tseveendorj D. said that the picture of the mouth of the Great Sky, which contains the above idea, represents herds of animals with many dots [5].

It should not be considered that in the Neolithic period, the method

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of realistic drawing declined and the method of sketching became dominant.

However, during the Neolithic period, the scope of people's understanding of the real world expanded, new farming and new rituals took an important place in their worldview and spiritual life, which was reflected in the development of some branches of art and then passed on to the Bronze Age [7].

Such depictions of herds of animals with spots are also found in cave paintings of China, America, and Western Europe. An example of this can be seen in the rock paintings of Mount Mandala and the paintings of the Sistine Chapel.

These pictures show that in ancient rock paintings, in addition to being represented by finger-printed spots, various lines and shapes are used to abstract reality. Mandal mountain rock paintings represent the urut with triangular shapes and the dots inside represent the people living in the hutment.

Scientist Batchuluun S. believed that in his story, the depictions expressed in the rock paintings of Mandal Mountain are a combination of real and abstract depictions of mobile tribes, tribal lifestyles, customs, and hunting. There is agreement with this, and the paintings found in the depths of the ancient Sistine Chapel are similar in terms of expression.

**Figure 2. Mandal mountain rock picture**



It can be seen from the above rock paintings that the works of the artists of the Stone Age only expressed their way of life by drawing with lines and expressing their ideas with images. It is believed that it is not limited to depicting the very subtle ideas of the mind, but also has a deep influence on the formation of modern paintings by expressing the hidden meaning of intuition.

Lake Winnemucca rock art, the oldest in North America, is unique in its depiction of various images. The petroglyphs at this lakeside petroglyph site are deep grooves and dots carved into intricate designs on several large limestone rocks that have been called unique for decades.

**Figure 3. A picture of the Sistine Chapel**



These petroglyphs include human, animal, and handprint images, absent, and the petroglyph design includes several vertical, chain-shaped marks, and several small holes deeply cut by a type of hard

rock scraper. Also, various shapes and lines are used to depict trees, flowers, and leaves. A large engraving (above) with a repeating pattern of crystals reminds me of fish scales, possibly from the

animals of the adjacent lake. As seen from the rock paintings of this lake, it is a work of visual art of Paleolithic people, and it is another fact that is the beginning of modern visual art.

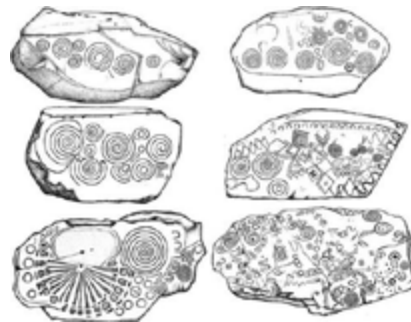
Also, there are a lot of coils and twists in ancient rock paintings, and it is one of the most widespread ancient symbols in our world, which have been depicted in the archeological monuments of Eurasia for a very long time.

**Figure 4 Rock painting of Lake Winnemucca**



According to the research of ancient civilizations around the world, there are very few cultures that do not have scroll images. Figure 5 shows.

**Figure 5. "Tumen Nasan**



In nature, spiral shapes are often found in the sky, water, wind, trees, spiral plants, animal horns, snails, shells, and snakes. Symbols seem to have had different conceptions in the ancient cultures of the world. The common understanding is the symbol of the sun and the moon, eternal movement, life, death, rebirth, or the symbol of life, and the endless continuation of the household, respectively [8].

household.

#### 4. Discussion

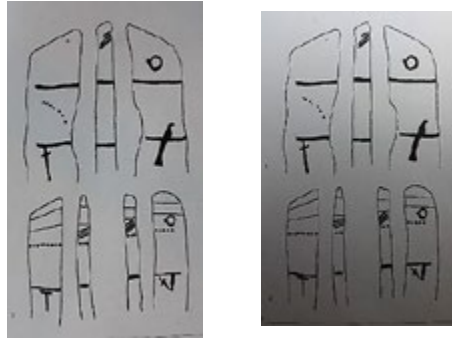
When looking at the depictions of all the rock paintings from the Stone Age to the Bronze Age, it was observed that the representation of real objects by dots, spots, lines, figures, animals represented by body parts such as horns, tails, manes, etc. evolved and updated.

The same image is depicted on bronze age Bugat statues and objects of human culture. Researchers consider such a scroll image to be an ancient type of folk pattern. Mongolians respect "Tumen Nasan Hei" as a symbol of longevity, existence, and endless continuity.

In the process of development, it became more and more sophisticated and began to depict triangular, square and circular symbols. As these methods of depiction have matured and developed since the time of the rock paintings of the Bronze Age, they have developed a wealth of meaning and content in terms of visual expression. An example of this is the picture of the BUGAT statue (picture 5). The Bugat statues depict the sun, moon, weapons and other artifacts in various forms. These methods of representation enter into a content that is irrevocably devotional, deeply meaningful, symbolic, and interpretive.



**Figure 6. Asian-European Bugat statue**



Researcher S. Batchuluun's concept in his book "Tracing the Art and Culture Path of Nomads" believed that the concept of "sky" among the ancient Mongols made nature a heavenly thing from the time of the unification of the umbilical cord and made the inner world of man, such as endless dreams, talents, and life activities, heavenly. Shaman worship is an expression of Mongolian worldview.

In this sense, the representation of the Bugat statue with the sun and moon drawn on the top may be artificially drawn as a symbol of the sky, but it represents the worship of the people of that time. The custom of marking and marking the Bugat statue is especially characteristic of the forest nomads, and the way of worshiping it has been connected with shamanism.

Thus, the fact that the Bugat statue is located in the mountainous region of Mongolia testifies that the people who left the mountain monuments were mainly forest taiga people. A.P. Okladnikov, considering that the depiction of deer in the art of the nomads of the region was widespread in the early period, considered that the custom of choosing deer was not only among the forest dwellers but also among the nomads [9].

According to this, the depiction of Bugat statue, the sun, the moon, belts, and shields in the depictions of deer statues created by the abstract thought of ancient people are reminiscent of patterns, which are the valuable intellectual cultural heritage of the people

created by the life and environment for many generations, and they have left it in their depictions. Considering the symbols of shape and form cherished by Mongolians, shamanism is expressed by three shapes: the round shape is a symbol of the sky, the triangular shape is a symbol of heroism, and the square shape is a symbol of honesty.

Dr. Researcher H. Perle, in his single-theme work "Researching the origin of the Mongolian people through seals", believed that the image of the shaman in the image of the seal of Munkh Khan and Gulagu / hulagu / king was abstractly modeled and represented as a symbolic image, which was engraved on the seal of the kings. According to this, the symbols of the ancient rock paintings have been handed down in folk crafts and patterns, containing symbolic meaning.

Also, the people of the Paleolithic period began to depict the image of the shaman in a realistic way, and later began to draw abstractly, recognizing the inner nature. It is a fact that in the process of spiritual development, iconography was connected to people's worship and remained in the form of symbols and animal seals.

It is a fact that in the life and animal husbandry of the nomadic region of Central Asia, especially Mongolians, the symbols of ancient rock paintings have been left in animal seals. When looking at the animal seal symbols, it is similar to comparing the symbols and patterns depicted on ancient rock paintings and Bugat statues.

**Figure 7. A photo of a realistic shaman**



**Figure 8. Modern patterns**



**Figure 9. Types of the main seal of modern animals**



Researcher G. Luvsandandar, in his article on the topic of animal seal in Mongolian heritage and its appropriate support system, highlighted in his research that the internal content, external form and modeling of animal seal are works of art.

It seems that the tribal seal did not exist when there was no human umbilical cord /travelling/, along with the emergence of maternal rights, and in connection with the emergence of labor within the clan /province, it seems that the tribal symbol appeared for the first time in the exchange of products. It was used as an identification mark on the work tools and utensils used by each or the family of the tribe (Perle, H. 1976, p-8).

According to this, the drawings depicted on the rock paintings can be distinguished by putting identification marks on the paintings that represent the livestock and animal life of their tribe. In this sense, it can be considered that the pictorial image of the rock art is connected to visions, symbols, and religion in the process of development and is the basis for the development of all types of art through the Bronze Age.

It is noted that, in addition to drawing animals truthfully during the

period, the mythical big deer with an elongated body and a snout like a bird's beak can be seen in the outline form of embroidery, which fills the body and shadow with geometric triangles and squares [10].

Another example of the abstract imagination of people of the period is the image of a horse-drawn carriage. It is the beginning of the method of abstracting the volume of space on a plane by combining the front, side, and top in one area in order to artistically show the things occupying the space in reality.

In this way, it is believed that drawing by expressing an abstract idea of space is the source of the method of drawing from multiple points of view in Mongolian painting in the later period.

Looking at the rock paintings of Mojoo at the beginning of Tsagaan River in Sagil Sum, Uvs Province, it can be said that argali, ibex, camel, and cow are depicted as symbols of space. It can be concluded from the fact that the animals in front of them are depicted in a large size and the animals in the background are depicted in a small size. Scientists believe that this painting belongs to different periods of time.

**Figure 10. Rock painting of Mojoo**



Mongolia is very rich in rock paintings created from the thought of ancient people, and it can be considered that the meaning of traditional painting was greatly influenced by the abstract thinking of vision and symbols. According to ancient researchers, these images were drawn during the history of Mongols, for example: from the Neolithic period, through the Bronze Age, and until the end of the 10th century AD [5].

**Figure 11. Period horseman representation of a chariot**



In modern decorative art, images of horse-drawn carriages from the Bronze Age have been widely used. One of the unique features of the Bronze Age decoration art of the steppe nomads, especially bronze casting, is the large-scale embossing of animal motifs, or simply embossing them.

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The main motifs of animal products are leopards, deer, dung beetles, herbivores, as well as horses and camels. Based on the design, bronze products with animal designs can be classified as Karasuk-Tagarian, Scythian-Siberian, and Hun-Sunni. considered possible (Enkhdavaa, D. 2023, p-111).

The imaginative depiction of ancient people is deeply embedded in the works of paintings, handicrafts, and art in all fields of modern Mongolia and the world.

#### 4. Conclusion

In summary, the evolution of petroglyphs from an abstract representation of animals to symbols suggests a development in the way ancient cultures communicated through rock carvings. This progression may reflect changes in cultural practices, belief systems, or technological advancements over time. Researchers analyze these changes to gain insights into the evolution of human expression and communication in ancient societies.

- **Petroglyphs:** These are ancient rock carvings or engravings made by people on natural rock surfaces. Petroglyphs are found worldwide and are often associated with prehistoric or indigenous cultures. They serve as a form of communication, storytelling, or recording events.

- **Evolution from Abstract Representation of Animals to Symbols:** According to the research documents, there seems to be an evolution in the way petroglyphs represent animals. In the early stages, the carvings might have been more abstract, meaning they portrayed animals in a simplified or stylized manner rather than trying to depict them realistically.

- **Transition to Symbols:** Over time, there appears to be a shift from representing animals in an abstract way to using symbols. Symbols are abstract representations that carry meaning. These could be geometric shapes, lines, or other visual elements that convey specific ideas or concepts. This transition suggests a development in the symbolic language used in petroglyphs.

- **Symbolic Communication:** The shift to symbols in petroglyphs implies a more sophisticated or nuanced form of communication. Symbols can convey complex meanings and may be used to represent not just animals but also ideas, events, or cultural concepts.

The assertion that ancient nomads shared the same ethnic origin suggests a common ancestry or heritage among these people. This shared ethnic background likely contributed to a sense of cultural unity, where they shared similar traditions, customs, and ways of life.

The statement suggests that artistic thinking among these ancient nomads was not merely a superficial expression but emerged as a result of inner development. This could imply a deep connection

between their artistic endeavors and their intellectual and spiritual growth over time.

The mention of clairvoyance and worship suggests that these nomadic societies may have had spiritual practices involving a heightened awareness or perception, possibly influencing their artistic expressions. Worship, in this context, could involve reverence for nature, deities, or other spiritual entities.

The assertion that works of painting during this period marked the beginning of abstracting space and volume on a plane suggests a significant artistic innovation. This could refer to the development of techniques or styles that moved beyond mere representation of reality and began to explore abstract, symbolic, or non-literal depictions of space and form.

In summary, the statement paints a picture of ancient nomadic societies with a shared ethnic origin, emphasizing the interplay between their worldview, culture, and religion. The development of artistic thinking, influenced by clairvoyance and worship, is seen as a crucial aspect of their inner development.

The images and symbols in the ancient rock paintings are not only visual arts, but also all types of arts, such as crafts, because the ideas of artists are reflected in the hidden meaning and symbolism of the paintings, so they are the basis of modern painting.

In summary, the ancient rock paintings are more than just visual representations; they constitute a diverse form of artistic expression that includes crafts. The hidden meanings and symbolism in these paintings reflect the ideas of the artists and are considered foundational to the evolution of modern painting. This perspective underscores the rich and multifaceted nature of ancient artistic practices and their enduring impact on the development of artistic traditions over time.

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