

<<中国民俗>>

图书基本信息

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作者：本社 编

译者：王莉娜

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内容概要

As a treasure house of the Chinese culture , Chinese facial masks have connotations of religion , ethnicity , customs and arts. Exhibiting the intellect , ideals and aesthetic tastes of the various ethnic groups in China , the facial masks embody the inexpressible charms and far-reaching influence of the primitive ecological cultures and thus open the door to the oriental Chinese culture and arts.

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章节摘录

Facial masks originated from the music and dance of prehistoric times. As a reflection of the worship of skulls , the earliest forms of facial masks were closely related to witchcrafts , funerals , burials and soul-calling rituals of primitive religions. Although no facial masks of Chinas prehistoric era have been unearthed up till now , they can be traced to the cliff paintings and the paintings and carvings on potteries and rocks. The exaggerated and distorted human and animal faces in the cliff paintings reveal the earliest forms of plastic arts , presenting the rich and colorful spiritual life of people living in prehistoric times. The cliff paintings discovered in China are mainly distributed in border areas where Chinese minorities live or once lived. The vivid pictures of totem worship , witchcrafts and hunting serve as an introduction to the history of facial masks evolved from primitive animal heads and bird crests , artificial heads to facial masks still often seen in altars , sanctuaries and on platforms for folk art performances in China today. As worshipped by humankind at their childhood , the gods and spirits in cliff paintings representing the natural power are the fountainhead of the culture of facial masks. Facial masks of different nationalities in China have their distinctive ethnic features owing to differences in the geographic location , ecological environment and social development of the various ethnic groups living in Chinas vast territory. The earliest forms of facial masks were the instruments with magical powers to drive away evils. With facial masks on , ordinary men were transformed into ghosts and gods. Consequentially , facial masks have become important means by which humankind can obtain the magical power of gods and ghosts and accordingly , communicate with them. There is a wide variety of facial masks in China and according to their functions they can be divided into masks for sacrificial dance rites , masks for rituals of passage , masks for the protection of villages and households , masks for sacrificial rites on festivals and masks for folk operas.

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