

〈北京猿人第一个头盖骨发现六十周年〉纪念邮资信封

北京猿人第一个头盖骨是1929年12月2日由中国科学家裴文中（1904—1982）在北京房山周口店发现的。北京猿人是人类进化史上一个重要的环节，“从猿到人”是学习马克思主义唯物史观的重要章节，这一发现对人类进化史的研究卓有贡献。

邮电部于1989年10月19日发行〈北京猿人第一个头盖骨发现六十周年〉纪念邮资信封一枚。邮票图案是北京猿人（女性）像，信封图案是北京猿人生活图。

60th Anniversary of the Discovery of the First Skull of Peking Man——Commemorative Pre-stamped Envelope

The first skull of Peking Man (*Homo erectus pekinensis*) was discovered by Pei wenzhong (1904-1982), a Chinese scientist on December 2, 1929 at Zhoukoudian, Fangshan County, 48 kilometers southwest of Beijing. Peking Man is an important link in the evolution of mankind. And "from ape to man" is a major chapter in the study of the materialistic conception of history of Marxism. The discovery of the first skull of Peking Man is a great contribution to the research of the evolution of mankind.

On Oct. 19, 1989, the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications issued this commemorative pre-stamped envelope. The stamp on the envelope. The stamp on the envelope features a bust of a female Peking Man and the cachet shows a living scene of Peking Man.

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ago and they postdate Java Man. Peking Man is considered more advanced than Java Man due to having a larger cranial capacity, a forehead and nonoverlapping canines. No mention is made directly of evolution — a theory proposed by Charles Darwin, a British scientist.

Darwin's book, "On the Origin of Species By Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life" came out on 24 November 1859 and all 1250 copies were sold out on the first day.

Darwin had mentioned man only once in the Origin. In the last chapter there is a single sentence, "much light will be thrown on the origins of man and his history".

For a well written account for the nonscientist on the evolution of the idea of evolution read "Blueprints: Solving the Mystery of Evolution" The book by Maitland A. Edy and Donald C. Johanson reads like a scientific detective story and is well worth your time. It was published in 1989.

The Chinese stress the Marxist materialist theory, while the British stress the scientific facts in placing the fossils in their correct placement on the time line of human evolution.

The Chinese issued their postal stationery on 19 October 1989. The stamp on the envelope features a bust of a female Peking Man and the cachet shows a living scene of Peking Man. Britannica verifies that the Chinese designs are correct, i.e., Peking Man had a well developed communal culture, practiced hunting, and used fire domestically.

The female Peking Man shown on the stamp holds a wooden object — seems to be lighter than clubs usually seen held by prehistoric men — perhaps she holds a digging stick in the gathering of edible plants and roots. The answer to its identification may be found in Britannica's reference to Peking Man (1975) by Harry L. Shapiro which tells the story of

discovery, significance, and disappearance of the fossils.

Unfortunately the original bones were under study at the Peking Union Medical College in 1941 when a Japanese invasion was feared. An attempt was made to smuggle them out of China to the United States. The bones disappeared and were never found. The casts as well as specimens discovered in 1958 are available for study.

If your local library does not have this book, it may be available through interlibrary loan.

I mentioned in a letter to George Rohrer That I was doing this article. By return mail George sent me a used set of Cuba 1967 issue showing the Evolution of Man. George had bought the set in Canada as he could not buy it in the United States due to the embargo on Cuban products.

The printing on this set is very small so I went to our local library to use their 1996 Scott Catalogues housed in the reference section. I found the Prehistoric Man set and learned that the 4c value (Scott 1213) depicted *Sinanthropus pekinensis*. I will use that stamp in my follow-up article for *Old World Archaeologist*.

I checked all the China headings and found another issue — People's Republic of China (Scott 2346) for the International Union for Quaternary Research Conference. This stamp shows an early man and I have it now. The word Quaternary sent me to the library dictionary. Quaternary means the geological period following the Tertiary in the Cenozoic era, comprising the Pleistocene and Recent epochs.

Fellow stamp collectors like George Rohrer are wonderful people who will be very helpful with your research projects. Be sure that you include a stamped self-addressed envelope when you are writing to stamp collectors and stamp dealers seeking information.

I would greatly appreciate any other leads to Peking Man, whether it be informational or philatelic material such as stamps, meters, cancels, postal stationery, etc. A photocopy of the item would be very useful.

As usual I have learned new information about a philatelic item by research and had fun at the same time. Just start digging, one little area at a time, and pretty soon you'll have the whole tell opened and the story becomes laid out for you. Just don't ever give up on a project because there's help from all of us.