

Study: Oil painting predated European art

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Oil-based paint likely was used in Afghanistan up to 800 years before it first appeared in European art, a study of cave paintings has found.

A study of cave murals found in Afghanistan's Bamian caves showed that oil-based paints were used hundreds of years before their first credited appearance in Europe in the 15th century, the Los Angeles Times reported Saturday.

"This is the earliest clear example of oil paintings in the world," historian Yoko Taniguchi of Tokyo's National Research Institute for Cultural Properties said of the murals.

The age of the Afghan paintings was determined using X-ray technologies and gas chromatographs, while the paint specifics were learned through synchrotron technology.

Taniguchi said the murals were likely created by artists traveling the historical Silk Road, which connected China to western countries.

But the historian warned that additional information on the art would be difficult to obtain since "due to political reasons, research on paintings in Central Asia is scarce," the Times reported.

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