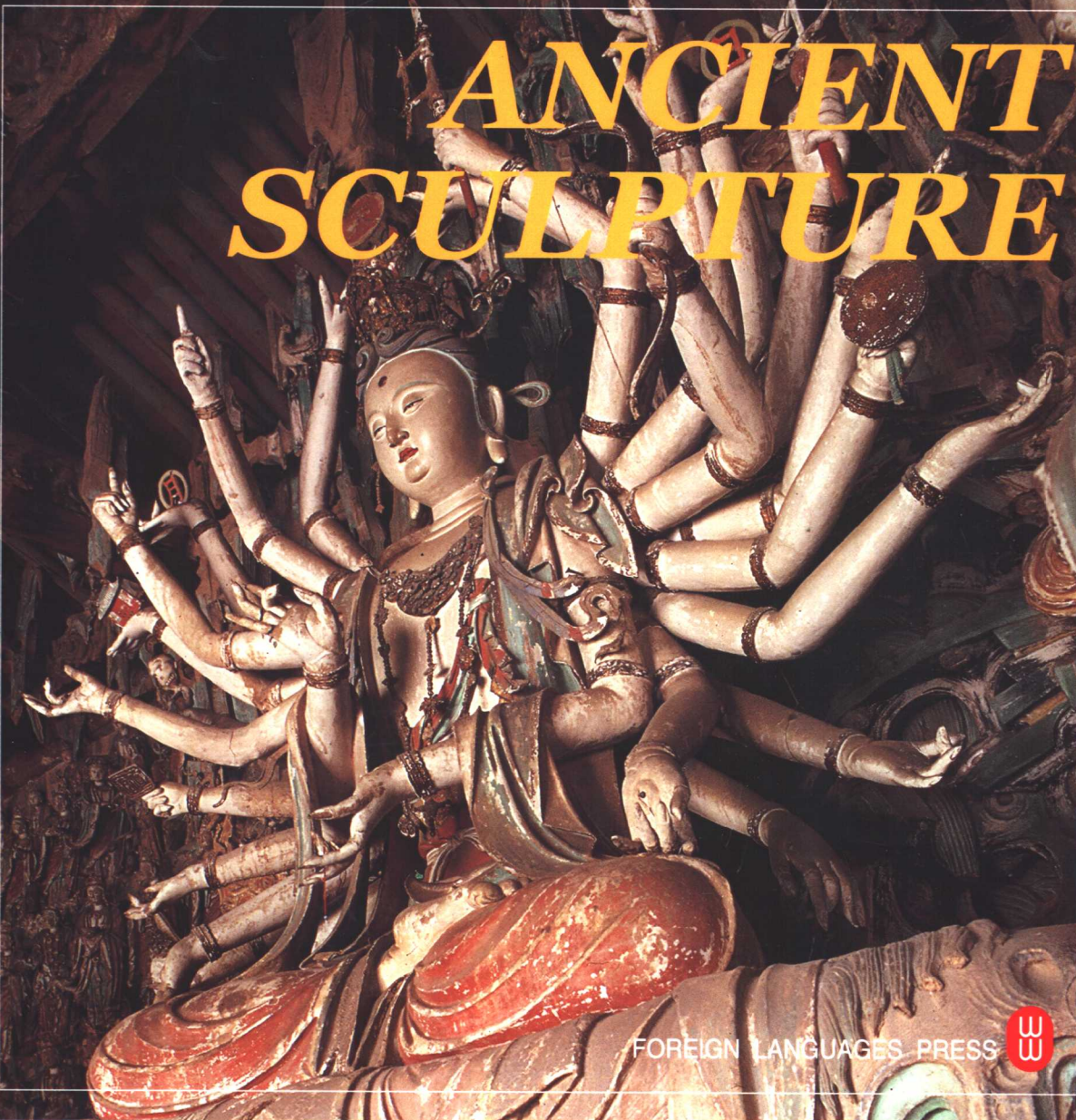




ANCIENT SCULPTURE

CHINA



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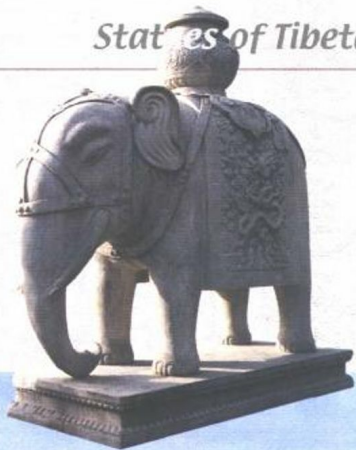
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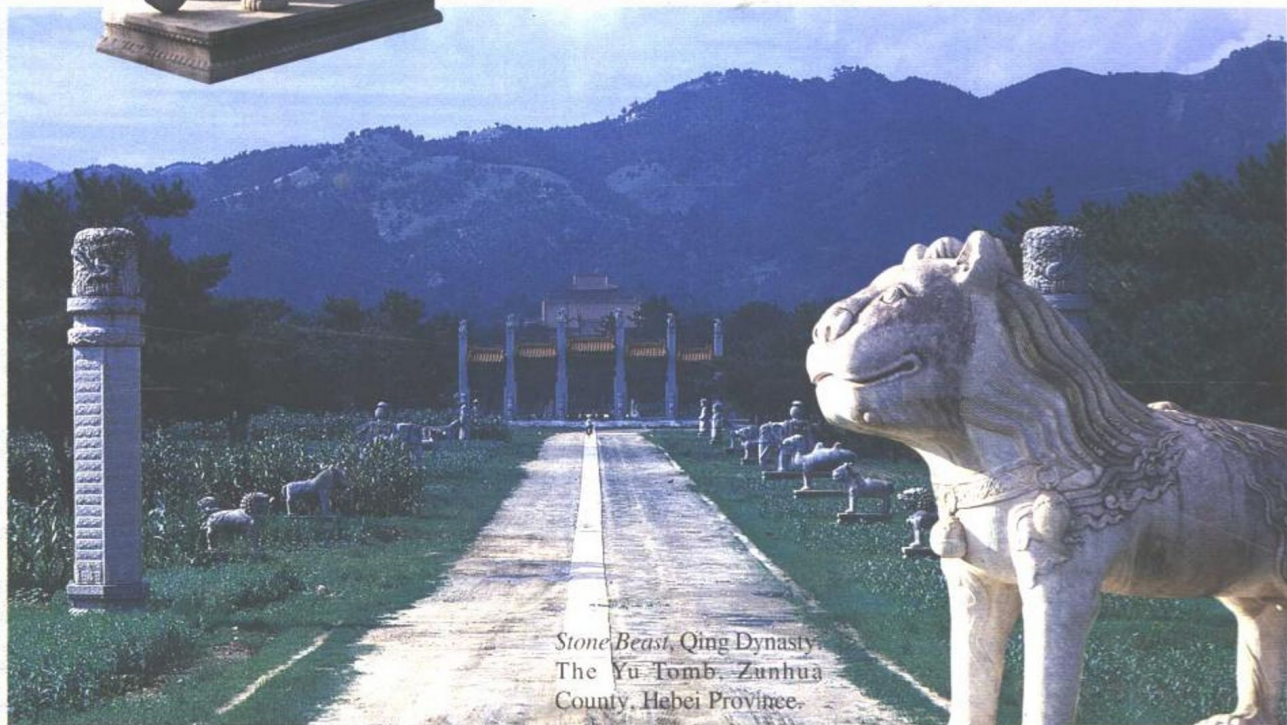
Statues of Tibetan Buddhism · Ming and Qing Stone Carvings



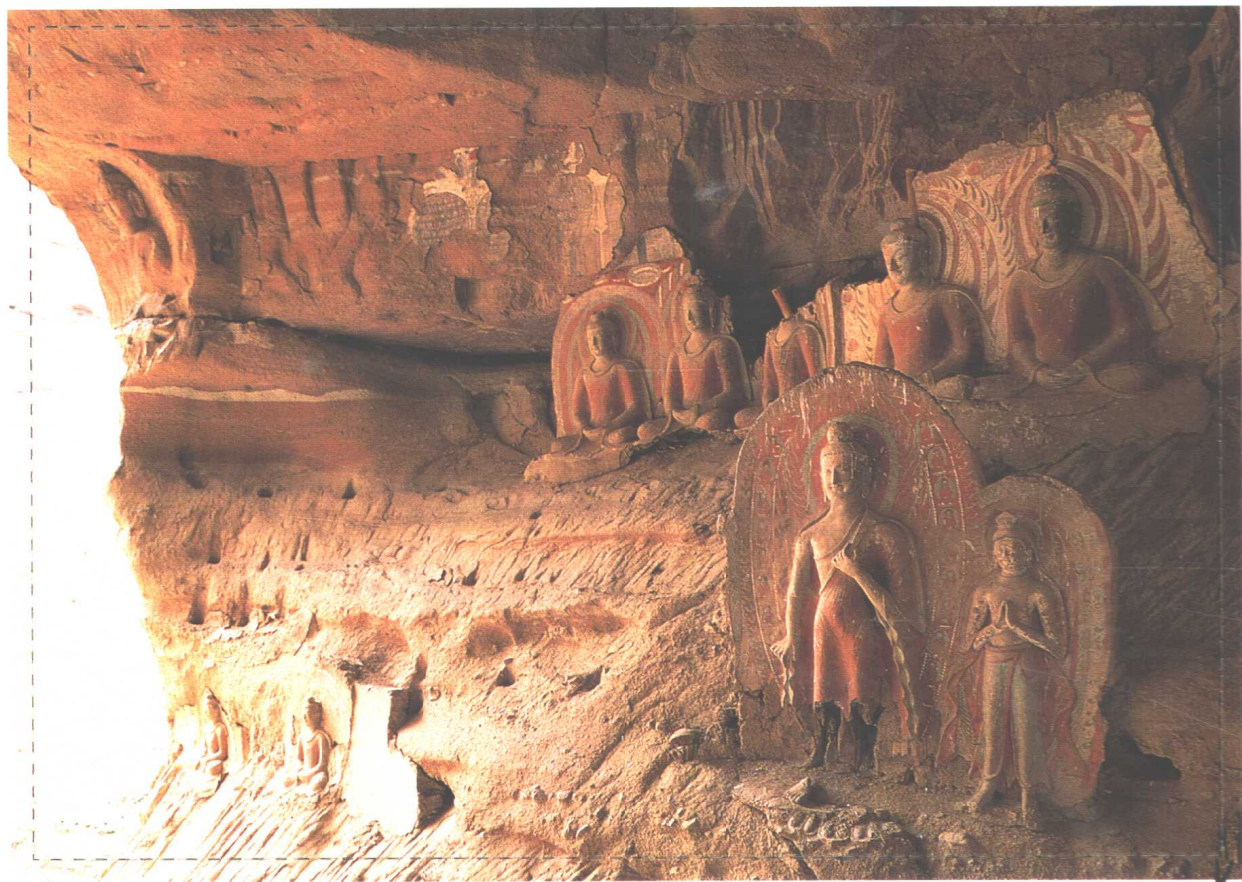
Stone Elephant, Qing Dynasty. The Tai Tomb, Yixian County, Hebei Province.

The stone sculptures of the imperial tombs of the Qing Dynasty continued the tradition of the preceding Ming Dynasty in contents and shapes—mainly representing civil officials, military officers, horses, mythical beasts, elephants, camels and lions. The only differences are in the costumes of the civil officials of the two dynasties.

Stone Statue by the Sacred Way to the Yu Tomb, Qing Dynasty. The Eastern Tombs of the Qing Dynasty, Zunhua County, Hebei Province.



Stone Beast, Qing Dynasty. The Yu Tomb, Zunhua County, Hebei Province.



Ancient Sculpture



Foreign Languages Press Beijing

A large-scale photograph of the Terracotta Army of the Qin Dynasty. The image shows a vast array of terracotta soldiers, including infantry, archers, and chariot drivers, arranged in rows within a large, excavated earthen pit. The figures are highly detailed, showing individual features and armor. The background shows the layered earth of the excavation site.

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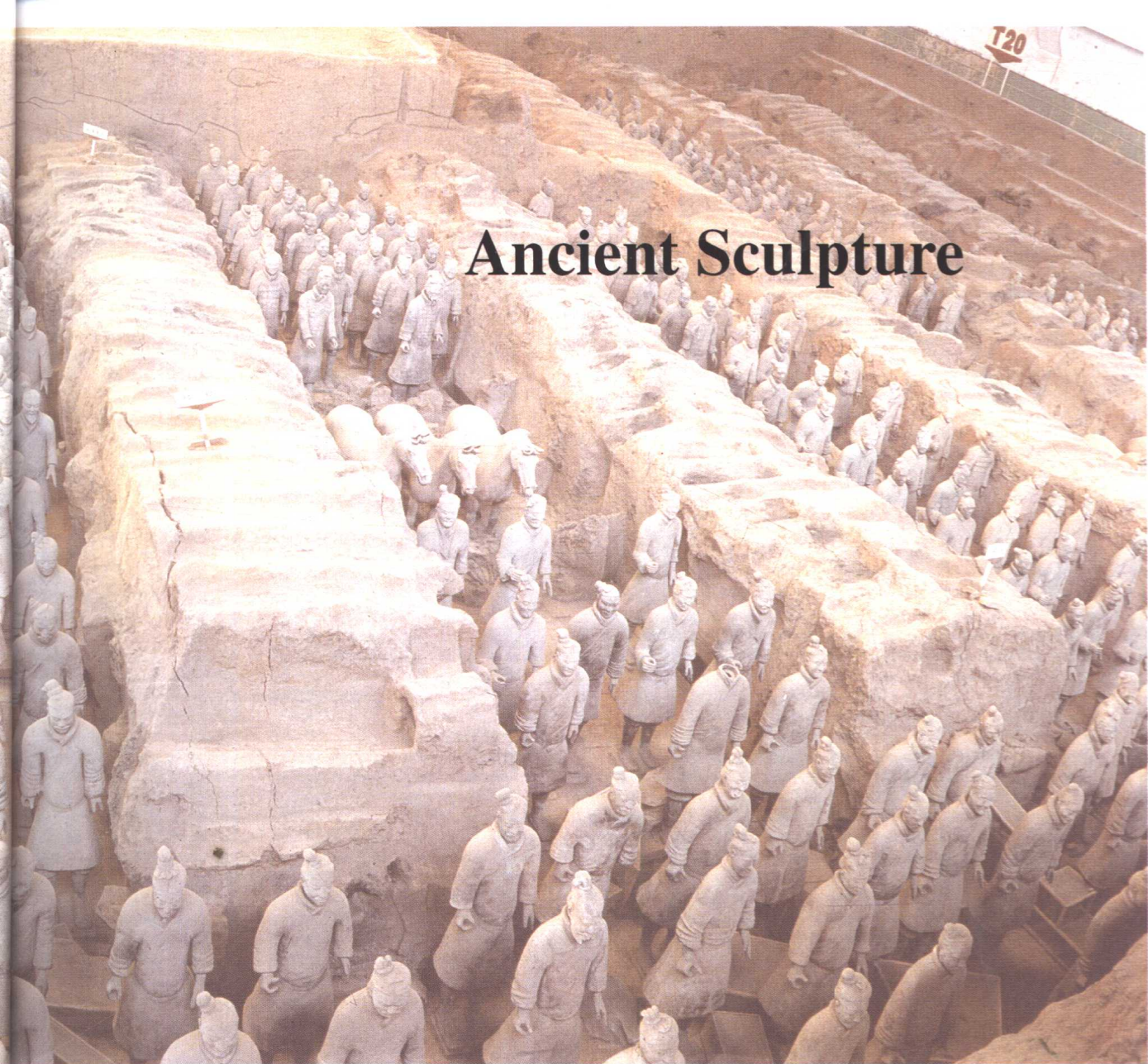
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Ancient Sculpture



Foreword

Sculpture refers to the making of three-dimensional works of art in stone, clay, metal, wood, etc. The art of sculpture emerged in China along with the first glimmerings of civilization. Over the millennia of Chinese cultural development, sculptural works with distinct national characteristics have been created, and famous sculptors have added luster to the Chinese people's artistic achievements from epoch to epoch.

Sculpture in the Period of Primitive Society, and the Xia, Shang and Zhou Dynasties

The late leading architect Liang Sicheng once stated, "Sculpture is the starting point of art. When our forefathers lived in caves in the wilderness, they had to carve stones into various items for daily use. Then, when building houses, they carved patterns as decorations. Thus, we can say the art of sculpture started in the Stone Age, and is the oldest artistic form."

In remote antiquity, with the appearance of primitive agriculture and an embryonic handicrafts industry, earthenware became important in people's life and work. Human aesthetic creation began to manifest itself in a basic way in the shaping and decorating of earthenware items.

Exquisite pottery products have been excavated belonging to the Yangshao, Maojiayao, Dawenkou and Hongshan cultures of the Neolithic Age, between 10,000 and 4,000 years ago. Great achievements were also made in jade carving at that time. Unearthed jade artifacts include jade axes, *bi* (ornamental flat pieces of jade with holes in the center), *cong* (jade ornaments in square shape with a hole in the middle), and jade battle-axes. Noteworthy is *zhulong* or *yulong* (jade ornaments with a bearing pattern resembling the dragon with a beast head).

During the Xia (2070-1600 B.C.), Shang (1600-1046 B.C.) and Western Zhou (1046-771 B.C.) dynasties, China was in the period of slave society. In the course of the Eastern Zhou Dynasty, which was conventionally divided into the Spring and Autumn (770-476 B.C.) and Warring States (476-221 B.C.) periods, a feudal society gradually emerged in China. During these dynasties, with the further division of social labor, the handicrafts industry became quite developed, and was divided into many categories. The sculpture category included bronze smelting and founding, pottery making, and jade, stone, bone and ivory carving. As the artistic achievements in bronze ware manufacture were the most significant, this period was also called the Bronze Age. Bronze ware production, mixing the characteristics of pottery making and jade carving, evolved into a new artistic tradition. Not only tools and weapons, but also large numbers of sacrificial vessels and musical instruments were made of bronze. Sacrificial vessels included *ding* (three-legged tripod or four-legged cauldron for meat and

cereals), *li* (cauldron for meat and cereals), *yan* (steamer for vegetables and cereals), *gui* (deep circular vessel with two or four handles, used as a container for grain), *gong* (lidded drinking vessel with spout at the front, handle at the back and a square stand or four legs), *jue* (tripod vessel with handle and open spout), *zun* (cup, used for drinking or warming wine), *you* (jar, round or oval in horizontal section, with cover and swing handle), and *hu* (jar, round, rectangular or compressed in shape). Sacrificial musical instruments included large and small bells, *nao* (in the shape of a big bell, with hollow handle, to be struck by wooden mallet), *bo* (bell with plane opening and circular knob on top) and drums. Bronze wares from the Shang Dynasty were noted for their distinctive carved patterns, such as *taotie* and *kui* (mystical beasts), clouds and lightning, dragons, tigers, elephants, deer, oxen, phoenixes and human faces. The patterns were stylized and delicately structured.

Sculpture in the Qin and Han Dynasties

The Qin (221-207 B.C.) and Han (206 B.C.-A.D.220) dynasties saw China become a unified feudal monarchy. In the newly powerful empire a vast range of prospects for the development of sculpture opened up. The rulers of the Qin and Han dynasties had many fine works of sculpture made to advertise their successes in enlarging their territory, demonstrate their personal power and cite courtiers and generals for distinguished services. During this period, striking achievements were also made in pottery, stone carving, bronze casting, and the shaping and designing of artifacts. Thus was formed the first golden age in the history of Chinese sculpture.

In 221 B.C., Qin Shi Huang (First Emperor of the Qin Dynasty) unified China, putting an end to the endemic warfare between the feudal states of the previous few centuries. In Lintong, Shaanxi, near the Qin Shi Huang Mausoleum, over 6,000 life-size terracotta figurines of warriors and horses have been discovered. Facing the east and standing in military formations, the terracotta warriors and horses were originally painted in bright colors, which prove that great progress was made in sculpture in the Qin Dynasty. There are thought to be many thousands more waiting to be excavated.

In the Han Dynasty, the royal palaces and gardens of Chang'an and Luoyang, the capitals of Western and Eastern Han dynasties, respectively, housed colossal sculptures, and the mausoleums and ancestral halls of the aristocrats were guarded by stone beasts as well. In recognition of the military achievements of Huo Qubing (140-117 B.C.), Emperor Wu designed his mausoleum in the shape of Mount Qilian. In the mausoleum were placed granite sculptures of horses, tigers, oxen, pigs and mythical beasts. Especially interesting is one representing Xiongnu invaders being trampled un-

der a warhorse's hooves. This series is rated as outstanding examples of Han stone sculpture.

Stone and brick relief carving was a characteristic new variety of sculpture which appeared in the Qin and Han dynasties. Such carvings are generally found on the walls of tomb chambers, memorial shrines in front of tombs and watchtowers. The brick relief works of the late Han Dynasty excavated around Chengdu, Sichuan Province, are of a quite high artistic level. The themes are mostly taken from daily life, featuring horse-drawn carriages, feasts and celebrations, and farming and handicraft work.

In the Qin and Han dynasties, bronze was no longer used exclusively for ritual vessels and weapons, but also for ordinary utensils, especially mirrors and lanterns. An exquisite example of the latter is the gilded "Changxin Palace Lantern" found in Dou Wan's tomb in Mancheng, Hebei Province. There are masterpieces in bronze statues as well. Near the Qin Shi Huang Mausoleum, two half-size bronze chariots and horses weighing over 1,200 kg each were discovered. They are elaborately shaped, and probably represent Qin Shi Huang's own imperial chariots and horses. A more famous example is a bronze statue of a galloping horse with the foot mounted on a flying swallow, excavated from an Eastern Han tomb in Wuwei, Gansu Province.

Sculpture in the Wei, Jin and Northern and Southern Dynasties

Throughout the period of the Wei, Jin and Northern and Southern dynasties (220-581), China was divided and war-torn. Social upheavals gave rise to the spread of Buddhism, along with which Buddhist art was introduced from India by way of the "Silk Road," and influenced the art of the Central Plains. During this period, sculpture with Buddhist themes became dominant and made the most prominent achievements. This is reflected in the grotto sculptures which were begun at that time. The earliest of these are in No.16 Grotto of the Mogao Grottoes in Dunhuang, Gansu Province, and those in No.169 Grotto of the Binglingsi Grottoes in Yongjing County, Gansu Province, dating from the first year of the Jianhong reign period (420) of the Western Qin Dynasty. The images and techniques of expression here fully reflect the influence from the Western Regions. After the Northern Wei Dynasty (386-534) united the northern part of China, the dissemination of Buddhism was accelerated, and grottoes containing Buddhist statues were carved at Datong, Luoyang and other places. Large numbers of magnificent stone sculptures dating from the Northern Dynasties period still remain, representative ones being the statues in the Five Grottoes by Monk Tanyao in Yungang, and Guyang Grotto and Binyang Grotto

in Longmen. From the images and attire of the Buddha and niches, we can see the blending of the characteristics of the art of the Central Plains and that of the Western Regions.

The area to the south of the Yangtze River developed under the rule of the Southern Dynasties. In today's Nanjing and the surrounding regions are scattered 30-odd tombs of emperors and aristocrats of the Song, Qi, Liang and Chen dynasties (420-589), in which large-scale memorial sculptures such as stone columns, stone tables and stone beasts occupy an important position, in addition to pottery figurines buried with emperors and high-ranking officials.

Sculpture in the Sui and Tang Dynasties

The Sui (581-618) Dynasty put an end to the state of separation and anarchy which had lasted for more than 300 years, uniting China once more. During this dynasty and the following Tang Dynasty (618-907), with the vigorous development of the handicrafts industry and commerce, closer contacts between the various ethnic groups of China, and more frequent economic and cultural exchanges between China and its neighbors, a splendid era of cultural and artistic attainments came into being. Chinese sculpture, naturally, shared in this prosperity.

Buddhist statues made at this time display richer contents, wider scopes of expression and more mature workmanship, along with a flurry of activity in the sphere of excavating grottoes and constructing temples. The Dunhuang Grottoes are a treasure house of clay sculptures and murals. Of the 476 grottoes here, 95 date from the Sui Dynasty, and 213 from the Tang Dynasty. Of the grottoes and niches in Longmen, over 60 percent were chiseled during the Tang Dynasty. The statues in the grotto of Fengxian Temple were made during the reign of Emperor Gaozong. Their gigantic scale and superb craftsmanship are outstanding in the history of grotto art.

The mausoleums of the Tang emperors were often built at the foot of a mountain, with stone figures of humans, lions and horses guarding them. The stone sculptures of the No. 18 Tang Mausoleum near Xi'an are among the great treasures of ancient Chinese sculpture. The six stone horses in front of the Mausoleum of Li Shimin, the second Tang emperor, and the groups of stone statues in the passageway of the Mausoleum of Emperor Gaozong and Empress Wu are representative of Tang sculpture.

The Tang Dynasty was famous for its characteristic tricolored glazed pottery. Funerary figurines of humans and models of animals, such as camels and horses, are among the best examples of this genre. The well-proportioned pottery horses, especially, are shown in frozen motion, emitting a lifelike spirit.

Sculpture in the Five Dynasties, Song, Liao, Kin and Yuan Dynasties Periods

With the division of the country once more during the Five Dynasties (907-960), the respective confrontations between the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127) and the Liao Dynasty (907-1125) and the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279) and the Kin Dynasty (1115-1234), and the short period of unification under the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368), this era was rather chaotic and changeable. The political situations and economic trends at different times had various influences on the art of sculpture.

The sculpture of this period lost the grandeur and forthrightness it had displayed in the Sui and Tang dynasties, but made progress in realistic techniques and precision. Religious sculpture still held an important position, and the sculptures in temples and monasteries were of quite grand scale. The 22-m-high bronze Bodhisattva of Great Sorrow (made in the Northern Song Dynasty) in Great Sorrow Pavilion in Longxing Temple, Zhengding, and the 16-m-high clay figure of Goddess of Mercy (made in the Liao Dynasty) in Dule Temple, Jixian County, Hebei Province, are outstanding examples of the large statues made in the medieval period. The 29 statues of Buddha, Bodhisattvas and arhats in the Xiahuayan Temple of the Pujia sect, and the statues of the "24 Heavenly Gods" in the Great Hall of Shanhu Temple — both in Datong, Shanxi Province, are the most magnificent such statues made in the Liao and Kin dynasties. As for the characteristic temple and monastery statues of the Song Dynasty, the best known are those in Baosheng Temple in Suzhou, the arhats in Lingyan Temple in Changqing, Shandong Province, and the colored statues of maids in the Jin Memorial Shrine in Taiyuan, Shanxi Province.

The construction of grottoes declined gradually in central China, the focus shifting to the areas of Shaanxi and Sichuan, which were relatively free from the upheavals which racked the northern parts of China following the fall of the Tang Dynasty. There are a dozen sites with stone statues in Dazu County in Sichuan Province, of which the largest are on North Mountain and Mount Baoding. The Southern Song Dynasty retained sovereignty south of the Yangtze River, and its capital, Lin'an (today's Hangzhou), was prosperous both economically and culturally. Lin'an was also a center of Buddhist worship. Near the West Lake there are several grottoes with statues, the most famous ones being Yanxia Grotto and the 380-odd statues on the Peak That Flew Here at Lingyin Temple.

Among the stone statues located at mausoleums dating from this period, the statue of Wan Jian at Wan Jian's tomb of the Former Shu Dynasty (one of the Five Dynasties) is a rare portrait-statue. The stone figures of men and animals at the imperial mausoleum of the Northern Song Dynasty in

Gongxian County, Henan, are notable for their realistic features.

Sculpture in the Ming and Qing Dynasties

The Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties were the last two feudal regimes in China. During this time, feudal politics, economy, ideology and culture reached their zenith and began to disintegrate. This directly or indirectly influenced the progress of all artistic activities, including sculpture.

The religious sculpture in the Ming and Qing dynasties generally showed a decline, but a few fresh works did appear, such as the colored sculptures in Shuanglin Temple in Pingyao, Shanxi Province, the statue of Goddess of Mercy with 1,000 hands and 1,000 eyes in Chongshan Temple in Taiyuan, the sculptured walls of Shuilu Convent in Lantian, Shaanxi, and the 500 arhats in Biyun Temple in Beijing.

An outstanding feature of this period was the flourishing of Tibetan Buddhism (also called Lamaism). A large number of wooden and bronze statues connected with Tibetan Buddhism were erected. Especially in the Kangxi and Qianlong reigns of the Qing Dynasty, in order to unite the Mongolian and Tibetan people, these rulers energetically supported Lamaism and sponsored the building of many Lamaist temples and monasteries. From the 52nd year of the reign of Emperor Kangxi (1713) to the 45th year of the reign of Emperor Qianlong (1780), 12 magnificent Buddhist temples were built in accordance with the architectural patterns of Mongolian and Tibetan religious constructions at the summer resort of the Qing emperors at Chengde. The "Eight Outside Temples," with 55,161 statues, are still preserved there. The Yonghe Palace in Beijing was turned into a lamasery in the ninth year of the reign of Emperor Qianlong (1744). In the Forbidden City there are 35 Tibetan Buddhist halls.

Apart from the Xiaoling Mausoleum of Zhu Yuanzhang, the first emperor of the Ming Dynasty, which is situated in Nanjing, all the mausoleums of the Ming emperors are located on the southern side of Mount Tianshou in Changping County, Beijing, reaching 13 in total. As for the imperial mausoleums of the Qing Dynasty, a few are in the northeast of China, and the Eastern Tombs of the Qing Dynasty are scattered in Zunhua City, and the Western Tombs, Yi County, in Hebei Province. Large stone animals and figures line the approaches to the tombs.

In the meantime, practical and visual technological and artistic sculpture for the decoration of houses flourished in the Ming and Qing dynasties. This included the carving of jade, stone, ivory, bone, bamboo and wood, and sculptures in porcelain and clay, some of which attracted great attention from connoisseurs.

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CHRONOLOGY

1,000,000-10,000 B.C.	PALEOLITHIC PERIOD	907-960	FIVE DYNASTIES (in the north)
10,000-ca.2100 B.C.	NEOLITHIC PERIOD		Later Liang 907-923
	Xia Dynasty ca. 2100-ca. 1600 B.C.		Later Tang 923-936
ca.1600-ca.1100 B.C.	SHANG DYNASTY		Later Jin 936-946
ca.1100-256 B.C.	ZHOU DYNASTY		Later Han 947-950
	Western Zhou ca. 1100-771 B.C.		Later Zhou 951-960
	Eastern Zhou ca. 770-256 B.C.	902-979	TEN KINGDOMS (in the south)
	Spring and Autumn Period 770-476 B.C.		Former Shu 907-925
	Warring States Period 476-221 B.C.		Later Shu 934-965
221-206 B.C.	QIN DYNASTY		Nanping or Jingnan 924-963
206 B.C.-A.D.220	HAN DYNASTY		Chu 927-951
	Western (Former) Han Dynasty 206 B.C.-A.D.9		Wu 902-937
	Xin Dynasty (Wang Mang Interregnum) 9-23		Southern Tang 937-975
	Eastern (Later) Han Dynasty 25-220		Wuyue 907-978
220-280	THREE KINGDOMS		Min 909-945
	Wei 220-265		Southern Han 917-971
	Shu 221-263		Northern Han 951-979
	Wu 222-280	916-1125	LIAO DYNASTY
265-420	JIN DYNASTY*	960-1279	SONG DYNASTY
	Western Jin 265-317		Northern Song 960-1127
	Eastern Jin 317-420		Southern Song 1127-1279
317-589	SOUTHERN DYNASTIES*	1115-1234	JIN DYNASTY
	Liu Song 420-479	1038-1227	WESTERN XIA DYNASTY
	Southern Qi 479-502	1271-1368	YUAN DYNASTY
	Liang 502-557	1368-1644	MING DYNASTY
	Chen 557-589	1644-1911	QING DYNASTY
386-581	NORTHERN DYNASTIES	1912-1949	REPUBLIC OF CHINA
	Northern Wei 386-534	1949-	PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
	Eastern Wei 534-550		
	Western Wei 535-556		
	Northern Qi 550-577		
	Northern Zhou 557-581		
581-618	SUI DYNASTY		
618-907	TANG DYNASTY		
	Great Zhou Dynasty (Wu Zetian Interregnum) 684-705		
			*The Western and Eastern Jin dynasties together with the Southern Dynasties are frequently referred to as the Six Dynasties.

Pottery Sculpture - Bronze Ware

The appearance of pottery in primitive society not only promoted and enriched the economic life of the people of remote antiquity, but also gave free rein to man's natural aesthetic impulse. The pottery and porcelain products of this period are the best manifestation of this. The statues of goddesses and pottery sculptures of fertility symbols discovered in Lingyuan County, Liaoning Province, show that primitive sculpture had reached a quite high level.

The Xia, Shang and Zhou dynasties are known as the era of bronze, when bronze was an alloy of copper and tin. The bronze wares of the Shang and Zhou dynasties display standard molding techniques and a high degree of artistic development. The great Si Mu Wu rectangular *ding* (cooking vessel) excavated at Wuguan Village in Anyang, Henan, is 110 cm long, 77 cm wide and 137 cm high and weighs 875 kg. This cooking vessel is a majestic piece of work, with dragon patterns on the edges of its four sides, projecting images of two standing tigers and one human head on its handles and solid ornaments of beast heads on its feet. A similar rectangular *ding* (cooking vessel) with human-mask motif was excavated in Ningxiang, Hunan Province, with four large and striking half-reliefs of human masks on its four sides, respectively. The features of these human faces are complete and clear-cut, and look pretty much the same as those of modern people, except for the ears, which are big and stretch back at the two sides of the faces with cloud patterns above the ears and crooked hand-shaped patterns below them. To cast such a big pot, a large-scale foundry, sophisticated division of labor and special techniques were obviously necessary. The bronze artifacts of the Shang Dynasty have a solemn and mysterious air about them, and they are exquisitely wrought. Bronze wares were made in great quantities in this period, mostly sacrificial vessels and musical instruments, and some tools of production, weapons and daily utensils. They show that artistic endeavors were gradually maturing.





Ancient Sculpture

Pottery Bust, late Yangshao culture. Excavated from a site in Lixian County, Gansu Province, 1964. It is the remnant of a pottery figure. The plump face wears a simple and honest expression.



Colored Pottery Bust. Hongshan culture. Unearthed in Niuheliang, Liaoning Province. With green jade eyeballs, a broad forehead, raised eyebrows, and full lips, this life-sized sculpted head was executed in a realistic style. The five sense organs are located accurately and are well proportioned.

Pottery Sculpture · Bronze Ware

Pottery Figurines of Naked Women, Hongshan culture. Unearthed in Dongshanzui, Mongolian Autonomous County of Harqin Left Wing, Liaoning Province. These two small, incomplete naked figurines have swelling abdomens and protruding buttocks. They are thought to be fertility symbols.



Animal-shaped Pottery Vessel. Dawenkou culture. Excavated from a site in Dawenkou, Tai'an City, Shandong Province, in 1925. This water container looks like a pig; however, its wide-open mouth looks exactly like that of a barking dog.

Ancient Sculpture



Bronze Bust with Gold Mask. Shang Dynasty. Excavated from the Sanxingdui tombs site, Guanghan City, Sichuan Province, in 1986.

Featuring an exaggerated nose, mouth and ears, the bronze human figures unearthed from the Sanxingdui tombs all look like extraterrestrial beings.

Jade Figurine of a Kneeling Man. Shang Dynasty. Unearthed from the Tomb of Fu Hao in Anyang County, Henan Province, in 1976.

This exquisite yellowish-brown jade sculpture is only seven cm high. This kneeling man, absorbed in thought and a fierce facial expression, may be a slave owner. The tube-shaped head ornament, gorgeous dress and the pendant worn at the waist are characteristics of the attire of the highest rank in ancient China.

