

The Birth and Spread of New Philosophies in Asia, part 2

Qin through Tang Dynasties in China

CHINA

Respect and reverence for nature and the forces of nature

Respect and reverence for ancestors

Respect and reverence for traditions and ritual

Warring States Period 475-221 BCE

Ch'in (Zither), 5th century BCE, 2002.8

Pair of wine cups, 4th-3rd century BCE, L2006.97.2 1,2

Qin Dynasty 221-209 BCE

- Legalist system form of government, state had absolute power
- Banned all books that that advocated any other forms of government other than Legalism
- Standardized writing, currency and systems of measurement
- Because it was thoroughly dictatorial, the government was stable and able to achieve its goals

Qin Shi Huangdi (The First Emperor)/ Ying Zheng

Xi'an

Mandate of Heaven

Han Dynasty 206 BCE – CE 220 (pronounced Hahn)

Western Han 206 BCE – CE 9, Capital Chang'an (Xi'an)

Xing-Wang Mang interregnum 9-25 CE

Eastern Han 25-220 CE, Capital Luoyang

- The Han Dynasty is considered one of the greatest periods in Chinese history.
- The ethnic majority of Chinese people today still call themselves "people of Han"
- Opening up of the Silk Road
- China officially became a Confucian state
- Daoism is reintroduced and Buddhism is introduced

Tomb tiles, Han dynasty, impressed earthenware, 99.50.1 and 83.29

Rubbing from a Wu Family Shrine, taken from a 2nd century carved stone relief, c.1920, paper

Military Tower, glazed earthenware, 98.69a,b

Foot Soldiers, 242 BCE, earthenware, 95.91.2.1, 2

Sword-making Tableau, Eastern Han dynasty, 1st-2nd century, Low-fired earthenware with green glaze, L2002.266.7

Equestrian Figure, earthenware with traces of pigment, 94.1a-c

Chariot fitting, Western Han dynasty, 3rd-2nd century BCE, Bronze with silver inlay, 2001.135.2

Cart with Ox and Farmer, bronze, 2002.207.7a-m

Funerary Model of a Pig Sty, earthenware, 95.118.1a-l

Wellhead, 1st – 2nd century, low-fired earthenware with green glaze, 2000.146a,b

*Their vermilion slippers
danced between plates
and goblets*

*And they waved their
long, dangling sleeves*

*With a curvaceous,
cultivated bearing*

*Their lovely dresses
fluttered like flowers in
the wind.*

Model of a Stove, 1st – 2nd century, earthenware with green glaze, 32.54.9a-c
Funerary Model of a Pavilion, low-fired earthenware with green glaze, 88.77.1
Figure of a Squatting Drummer, 1st-2nd century, ceramic, 2003.101
Female "Long Sleeve" Dancer, 2nd century BCE, earthenware, 2000.87.1
Cosmetic Case (Lian), about 100 BCE – CE 100, painted lacquer with silver inlay over wood core, 2001.69.2.1a,b
Lian (cosmetic box), bronze with gold and silver cloud design, 50.46.49a,b
Lian (cosmetic container), earthenware with molded décor under green glaze, 89.43.1a,b
Celestial Horse, bronze with traces of polychrome, 2002.45
Prancing Horse, earthenware with traces of pigment, 98.19
Silk Worm, gilt bronze, 96.55.1
Ink Tablet in the Form of a Turtle, earthenware, 32.54.4a,b

Liu Bang (Han Gaozu)
Confucius 550-479 BCE

mingqi

"Parthian shot"

Han Wudi (140-87 BCE)

Yijing (The Book of Changes), trigrams

Ferghana/Fergana (part of modern Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyztan)

Queen Mother of the West, Xi Wang-mu

Three Kingdoms: 220-280

Shu 221-263

Wei 220-265

Wu 222-280

- Wars, plagues, and political instability characterize this period
- Upheaval forced the Chinese to question Confucianism and encouraged many to embrace Buddhism and Daoism
- Celadon ceramics develop and calligraphers perfected increasingly picturesque styles
- New innovations include monumental stone sculpture and woodblock printing

Tomb Guardian Figures, Northern Wei dynasty, early 6th century, Grey earthenware with traces of pigments, 31.117.1-2

Striding Horse, 549-577, terracotta, 2004.205.2

Flask with Figural Decoration 6th century, 550-577, Stoneware with moulded decoration under brown glaze 2004.132.6

Northern and Southern Dynasties

Six Dynasties 420-589

Northern Wei 386-534

Northern Ch'i 550-577

Standing Buddha, Northern Qi, late 6th century, limestone, 2000.207

Pair of Bodhisattvas, Northern Qi, white marble, 42.4.2

Sarcophagus of Prince Cheng Ching (Yuan Mi), 524, black limestone, 46.23.1a-d

Epitaph Tablet of King Zhenjing, (Yuan Mi), 524, black limestone, 46.23.6

Epitaph Cover of King Zhenjing, (Yuan Mi), 524, black limestone, 46.23.5

Sui Dynasty 581-618 (pronounced sway)

- The Sui reunited China and territorially and culturally.
- Trade over the Silk Road flourished as the emperor sent trade invitations to western Asian merchants.
- China became the center of Buddhist learning.
- Beginning of porcelain (whiteware), or porcelaneous stoneware

Daoism

Money Tree, 1st- 2nd century, bronze and green-glazed earthenware, 2002.47.a-rrr

Coffin ornaments, Gilt bronze, Eastern Han dynasty, 25-220 CE, 2003.137.1

Taoist Stele of Five Deities, Black limestone, 8th century, 2003.30

Image of a Celestial Worthy, Painted slip-coated earthenware, 10th-11th century, L2006.49.2

Popular Deities

Zhengwu, The Perfected Warrior, 17th century, Stoneware with polychrome glazes, 95.98.4

Zodiac figures, set of twelve, Ceramic, pigment, 7th-10th century, L2004.427.5.1-12

Death and Immortality

Spirit Jar (hun ping), Yueh ware, Porcelaneous stoneware with olive green glaze, 3rd century, 98.51

Burial Jar for Wine Storage, Qingbai ware, Porcelaneous stoneware with appliqué décor under pale blue-grey glaze combined with painted iron-brown details, 91.11.2a,b, 12th-13th century

Cosmology and the Heavenly Hierarchy

Sarcophagus of Prince Yuan Mi, Black limestone, 6th century, 46.23.1a-d

Ritual

The Marvelous Words of the Supreme Jade Emperor (Kao-shang yu-huang pen-hsing chi-ching),

Ink on white paper, 15-16th century, 2001.75.9.1-3

Daoist Robe, 19th century, 1821-1850, Silk, 42.8.118

Official Daoist Seal, 14th century, Nephrite (jade), 2000.38.7

Popular motifs

Ink tablet in the form of a turtle, Earthenware with modeled and incised décor, 32.54.4a,b

Pair of Flying Dragons, Tang dynasty, Gilt Bronze, 2000.87.2.1-2

Mountains

Hill Censer (Boshanlu), 1st-2nd century CE, Bronze, 2001.5.3a,b

Pictorial Hanging Illustrating the Feast of Peaches, 18th century, Silk tapestry (k'o-ssu), 42.8.342

Buddhist Art

Maitreya (The Buddha of the Future), Grey Limestone, 5th century BC, 45.3

Bodhisattva head, Stone, 6th century, L2014.148

Stele of Maitreya Buddha, 6th century, Black limestone with traces of pigment, 2002.93

Bodhisattva (Avalokitsvara), 571, black marble with traces of pigments and gilding, 18.5

Standing Buddha, Northern Qi, late 6th century, limestone, 2000.207

Pair of Bodhisattvas, Northern Qi, white marble, 42.4.2

Dvarapala (Guardian Figure), Stone, 8th century, 2006.79

Figure of a Bodhisattva, Marble, 7th-8th century, 2007.18

Tang Dynasty 618-906 (pronounced tahng)

- Known as the golden age of China, a period of relative prosperity, political stability and intellectual freedom.
- Tang restored all the holdings claimed by earlier dynasties and extended them.
- The Silk Road flourishes sparking an interest in the exotic.
- A highly creative period of cultural activity and artistic excellence.
- Invention of gunpowder

Benediction Scene, late 8th century, sandstone, 99.174.3

Camels with Driver, 618-906, terracotta, 2004.205.1.1,2

Tomb Figure of a Kneeling Camel with Driver, 618-906, terracotta, 50.46.196

Plate, silver with chased and gilt décor, 51.28.3

Buddhist Text: Fragment from Tun-Huang (Dunhuang) Cave sanctuary, about 600, ink on paper 2003.98.1

Ritual Buddhist Bottle Vase and Cover, bronze, 98.218.1a,b

Lokapala Guardian King, late 7th-early 8th century, earthenware with molded and carved décor under polychrome pigments and gold

Figure of a Woman, Painted earthenware with white slip, 7th-10th century, 50.46.182

Tomb Figure Representing a Musician Playing a Lute, Painted earthenware with white slip, 7th-10th century, 50.46.180

Tomb Figure Representing a Musician Playing a Bamboo Flute, Painted earthenware with white slip, 7th-10th century, 50.46.181

Tomb Figurine of a Court Lady, Earthenware with traces of pigments, 7th-10th century, 50.46.193

Court Lady Holding a Child, Slip coated earthenware with traces of pigment, 7th-8th century, 98.59

Striding Horse, 549-577, red earthenware, 2004.205.2

Tomb Retinue, about 725, earthenware with polychrome glaze, 49.1.1-10

Chang'an (Xian)

sancai ware (3-colored ceramics)

Pure Land Buddhism, Mahayana Buddhism

Amitabha Buddha

sutras

bodhisattva

bodhi tree

mandorla

bactrian and dromedary

* Items not currently on view

Web Resources

<http://archive.artsmia.org/art-of-asia/>

<http://www.metmuseum.org/toah> (Metropolitan Museum of Art's Timeline of Ancient History)