

SILVER AND GOLD  
IN ANCIENT CHINA



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J. J. LALLY & CO.  
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## IMAGES OF THE RED CLIFF IN SOUTHERN SONG PAINTING AND DECORATIVE ARTS

by Masaaki Itakura<sup>1</sup>

THE BODY OF LITERARY WORKS, calligraphy, and paintings by the great Northern Song scholar-official Su Shi (1036–1101; courtesy name Zizhan, sobriquet Dongpo Jushi) have had immeasurable influence down the ages. Although Su Shi was drawn into the vortex of factional rupture and ultimately exiled, first to Huangzhou and later to Hainan Island, his celebrity was universal from his own time on, and his literary fame even reverberated beyond China. After his death, the court of Emperor Huizong (r. 1100–1125) issued a prohibition of works by Su, who had been a conservative during a period dominated by the New Policies party (*xin fa dang*). Despite this, his writings, calligraphy, and paintings were beloved and fervently collected among scholar-bureaucrats.<sup>2</sup> The Southern Song period saw both the restoration of the Conservative party (*jiu fa dang*) and a great upsurge of interest in Su's literary works.<sup>3</sup>

Best known among Su Shi's literary works are his first and second "Prose-poems to the Red Cliff" (respectively, *Qian chibi fu* and *Hou chibi fu*), which he wrote in 1082 during his exile in Huangzhou (Huanggang, Hubei). These rhapsodic essays were composed during trips to the Red Cliff (*Chibi*), the first in autumn, on the sixteenth day of the seventh month, and the second three months later in winter, on the fifteenth day of the tenth month.<sup>4</sup> According to Su's "Preface to the Red Cliff Prose-poems" (*Shuqian chibi fu juan*), owned by the National Palace Museum in Taipei, he avoided circulating the work out of fear that it would be seen as politically motivated. Nonetheless, "Red Cliff" exhibits the poet's great malleability and quickly became Su's most representative work, clearly evidenced by the existence of Qiao Zhongchang's *Illustration to the Second Prose-poem to the Red Cliff*, a handscroll produced shortly after Su's death and owned by the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art (figure 1). Pictorializations of "Red Cliff" were commonplace by the end of the late Northern Song and can be divided into two broad categories: *narrative* pictorializations in



Figure 1. Qiao Zhongchang. *Illustration to the Later Prose-Poem to the Red Cliff* (detail). Northern Song Dynasty. Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City

the handscroll format and *iconic* images depicting a single scene, such as the boat trip, that symbolize the prose-poem in its entirety.<sup>5</sup> The former *narrative* category is comprised primarily of works that represent the epic-poetic second prose-poem, of which scrolls by Qiao Zhongchang and Wen Zhengming are examples. The Jin Dynasty artist Wu Yuanzhi's *Illustration to the Red Cliff* (National Palace Museum, Taipei) and the Southern Song artist Li Song's *Red Cliff* are characteristic examples of the latter *iconic* category (figure 2).

Pictorializations of the Red Cliff prose-poems are not limited to painting, however. Following developments in painting in the late Northern Song, a variety of painting-inspired designs can be found on decorative arts dated to the Southern Song period.<sup>6</sup>

Four characters, 後赤壁賦 ("Second Prose-poem to the Red Cliff"), and illustrations of the second Red Cliff prose-poem are carved in relief on a shallow, red lacquerware bowl, held in a private collection in Tokyo. At center-left appear Su Shi and two companions standing before Su's Xuetang ("Show Hall") studio

in Huangzhou. The following passage is carved near the left rim of the bowl: 是歲十月之望。步至雪堂。將歸于臨臯。二客從予過黃泥之坂 ("Under a full moon in the tenth month of that year, I walked toward Snow Hall on the way to Lingao [Pavilion]. Two companions joined me, and we crossed Huangni Hill"). Although the original prose-poem describes Su walking *from* Snow Hall, both the carved text and scene show Su walking *toward* the studio. In a scene above this, Su, fish in hand, returns briefly to the Lingao Pavilion, his home looking out over the Yangzi, to procure wine. The lower portions of the picture show a lively Su Shi pushing his way into the mountains so that he may gaze out over the Yangzi. To the right and slightly above this is a depiction of the boat trip to the Red Cliff along with two characters, 赤壁 ("red cliff"). A single crane, having flown in as if to take refuge on the central rock formation, is also shown. Finally, in the upper portions of the image appear a slumbering Su Shi and, to his upper left, the *single* Taoist in a robe of feathers that he sees in a dream.<sup>7</sup> In other words, the various episodes from Su Shi's second prose-poem are



Figure 2. Li Song. *Red Cliff*. Southern Song Dynasty. Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City

arranged within the circular space of the bowl. With the complexity of interactions between the various scenes, positional relationships seem not to have been taken into consideration, and it is clear that not all the depictions strictly adhere to the text.

Four characters, 東坡赤壁 (“Dongpo’s red cliff”), appear just above the center of a black lacquerware tray owned by Seishūji in Nagoya, Japan. While there are fewer scenes than the aforementioned red lacquerware work, it is clearly a composite of several scenes from the second Red Cliff prose-poem. The composition has a pronounced diagonal orientation with scenes from the first

half of the prose-poem, those that focus on the Lingao Pavilion, such as Su receiving the fish and procuring wine, placed at lower left. To the upper right appear climactic scenes, the boat trip to the Red Cliff and the single alighting crane. Most important here is the appearance of a bridge and willow trees in front of the Lingao Pavilion in the lower left of the composition, motifs that are also found before the Lingao Pavilion in the aforementioned painting by Qian Zhongchang. Since the prose-poem itself does not mention willows, it should be understood as a superimposition of Su Shi and motifs that call to mind the reclusive poet Tao Yuanming (365–427).<sup>8</sup> Also significant is the inclusion of the Dipper and Ox constellations in the night sky, motifs that appear in the first prose-poem. That is, while the tray is ostensibly a depiction of the second prose-poem, it is actually a fusion of elements from both works.

A recently discovered silver tray, in a private collection in New York, includes the characters 前赤壁 (“first red cliff”) on a book carried by a figure on a boat, a depiction of the boat trip to the Red Cliff used to illustrate the first prose-poem (figure 3). The tray shows Su Shi, drinking wine with his companions and singing. One of his guests, presumed to be Yang Shichang, accompanies him on the flute. Despite their differing media, there are a number of correspondences between this silver plate and the above lacquerware works, not only in the organization of the design, but also formal similarities, as well as the inclusion of the moon and Dipper and Ox constellations in the sky and the waves crashing against the cliff. Further, although the willows at left and the two birds hovering in the night sky do not appear in the text, in paintings and in lacquerware the willows point to Tao Yuanming, whom Su Shi venerated, while the flying birds are suggestive of the symbolic crane in the second prose-poem. With no hint of exile, here is an image of a scholar for whom seclusion has become the ideal.

According to accounts by Southern Song poets, the actual Red Cliff, Chibiji (“Red Nose Promontory”) in Huangzhou, was nothing more than a knoll upon which reeds, and little else, grew. Through the imagination of artists and viewers alike, however, a yearning for Su Shi and the images of his poetry were projected onto pictorializations of the prose-poems, thus vastly altering the actual landscape.<sup>9</sup> Uncoupled from its reality as the site of Su Shi’s revelry during exile, it was transformed into the poetic ruins of a great writer, and, as an object of yearning for Su Shi, the site was also imagined to be a utopia of sorts. On the two



Detail of Cat. 24



Detail of Figure 1

lacquer works discussed above, at least eight varieties of seasonal flowers—lotus, jasmine, chrysanthemum, plum, camellia, peony, rose, and more—appear on the outer edges, encircling central images of the Red Cliff, as if to adorn the Red Cliff as an object of longing. Moreover, although narrative illustrations of various scenes from the prose-poems continued to be produced after the Southern Song period, single, intimate images of the boat ride used to represent both prose-poems gained prominence. The aforementioned Li Song painting as well as a similar album leaf in the National Palace Museum in Taipei are evidence that this movement was pronounced already in the Southern Song, while the works at Seishūji and in New York serve to reinforce this notion.

Southern Song admiration for Red Cliff took a variety of shapes through the mediating role of diverse media. The decorative objects discussed here not only belong to the same phase of the process of image formation as the cited paintings do, but they also exhibit variations in design and scene selection and interpretation that are not to be found in any extant painting.

*Translation by Aaron M. Rio*

#### NOTES

1. The present article first appeared in Japanese as “Imeiji no naka no sekiheki: Sōdai no kaiga to kōgei” イメージの中の赤壁：宋代の絵画と工芸, in Nishida Hiroko and Tahira Namiko, eds., *Sōgen no bi: denrai no shikki o chūshin ni* 宋元の美：伝来の漆器を中心に (Tokyo: Nezu Bijutsukan, 2004): 42–44.

2. Uchiyama Seiya 内山精也, “*Dongpo wutai shian ryūden kō: Hokusō-matsu Nansō-hajime no shitaifu ni okeru So Shoku bungei sakuhin shūshū-netsu o megutte*” 『東坡烏台詩案』流伝考：北宋末～南宋初の士大夫における蘇軾文芸作品蒐集熱をめぐって [The collecting of works by Su Shi by scholar-officials in the later Northern Song and early Southern Song period], *Yokohama Shiritsu Daigaku gakuronsō, jinbun kagaku keiretsu* 47, no. 3 (1995).

3. Saeki Tomi 佐伯富, “So Tōba to sono meisei” 蘇東坡とその名声 [Su Dongpo and his fame], *Shoron* 20 (1982)

4. Yamamoto Kazuyoshi 山本和義, *Shijin to zōbutsu: So Shoku ronkō* 詩人と造物：蘇軾論考 [Poet and creation: a study of Su Shi], (Tokyo: Kenbun Shuppan, 2002).

5. See Guo li gu gong bo wu yuan bian ji wei yuan hui, eds., *Chibi fu shu hua te zhan* 赤壁賦書畫特別展 [Exhibition of calligraphy and painting related to the ‘Prose-poems to the Red Cliff’], (Taipei: Guo li gu gong bo wu yuan, 1984); Jerome Silbergeld, “Back to the Red Cliff: Reflections on the Narrative Mode in Early Literati Landscape Painting,” *Ars Orientalis* 25 (1995); and Miyazaki Noriko 宮崎法子, “Nansō jidai ni okeru jikkei-zu” 南宋時代における実景図 [Images of true landscapes in the Southern Song period], in *Sekai bijutsu daizenshū, Tōyō-hen 6 Nansō, Kin* (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 2000).

6. Nishioka Yasuhiro 西岡康宏, “*Nansō yōshiki* no chōshitsu: Suiōtei zu, Sekiheki fu zu bon nado o megutte” 「南宋様式」の彫漆：醉翁亭図・赤壁賦図盆などをめぐって [The ‘Southern Song style’ in carved lacquer: Images of ‘Old Drunkard Pavilion’ and ‘Red Cliff Prose-poems’], *Tōkyō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan kiyō* 19, 1984.

7. There were differing views in the Southern Song period regarding whether it was one or two Taoists that Su Shi saw in his dreams. The image in question shows only one. See Yi Ruofen 衣若芬, “Tan Su Shi *Hou chibi fu zhong suo meng daoshi renshu zhi wenti*” 談蘇軾「後赤壁賦」中所夢道士人數的問題 [On the number of Taoists appearing in Su Shi’s dream in his *Second Prose-poem to the Red Cliff*], in *Chibi manyou yu Xiyuan yaji: Su Shi yanjiu lunji* 赤壁漫遊与西園雅集：蘇軾研究論集 (Beijing: Xianzhuang shuju, 2001).

8. See my “*Kyōchūjō Go sekiheki fu zukan* (Neruson Atokinsu Bijutsukan) no shiteki ichi” 喬仲常「赤壁賦図巻」（ネルソン・アトキンス美術館）の史的位位置 [The historical importance of Qian Zhongzhang’s *Illustrations to the Later Prose-Poem to the Red Cliff* in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art], *Kokka* 1270 (2001).

9. See my “*Sekiheki o meguru jikkei, kotoba, gazō*” 赤壁をめぐる実景・言葉・画像 [The Red Cliff in landscape, word, and image], *Ajia yūgaku* 31, 2001.

中國朝代

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

漢	HAN DYNASTY	206 B.C.–A.D. 220
西漢	Western Han	206 B.C.–A.D. 8
新 (王莽)	Xin (Wang Mang)	A.D. 9–23
東漢	Eastern Han	24–220
三國	THREE KINGDOMS	220–265
晉	JIN DYNASTY	265–420
南北朝	SOUTHERN AND NORTHERN DYNASTIES	420–589
隋	SUI DYNASTY	581–618
唐	TANG DYNASTY	618–907
五代	FIVE DYNASTIES	907–960
遼	LIAO DYNASTY	907–1125
宋	SONG DYNASTY	960–1279
北宋	Northern Song	960–1127
南宋	Southern Song	1127–1279
金	JIN DYNASTY	1115–1234
元	YUAN DYNASTY	1279–1368

## CATALOGUE

# 1. A SILVER 'WINGED STALLION' HARNESS ORNAMENT

Xianbei type, *circa* 1st century B.C. – A.D. 1st century

of elongated pear shape, decorated in repoussé with a highly stylized figure of a flying horse with long neck and pointed wings rising from its shoulders, the head with flat cheeks and open mouth, the slender legs ending in sharp hooves gathered under the body as if running at a gallop, enclosed within an irregular border of waves and peaks arising from the edge, the downturned narrow sides with small holes punched through to allow for attachment to the leather harness.

Length 4<sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches (12.6 cm)

A matching silver plaque with 'flying horse' motif in relief, from the collection of E. V. Thaw, was exhibited at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and illustrated by Bunker, Watt and Sun in the catalogue entitled *Nomadic Art of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes*, New York, 2002, p. 55, no. 22, where the author states that the flying horse, a prominent animal figure in Xianbei mythology, was believed to have guided an early Xianbei leader and his people on their migration to the south. The same silver plaque is illustrated again in the catalogue of the special exhibition shown at the Nara National Museum, *Pegasus and the Heavenly Horses: Thundering Hoofs on the Silk Road*, Nara, 2008, p. 86, no. 85, with description on p. 247.

A very similar silver 'flying horse' plaque of this same type, in the Uldry Collection, was exhibited at the Rietberg Museum, Zurich in 1994 and illustrated in the catalogue *Chinesisches Gold und Silber: die Sammlung Pierre Uldry*, Zurich, 1994, p. 127, fig. 97.

Compare the gilt bronze plaques with 'flying horse' motif in relief, excavated in 1959 from an Eastern Han Xianbei site in Hulunbeierming, Inner Mongolia and illustrated in *Zhongguo Meishu Quanji: diaosu bian* (Compendium of Chinese Art: Sculptures), Vol. 2, Qin and Han Dynasties, Beijing, 1985, p. 141, no. 140, where they are described on p. 52 as indigenous works of art by the Xianbei. Compare also the gilt bronze plaques of similar form but decorated with a single-horned mountain goat in relief, excavated from a tomb in Xilin county, Guangxi province, illustrated in *Wenwu*, 1978, No. 9, p. 45, fig. 3.

鮮卑 飛馬紋銀馬飾 長 12.6 厘米



## 2. A GILT-SILVER SEAL WITH TORTOISE KNOB

Eastern Han Dynasty – Three Kingdoms Period, A.D. 3rd Century

the solid silver square block well cast with a tortoise standing on top with its oversized flipper-feet splayed into the corners, the domed carapace realistically rendered with linear rows of repeating lozenge-shaped segments, the head extended and the short tail touching the block, the worn surface showing traces of gilding in the recesses and on the underside, the tortoise hollowed and with a wide opening between the legs to allow for a cord to be strung under the body, the flat base with four seal characters in intaglio.

Height ½ inch (1.4 cm)

The seal may be read as *Zhao Guang si yin* (趙廣私印), which may be translated as “private seal of Zhao Guang.”

The owner of the seal may have been the second son of the famous General Zhao Yun (d. 229) of the Three Kingdoms period. According to *The History of the Three Kingdoms (Sanguo zhi)*, Zhao Guang served as a General (*Yamen jiang*) for the Shu State in present day Sichuan Province and died in a battle on the northern frontier.

In ancient China, the choice of material and design for seals often was determined by the hierarchy of official ranks. Most Han dynasty seals were made of bronze, and the great majority had simple tab-loop knobs. Seals made in silver or gold with tortoise-form knobs such as the present example were reserved for use by high ranking civil and military officials, and private seals often were extended the same official status despite the omission of the rank title.

Compare the Han dynasty silver tortoise-knob official seal unearthed in 1983 at Fengxiang county, Shaanxi province, illustrated in *Zhongguo meishu fenlei quanji, Zhongguo jin yin boli falang qi quanji* (Illustrated Classification of Chinese Art, Chinese Gold, Silver, Glass, and Cloisonné), Vol. I, Gold and Silver (I), Shijiazhuang, 2004, p. 160, no. 192. Another silver seal of this type, excavated in 1967 at Guanzhen, Weishi county, Henan province, is illustrated in the same volume, *loc. cit.*, no. 193, attributed to the Eastern Han dynasty.

Compare also the bronze tortoise-knob private seal in the National Palace Museum, Taipei, illustrated in *A Catalogue of the Special Exhibition of Bronze Seals Throughout the Dynasties in the National Palace Museum*, Taipei, 1987, p. 203, no. 132, attributed to the Eastern Han dynasty.

東漢 — 三國 鑲金銀龜鈕趙廣私印 高 1.4 厘米



## 3. A CAST SILVER TAOTIE MASK AND RING HANDLE

Han Dynasty (206 B.C. – A.D. 220)

the monster-mask with bulging eyes set under wide flat scrolled eyebrows which join and curve down to form the hooked nose supporting the solid loose ring, the sides of the mask formed as ‘C’-scrolls ending in tight spirals, the forehead centered with an inset linear ‘mountain peak’, the reverse with a pierced tab for attachment, the smooth burnished surface showing traces of bright green patination widely scattered and remains of encrusted earth, the back of the mask left plain and unfinished.

Height overall 3⅜ inches (8.5 cm)

A smaller gilt bronze *taotie* mask and ring handle of very similar form, originally mounted on a lacquer *lian*, unearthed from the Han imperial tomb complex at Mancheng in Hebei province, is illustrated in the excavation report *Mancheng Han mu fajue baogao* (Excavation Report of the Han Dynasty Tombs in Mancheng), Vol. II, Beijing, 1980, pl. 217, no. 2. A lacquer *lian* from the same tomb decorated with a similar mask and handle is illustrated in a line drawing, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 301, pl. 202.

漢 饕餮銀鋪首 通高 8.5 厘米



4. AN ARCHAIC SILVER SEAL WITH *BIXIE* KNOP

Eastern Han Dynasty – Jin Dynasty, A.D. 2nd–3rd Century

cast with a striding figure of a *bixie* on top of a solid square block, the mythical beast intricately modelled with the body of a tiger, the head with a pair of elongated horns, the shoulders with wings, tufts of fur at the cheeks and a long beard, shown with its body powerfully tensed, head pulled back and mouth open revealing rows of teeth, the surface unevenly oxidized to cloudy gray, the base with four seal characters cast in intaglio.

Height  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch (1.9 cm)

The seal may be read as *ting* □ *yin xin* (程□印信), which may be translated as “Ting □, his seal,” indicating that this was a personal seal, not the seal of a magistrate or a general. The second character, indicating the given name, is indecipherable.

The *bixie*, an auspicious mythical beast in Chinese mythology said to have the power to ward off evil, was a popular subject in the Han dynasty and many Han seals with *bixie* knops are recorded, but cast silver seals surviving from the Han period are rare.

A similar gilt bronze seal cast with a *bixie* knop, in the National Palace Museum, Taipei, is illustrated on the cover of *A Catalogue of the Special Exhibition of Bronze Seals Throughout the Dynasties in the National Palace Museum, Taipei, 1987*, and also illustrated in several views inside the catalogue, pp. 241–242, no. 170, attributed to the Eastern Han dynasty.

東漢 — 晉 銀辟邪鈕程□印信 高 1.9 厘米



5. AN INLAID SILVER GARMENT HOOK CAST WITH A MYTHICAL BEAST

Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 8)

the auspicious mythical *xiangrui* cast in high rounded relief, with the head of a horse, feline body, bifurcated horn, and double-scroll tail, its body elongated and twisted to fit the shaft, with chest thrust forward and head held high, the eyes inlaid in jet, the tapered neck at the opposite end with terminal in the form of a dragon's head turned back to form the hook, the dragon's eyes also inlaid in jet, the underside with a stud for attachment, showing scattered malachite green encrustation in the recesses.

Length  $3\frac{15}{16}$  inches (10 cm)

A very similar cast silver garment hook with remains of gold foil inlays but lacking the original dragon-head hook in the Miho Museum is illustrated in the inaugural exhibition catalogue *Miho Museum—South Wing*, Shigaraki, 1997, p. 206, no. 103.

Compare the bronze garment hook similarly cast with a mythical beast, unearthed in 1958 in Changsha, Hunan province, illustrated by Gao and Liu in 'Changsha shi dongbei jiao gu muzang fajue jianbao' (Excavation Report of an Ancient Burial Site Northeast of Changsha City), *Kaogu*, 1959, No. 12, pl. 1, no. 7.

西漢 鑲黑玉祥瑞銀帶鉤 長 10 厘米



6. A CENTRAL ASIAN CHASED SILVER WINE CUP

A.D. 5th–6th Century

the shallow circular bowl formed by hammering over a mould, with thick half-round lip around the rim, decorated on the interior with an incised roundel of a tall female figure with elaborately dressed hair but wearing only a necklace and a cape, shown standing under an arch formed by a fruiting grapevine and holding the vine with both hands, as if bending it down to assist a much smaller figure with curly hair, shown grasping the lowered end of the vine, harvesting the grapes, all enclosed within a medallion formed by an incised herringbone border, the underside plain and raised on a high ring foot with splayed sides which is inset over a mushroom-shaped knob at the base of the cup.

Diameter 4¾ inches (12.2 cm)

The imagery on this wine cup derives from a popular motif seen on silver and other luxury goods from Sasanian Persia. The style of execution and form of the cup indicate that it was most likely made in Sogdiana, a Central Asian Kingdom populated by an Eastern Iranian people settled in territories roughly corresponding to the modern provinces of Samarkand and Bokhara in modern Uzbekistan.

The Sogdians occupied a key position on the ancient Silk Road and Sogdian traders dominated the caravan routes of Central Asia. Luxury goods brought to China by Sogdian traders included silver and gold vessels and jewelry, grapes and wine as well as Buddhist images, glass, coral, and amber.

A Sasanian gold ring set with an onyx seal carved with a standing female figure in the same dancing pose, holding a long scarf in an arch over her head, discovered in the tomb of the Chinese official Li Xian (d. 569) at Guyuan, Ningxia province, on the Northwestern frontier of China is illustrated by Juliano and Lerner in *Monks and Merchants: Silk Road Treasures from Northwest China, Gansu and Ningxia Provinces, 4th–7th Century*, New York, 2001, p. 101, no. 32. The authors note that the same imagery is found on Sasanian luxury metalwork, citing and illustrating as an example a Sasanian silver dish in the Cleveland Museum of Art decorated in relief with a nude female shown dancing with her scarf arched over her head, with the trailing ends of her scarf transformed into luxuriant curling grapevines on either side, commenting: "If this figure is not intended to represent the great Sasanian goddess of water and fertility, Anahita, or a priestess of her cult, then it is certainly meant to evoke more generalized ideas of fecundity and abundance."

五至六世紀 中亞女神像銀酒杯 徑 12.2 厘米



## 7. A SOGDIAN PARCEL-GILT SILVER FLUTED CUP

circa A.D. 700

with heavily cast waisted sides decorated with a broad frieze of concave serpentine flutes alternately gilded and left plain, framed by beaded borders at the edge of the base and below the flared rim and moulded with a half-round lip above stepped plain bands on the exterior, the rounded base of the cup chased with a continuous band of foliate scroll picked out in gilding on a ring-punched ground, raised on a faceted octagonal foot with splayed edge ornamented with a border of large beading which is repeated on the outer edge of the small ring handle applied perpendicular to the side of the cup below a thick tab cast with a pair of addorsed elephant heads ornamenting the thumb-rest just below the mouth rim, the elephants' ears and the beaded band at the edge of the handle also parcel-gilt.

Width with handle 3½ inches (8.9 cm)

Height 2½ inches (6.3 cm)

Reported to have been found in China before World War II

From the Collection of Carl Kempe (1884–1967), Ekolsund, Sweden

From the Collection of Idemitsu Museum of Arts, Tokyo, Japan

Published Gyllensvärd, 'T'ang Gold and Silver,' *B.M.F.E.A.*, Bulletin no. 29, Stockholm, 1957, fig. 24k, described on pp. 63–64 as "made by a Persian silversmith," with a note that "... when the cup was offered for sale in Europe it was said to be Chinese, because it was found in that country."

Marschak, *Silberschätze Des Orients: Metallkunst des 3.–13. Jahrhunderts und ihre Kontinuität*, Leipzig, 1986, fig. 80, described on pp. 61, 75, 88, and included in an illustrated table on p. 427.

Qi, 'The Hejiacun Treasure and Sogdian Culture,' in *Les Sogdiens en Chine* by De la Vaissière and Trombert (eds.), Paris, 2005, p. 110 and as a line drawing in fig. 8. The same line drawing was previously illustrated by Qi in *Tang dai jinyinqi yanjiu* (Research on Tang Gold and Silver), Beijing, 1999, p. 346, fig. 3–38, no. 2, where the author suggests a mid-7th century dating.

Compare the octagonal gilt bronze cup with musicians cast in high relief, similarly decorated with small punched rings on the border of each panel, and with large beading on the ring handle and the edge of the octagonal foot, illustrated in *Hua wu da Tang chun: Hejiacun yibao jingcui* (Selected Treasures from Hejiacun Tang Hoard), Beijing, 2003, pp. 74–79, no. 4, where the author describes the cup as heavily cast, carved, and gilded, and suggests that the cup was probably made in China by Sogdian craftsmen during the mid-7th to early 8th century.

公元700年前後 粟特鑲金銀帶把杯 高 6.3 厘米



## 8. A PARCEL-GILT SILVER STEM CUP

A.D. 6th–7th Century

the deep bowl decorated with sixteen petal-flutes with half-round raised borders radiating up from the base of the bowl to a narrow band of squared beads and a border of pairs of inverted horizontal 'C'-scroll motifs in relief below the slightly flaring lip, and with the same fluting and decorative borders repeated in reverse on the sloping sides of the tall hollow foot and around the spreading base, the recessed areas of the decoration and the rim of the bowl and the footrim all gilded, the interior with a small medallion enclosing a florette with eight gilded petals, the surface with lightly encrusted green patination from burial.

Height 3 $\frac{5}{8}$  inches (9.2 cm)

No other relief-decorated silver stemcup of this distinctive design appears to have been previously recorded, but two small plain stemcups of similar form, regarded by Chinese scholars as foreign luxury goods imported into China from Mongolia or Central Asia, one gold and the other silver, were discovered in Xi'an, Shaanxi province, in the tomb of the Sui dynasty princess Li Jingxun who died in A.D. 608. The gold stemcup is illustrated by Watt in *China: Dawn of a Golden Age, 200–750 AD*, New York, 2004, p. 294, no. 186, and both stemcups are illustrated in *Tang Chang'an cheng jiao Sui Tang mu* (Excavations of the Sui and Tang Tombs at Xi'an), Beijing, 1980, pl. XI, fig.s 1 and 8.

A plain gold stemcup of similar form and slightly larger than the present example, included in an exhibition from China which toured Japan, is illustrated in the catalogue *Chūgoku Naimōko—hoppō kiba minzoku bunbutsu ten* (Chinese Inner Mongolia—Art of the Horseman of the North), Tokyo, 1983, p. 70, no. 68, attributed to the Tang dynasty.

The 'C'-shaped motifs in rounded relief on this stemcup are closely related to the relief designs on an Iranian silver vase in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, illustrated by Demange in *Glass, Gilding, & Grand Design: Art of Sasanian Iran (224–642)*, New York, 2007, p. 45, no. 12, attributed to the 8th Century.

Most scholars accept the traditional view that the stemcup vessel form was introduced to China by 'Silk Route' traders bringing stemcups from Sasanian Iran or Sogdiana, as outlined by Qi in *Tang dai jinyinqi yanjiu* (Research on Tang Gold and Silver), Beijing, 1999, p. 408, but the Japanese scholar Kuwayama Shōshin, quoted by Qi, *loc. cit.*, has proposed an alternative source in 'A Chronology of Tang Gold and Silver Excavated since 1956,' *Shilin*, Vol. 61, No. 6, 1977, noting that stemcups were a prevalent form in Byzantium in the 4th–5th century, and Byzantine stemcups also may have been brought to China by 'Silk Route' traders. A Byzantine gold stemcup decorated with elongated petal-flutes similar to those found on the present example, excavated in 1912 from a 7th century hoard in the Steppe region north of the Black Sea, now in the Hermitage Museum, illustrated in the catalogue of the travelling exhibition organized by the Tokyo National Museum, *Cultural Contacts between East and West in Antiquity and Middle Ages from USSR*, Tokyo, 1985, no. 146, may give some support to Kuwayama's conjecture.

六至七世紀 鑲金銀高足杯 高 9.2 厘米



9. A PARCEL-GILT SILVER 'TWIN DUCKS' BOX AND COVER

Late Tang/Five Dynasties, A.D. 9th–10th Century

of rounded cushion shape, finely chased with a pair of ducks amidst dense foliage and flowers filling a borderless gilded roundel in the center of the domed cover, with three similar oval gilded reserves chased with exotic foliage evenly spaced around the edges of the cover and continuing down the straight sides and onto the edges of the base, the decoration freely drawn with stippling and fine line details and all brightly gilded, the burnished surface divided into three lobes by deep notches at the edges and straight grooves across the sides.

Diameter 3¾ inches (9.5 cm)

Silver boxes of this large size surviving from the Tang dynasty are very rare, but many smaller examples are recorded, and 'twin ducks' was a popular Tang dynasty motif.

A small Tang silver cushion-shaped circular box and cover decorated with a pair of ducks and exotic foliage is illustrated by Kelley, *Chinese Gold & Silver in American Collections: Tang Dynasty A.D. 618–907*, Dayton, 1984, p. 71, no. 38, where the author comments: "The iconography of paired ducks and geese among blossoms is Indian in origin and can be found in the cave paintings at Ajanta. In China the duck was an emblem of felicity and as a pair represents conjugal fidelity."

晚唐/五代 鑲金雙鴨花卉紋銀蓋盒 徑 9.5 厘米



10. A LARGE PARCEL-GILT SILVER DISH

Tang Dynasty, A.D. 8th–9th Century

of shallow circular form with gently rounded flaring sides resting on a wide ring foot, decorated in very low relief in the center with a floral roundel in the form of a continuous scrolling vine bearing three blooms alternating with three large leaves encircling a single bloom from the same vine in the center, all drawn in outline with a strong chased line and picked out in gilding, with finely incised linear details, the mouth with a raised half-round border around the inner rim also picked out in gilding, the underside plain, the ring foot made separately and soldered on, with some bright green patination at the join where the solder has corroded, inscribed on the base with a single character *yong* (詠) which may be translated as “to sing praise of,” and with other incised symbols including a triangle with two lines forming an acute angle at the apex and associated angular and curved lines clustered near the footrim.

Diameter 9½ inches (24.1 cm)

Compare the smaller parcel-gilt silver dish of the same shape, with a similar raised half-round border around the inner rim, decorated with a gilded tiger motif at the center in low relief, excavated from Lijiayingzi, Aohan Banner, Chifeng, Inner Mongolia and now in the Inner Mongolia Museum, illustrated in *Chifeng jinyinqi* (Important Archaeological Sites for Excavated Gold- and Silverware in Chifeng Region), Huhehaote, 2006, p. 34, no. CJ021, described as Tang period but Sogdian workmanship.

Compare also a smaller Tang parcel-gilt silver dish of lobed form decorated with a similar parcel-gilt floral roundel in the center, discovered at Qujiangchi, in the southern suburbs of Xi'an, Shaanxi province, now in the Xi'an City Cultural Relics Management Authority, illustrated in *Zhongguo wenwu jinghua dacidian: jin yin yushi juan* (The Compendium of Chinese Art: Gold, Silver, Jade and Stones), Hong Kong, 1994, p. 110, no. 71.

唐 鑲金折枝串花紋銀盤 徑 24.1 厘米



11. A PARCEL-GILT SILVER TEA SCOOP (ZE)

Tang Dynasty, A.D. 7th–8th Century

finely engraved on the terminal of the long arching handle with a complex pattern of diamond trellis, petal and star motifs on a ring-punched ground, showing remains of light gilding, the rest of the handle and the shallow ovoid bowl of the spoon entirely plain, the surface very well preserved, with bright green malachite encrustation at the margins of the terminal and widely scattered on the back.

Length 10½ inches (26.5 cm)

Compare the Tang dynasty gilt-silver scoop of this form similarly decorated with engraved diamond trellis and more complex designs, unearthed in 1987 from the underground chamber of Famen temple in Fufeng, Shaanxi province, illustrated by Han and Wang in *Famensi digong chaju yu Tang ren yincha yishu* (Tea Utensils from the Famensi Underground Chamber and the Art of Tea Drinking in the Tang Dynasty), Beijing, 2004, p. 39 and in a line drawing on p. 48, where the author identifies the scoop as a ze (則). The same scoop was previously illustrated in the catalogue of the traveling exhibition, *Tō kōtei kara no okurimono* (Gifts of the Tang Emperors: Hidden Treasures from the Famen Temple), Niigata, 1999, p. 94, no. 53.

Compare also the Tang dynasty gilt-silver scoop of the same form, decorated with engraved scrolling vines, in the catalogue of the special exhibition of the Uldry Collection, *Chinesisches Gold und Silber: die Sammlung Pierre Uldry*, Zurich, 1994, pp. 166–167, no. 156.

According to *Cha Jing* (The Classic of Tea), the tea master uses the ze to scoop the proper amount of tea powder and stir it into the boiling water. The elegant long handle is a practical design as it keeps the hand at a safe distance from the heat.

唐 鑲金銀茶匙 長 26.5 厘米



12. A SILVER LONG-HANDLED TEA SCOOP (ZE)

Early Tang Dynasty, A.D. 7th century

the slender curving handle of half-round form with flattened back, tapering to a simplified duck's head terminal at one end and flattened out to a lotus-petal-shaped very shallow curving scoop at the other end.

Length 9¾ inches (24.8 cm)

A plain silver tea scoop with long straight handle, excavated from the tomb of Li Jingxun, dated by epitaph to A.D. 608, is illustrated in *Tang Chang'an chengjiao Sui Tang mu* (Excavations of the Sui and Tang Tombs at Xi'an), Beijing, 1980, pl. 12, no. 4, with description on p. 19.

Compare also the silver spoon with shallow petal-shaped scoop, long curving handle and duck's head terminal, decorated with engraved ducks and scrolling vines, excavated in 1983 near the Tang capital at Xi'an, Shaanxi province, illustrated by Han and Deydier in *Ancient Chinese Gold*, Paris, 2001, p. 164, no. 399.

唐 銀茶匙 長 24.8 厘米



13. A PARCEL-GILT SILVER POURING BOWL AND STAND

Tang Dynasty (A.D. 618–907)

the quatrefoil bowl with steeply rounded sides rising to an everted rim interrupted by a wide gutter-shaped spout and resting on a high ring foot, decorated on the interior with an engraved and gilded medallion of twin ducks with wings displayed, flying in a circle and each holding in its beak a scrolling stem sprouting twin flowers, trefoil leaves and scrolling tendrils, all reserved on a ring-punched ground and enclosed within a border of overlapping petals; the stand in the form of a large flower with shallow sides divided into eight wide petals radiating from an engraved ring of linked circles enclosing pointed bosses rising from a narrow gilded band, the gilded band with an inner diameter matching the diameter of the foot of the pouring bowl, the stand also raised on a high ring foot decorated with a gilded border of small engraved circles and the tips of the petals around the rim touched with gilding.

Length of pouring bowl with spout 7 inches (17.8 cm)

Diameter of stand 5¾ inches (14.5 cm)

Compare the parcel-gilt silver pouring bowl (*yi*) decorated with twin ducks and flower sprays on the exterior discovered in a Tang dynasty hoard at Hejiacun and now in the collection at the Shaanxi History Museum, illustrated in *Hua wu da Tang chun: Hejiacun yibao jingcui* (Selected Treasures from Hejiacun Tang Hoard), Beijing, 2003, pp. 244–247, no. 65, where the author cites one other silver *yi* from the tomb of Shui Qiu as the only comparable example, and states that silver *yi* vessels are very rare in the Tang dynasty.

The second Tang silver *yi* mentioned above, unearthed from the tomb of Shui Qiu in Lin'an, Zhejiang province, is illustrated as a line drawing by Han in *Hai nei wai Tang dai jinyinqi cui bian* (Selections of Tang Gold and Silver Wares from Inland and Overseas), Xi'an, 1989, p. 145, no. 284.

Compare the two gilt-silver flower-form cupstands with wide petal-lobed rims, one dated by inscription to A.D. 860, discovered in 1957 outside of Hepingmeng at Xi'an, Shaanxi province, illustrated in the excavation report in *Kaogu*, 1959, No. 11, pl. 6.

唐 鑲金鴛鴦花卉紋銀匜及鑲金蓮瓣銀托 匜長 17.8 厘米 托徑 14.5 厘米



14. A LARGE REPOUSSÉ AND CHASED PARCEL-GILT SILVER BOWL

Tang Dynasty, A.D. 8th Century

boldly decorated with a gilded dragon-fish in high relief, shown leaping with large jaws stretched open in an attempt to grasp the 'flaming pearl', its scaly body twisted to fill the central medallion and chased with fine details, surrounded by rippled churning waves engraved on a finely punched ring-matte ground, within a border of feathery overlapping petals also picked out in gilding, the plain flaring sides divided into four lobes by raised radiating ribs, and the notched rim embellished with a gilded band of engraved foliate scroll on ring-matte grounds, the underside plain and the whole raised on a high, flaring ring foot with sides notched to match the notches on the underside of the bowl, the side of the foot with a single character *qiong* (瓊) lightly scratched onto the surface, possibly the name of the original owner, and with two indecipherable characters lightly scratched onto the side and two more on the base.

Diameter 8½ inches (21.6 cm)

Compare the Tang dynasty parcel-gilt silver bowl similarly decorated with a repoussé dragon-fish in a central medallion, excavated from Inner Mongolia and now in the collection of the Ordos Museum, illustrated in *Zhongguo meishu fenlei quanji*, *Zhongguo jin yin boli falang qi quanji* (Illustrated Classification of Chinese Art, Chinese Gold, Silver, Glass, and Cloisonné), Vol. II, Gold and Silver (II), Shijiazhuang, 2004, p. 47, no. 91.

A Tang dynasty parcel-gilt silver dish decorated with a pair of repoussé dragon-fish in the central medallion, excavated in 1976 from the Karachin Banner, Zhaomeng, Liaoning province, is illustrated in *Kaogu*, 1977, No. 5, p. 328, no. 3 and in a rubbing on p. 329; one other silver dish of closely related design unearthed from the same pit includes a dedicatory inscription by the owner, Liu Zan (d. 796), indicating that the dish was made to be presented as tribute to the imperial palace.

唐 鑲金摩羯紋四曲銀碗 徑 21.6 厘米



15. A SMALL OVAL SILVER BASIN WITH RING HANDLE

Tang Dynasty (A.D. 618–907)

with very gently rounded plain flaring sides rising from a flat rimless base, applied at one end with six-petal florettes on the interior and exterior, centered with a loop and loose ring handle on the exterior, the bright burnished surface with widely scattered malachite green corrosion.

Length 4<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches (10.7 cm)

Compare the Tang dynasty bronze basin on flat base with loose ring handle at one end illustrated in the catalogue of the special exhibition organized by the Kubosō Memorial Museum of Art in Izumi, *Chūgoku no kyōdō: rokuro hiki no seidōki* (Tin-Bronze of China: Bronzes of the Potter's Wheel), Osaka, 1999, p. 53, no. 108, with caption and discussion on p. 109 where the author states that the rare oval form shows the influence of Central Asian metalwork introduced by 'Silk Road' traders.

唐 素地銀長杯 長 10.7 厘米



16. A SILVER DISH WITH CHASED FOLIATE DECORATION

Late Tang/Five Dynasties, A.D. 9th–10th Century

of flat circular form with narrow rounded sides and plain everted rim, finely chased with a large central roundel of exotic flowers, small stylized pomegranate-like fruits and wide feather-shaped leaves with scalloped edges.

Diameter 6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches (16 cm)

The chased decoration on this dish is closely related to the well-known group of late Tang silver bowls decorated with parcel-gilt borderless panels of finely drawn exotic blooms and feathery foliage which have been widely published in museum catalogues and scholarly journals. Compare, for example, the chased decoration in this style and technique on the bowl and cover from the Kempe Collection which was included in the exhibition that travelled to ten museums in the United States, illustrated in the catalogue by Gyllensvärd, *Chinese Gold, Silver and Porcelain: The Kempe Collection*, New York, 1971, p. 54, no. 56. Two other parcel-gilt late Tang silver bowls decorated in the same style and technique are illustrated in the catalogue published by the Museum Rietberg, *Chinesisches Gold und Silber: die Sammlung Pierre Uldry*, Zurich, 1994, pp. 160–161, nos. 147–148.

晚唐/五代 折枝石榴紋銀盤 徑 16 厘米



17. A SMALL CHASED SILVER BOX AND COVER

Tang Dynasty (A.D. 618–907)

of circular cushion shape, with two matching sections each gently domed and finely chased with a dense pattern of exotic flowering vine scroll reserved on ring-matted grounds, the narrow straight sides decorated with detached cloud motifs on ring-matted grounds between plain borders, with a thin upright inner rim to receive the closely-fitted cover.

Diameter  $1\frac{3}{8}$  inches (3.5 cm)

Finely made gold and silver boxes of this type containing rouge or aromatic balm were gifts from the emperor on *la ri* (臘日)—a winter celebration taking place on the eighth day of December in the lunar calendar, according to Liu Yuxi (A.D. 772–842), as recorded in chapter six hundred and two of *Quan Tang wen* (全唐文), the compilation of Tang records compiled by Qing scholars early in the 19th century.

Compare the two smaller Tang dynasty silver boxes of this form chased with very similar decoration illustrated by Gyllensvärd and Scott in *Kinesiskt Guld och Silver I Carl Kempe-Samlingen* (Chinese Gold and Silver in the Carl Kempe Collection), Ulricehamn, 1999, p. 133, nos. 93 and 94.

Compare also the two Tang dynasty silver boxes chased with closely related decoration of scrolling vines in the Muwen Tang Collection, illustrated by Kwan in *Chinese Silver*, Hong Kong, 2004, pp. 88–89, nos. 26 and 27.

A similarly decorated small silver box of this type from the collection of James W. Alsdorf is illustrated by Singer in the catalogue of the special exhibition at the China Institute, *Early Chinese Gold & Silver*, New York, 1971, p. 39, no. 42. Another small silver box decorated with birds and scrolling vines, from the collection of Frederick M. Meyer, is illustrated by Trubner in the catalogue of the special exhibition at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, *The Arts of the T'ang Dynasty*, Los Angeles, 1957, pp. 124–125, no. 353.

唐 寶相紋銀蓋盒 徑 3.5 厘米



18. A PAIR OF SMALL CHASED SILVER CUPS

Tang Dynasty (A.D. 618–907)

each wine cup of circular form resting on a narrow ring foot finely decorated on the exterior with incised exotic vine scroll sprouting trefoil leaves, small flowers and bunches of stylized fruit on a ring-punched ground, the steeply rounded bombé sides curving in below the flared rim and rounded at the base, the interior plain.

Diameter  $1\frac{9}{16}$  inches (4 cm)

A silver wine cup of this form similarly chased with a dense pattern of flowering vine scroll, formerly in the collection of C. T. Loo, is illustrated by Beurdeley in *The Chinese Collector Through the Centuries: From the Han to the 20th Century*, Fribourg, 1966, p. 225, Cat. 34.

唐 纏枝紋銀杯一對 徑 4 厘米



19. A CLAM SHELL BOX AND CHASED SILVER COVER

Tang Dynasty, A.D. 8th–9th Century

the shell-shaped silver cover with domed surface finely decorated with a *fenghuang* bird with fan-shaped crest and long luxurious tail feathers shown walking with wings displayed, surrounded by exotic blooms and lush foliage borne on long curling stems, the decoration all freely incised in outline and with fine stippling and linear details, reserved on a dense ring-punched ground, and enclosed within a narrow plain border around the rim and downturned narrow sides which are angled over the edge of the natural clam shell base, with a small silver ring at one side of the cover linked by a silver chain to a similar ring on a peg drilled through and attached to the shell.

Width 4 inches (10.2 cm)

Compare the small Tang dynasty clam shell-form silver box and cover in the collection of The Art Institute of Chicago, illustrated by Trubner in the catalogue of the special exhibition, *The Arts of the T'ang Dynasty*, Los Angeles, 1957, p. 125, no. 354. The same silver box and cover is illustrated again in the catalogue of the special exhibition which toured Japan in 1989, *Masterpieces of Chinese Arts from The Art Institute of Chicago*, Osaka, 1989, p. 35, no. 27.

A small parcel-gilt clam shell-form silver box and cover excavated from the tomb of Li Jingyou, dated by epitaph to A.D. 738, is illustrated in the excavation report entitled *Yanshi Xingyuan Tang mu* (The Tang Tombs in Yanshi Xingyuan), Beijing, 2001, col. pl. 4-3 and pl. 25-3, with a line drawing on p. 131, no. 120-1. Another parcel-gilt clam shell-form silver box and cover excavated from the tomb of Zheng Xun, dated by epitaph to A.D. 778, is illustrated in the same excavation report, *op. cit.*, col. pl. 7-2 and pl. 25-4, with a line drawing on p. 133, no. 122-2.

Two natural clam shell-boxes found in the Tang dynasty tomb of Jinxiangxianzhu near Xi'an, Shaanxi province are illustrated in the excavation report, *Tang Jinxiangxianzhu mu* (Tang Dynasty Tomb of Jinxiangxianzhu), Beijing, 2002, pl. 130, with description on p. 80, where the author suggests that the shell-boxes probably were used to hold cosmetic powder.

唐 鳳凰紋銀蓋蚌盒 寬 10.2 厘米



20. A PARCEL-GILT SILVER FLOWER-SHAPED BOWL

Late Tang/Five Dynasties, A.D. 9th–10th Century

decorated in high relief on the interior with a large roundel of a pair of long-tailed birds flying in opposite directions, each holding in its beak the scrolled end of a long undulating stem bearing flowers and fruit also in high relief, reserved on a punched ground of fine rings and enclosed by a narrow border of raised bosses surrounded by a wider engraved border of overlapping petal motifs, the steep flaring sides divided into five petal lobes by indented grooves on the exterior and corresponding raised ribs on the interior, the rim canted out and engraved with foliate scroll on a ring-punched ground below the lip on the interior, the decoration at the rim and in the roundel all picked out in gilding, contrasting with the ring-punched ground, the flat base of the bowl raised on a slightly splayed high ring foot.

Diameter  $5\frac{1}{8}$  inches (13 cm)

A very similar Tang dynasty silver footed bowl decorated with twin birds and scrolling vines on a finely punched 'pearl' ground, in the collection of the Cultural Relics Administration Committee of Wugong county, Xianyang, Shaanxi province, is illustrated in *Xianyang Wenwu jinghua* (The Cream of Xianyang Relics), Xianyang, 2002, p. 67. Another silver footed bowl of this form with similar decoration, excavated in 1982 at Dingmaoqiao, Dantu county, Jiangsu province, is illustrated by Rastelli (ed.) in the catalogue of the special exhibition, *China at the Court of the Emperors: Unknown Masterpieces from Han Tradition to Tang Elegance (25–907)*, Florence, 2008, p. 207, no. 89, with description on p. 296.

A bowl of this form decorated in the same style and technique with twin birds and floral scroll in the central roundel, from the Brundage Collection, now in the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, is illustrated in the catalogue *Mostra d'Arte Cinese* (Exhibition of Chinese Art), Venice, 1954, p. 85, no. 276 and the same bowl is illustrated again by Trubner, *The Arts of the T'ang Dynasty*, Los Angeles, 1957, pp. 116–117, no. 331; by Singer, *Early Chinese Gold & Silver*, China Institute, New York, 1971, p. 53, no. 82; and by Kelley, *Chinese Gold & Silver in American Collections: Tang Dynasty A.D. 618–907*, Dayton, 1984, p. 53, no. 9.

Another similarly decorated Tang silver bowl of this form is illustrated in the auction catalogue, *Die Sammlung des Herrn Dr. Otto Burchard, Berlin*, Cassirer and Helbing, Berlin, 22nd May, 1928, lot 206.

Compare also the similar parcel-gilt silver bowl without its footring in the collection of Carl Kempe, illustrated by Gyllensvärd and Scott in *Kinesiskt Guld och Silver I Carl Kempe-Samlingen* (Chinese Gold and Silver in the Carl Kempe Collection), Ulricehamn, 1999, p. 164, no. 120.

晚唐/五代 鑲金花鳥紋五曲銀碗 徑 13 厘米



21. AN OPENWORK AND REPOUSSÉ SILVER VOTIVE STUPA

Northern Song Dynasty, dated by inscription A.D. 986

the square reliquary decorated with figural panels depicting famous scenes from *jataka* stories in relief and openwork, each panel framed by a beaded arch and flanked by guardian birds on rectangular pedestals at the corners, all surmounted by flaring panels decorated with exotic lotus in relief and supporting four angled leaf-shaped projections decorated in relief with scenes from the life of the Buddha, the domed top incised with undulating waves surrounding an open lotus blossom with overlapping petals radiating from a circular aperture for the tall central pillar rising from a pierced sphere and adorned with seven octagonal umbrellas, three discs and a small globe, the stepped pedestal base pierced with *ruyi*-shaped openings at the sides and supporting a central platform with a hollow ring of radiating petals to receive the *sarira* or relic to be enshrined, hidden within the stupa, the projecting upper border of the base incised with a lengthy dedicatory inscription.

Height 14 inches (35.5 cm)

From the Collection of J. T. Tai, acquired at Hartman Galleries, New York, 1975

The inscription may be read as: 時大宋雍熙三年八月二十四日記打塔人李令巽 左街衛國寺講維摩經 沙門從誠與母趙氏造多寶佛塔舍利銀塔壹 所願近親慈氏 遠值龍花 法界有情 同成佛果 which may be translated as: In the time of the Great Song dynasty, Yongxi era, third year, eighth month, twenty-fourth day, made by Li Lingxun. Sermons on the *Vimalakirti* Sutra were read at the Weiguo Monastery on Zuo Avenue and Monk Congcheng and Madame Zhao commissioned one silver stupa to contain precious relics of *Prabhūtaratna* Buddha. May [our] dear family member Madame Ci cultivate the bodhi tree of Maitreya near and far, spread the Buddha's teaching to all living beings [and eventually] all beings together will attain Buddhahood.

Compare the very similar repoussé openwork stupa made of copper with traces of gilding from the Nitta Collection, now in the collection of the National Palace Museum, Taipei, incised with a dedicatory inscription on the same register of the base dated to the second year of Tianyou, Tang dynasty (A.D. 905), illustrated by Chen in *Lidai jintong fo zaixiang tezhan tulu* (*A Special Exhibition of Recently Acquired Gilt-Bronze Buddhist Images*), Taipei, 1996, pp. 50–55, no. 13, and on pp. 119–121.

A silver openwork stupa very similar to the present example, excavated in 2001 from the underground chamber of Leifeng Pagoda (built A.D. 972) in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, is illustrated in *Leifeng yizhen* (*Treasures from the Leifeng Pagoda*), Beijing, 2002, pp. 130–158.

This distinctive form of square Buddhist reliquary is known as an Ashoka Stupa, called *Ayuwangta* (阿育王塔) in China. The name refers to an important early royal patron of Buddhism, the Indian King Ashoka (r. 272–231 B.C.) of the Maurya Dynasty who, according to legend, commissioned 84,000 monasteries and stupas for Buddhist scriptures and relics.

King Qian Hongchu (r. A.D. 948–978) of the Wuyue Kingdom, following the example of King Ashoka, commissioned 84,000 stupas of this form each inscribed with a dedication including a reign date corresponding to A.D. 955. A bronze example from that group in the collection of the Harvard University Art Museums is illustrated by Proser (ed.) in the catalogue of special exhibition, *Pilgrimage and Buddhist Art*, Asia Society, New York, 2010, p. 63, no. 18, where the author identifies the scenes depicted on four sides of the stupa as being "... from *jataka* tales featuring King Sibi offering his flesh, King Chandraprabha sacrificing his head, King Sudhira offering his eyes, and Prince Mahasattva sacrificing his body to the tigress and her cubs." The same *jataka* scenes are depicted on the present example.

Several Ashoka stupas from the Qian Hongchu group are preserved in Japan. Three are published in the Nara National Museum exhibition catalogue *Seichi Ninpō: Nihon bukkyō 1300-nen no genryū, subete wa koko kara yatte kita* (*Sacred Ningbo: Gateway to 1300 years of Japanese Buddhism*), Nara, 2009, p. 49, no. 33, from Seigan-ji Temple, Fukuoka; no. 34, from Tokyo National Museum; and no. 35, from Nara National Museum.

Another Ashoka stupa made of iron, bearing an inscription by Qian Hongchu dated to A.D. 965, unearthed in 1969 from the underground chamber of the Jingzhi temple Pagoda, Dingzhou, Hebei province, is illustrated in the catalogue of the travelling exhibition organized by the Idemitsu Museum of Arts, *Chika kyūden no ihō: Chūgoku Kahoku-shō Teishū Hokusō tōki shutsudo bunbutsuten* (*Treasures from the Underground Palaces: Excavated Treasures from Northern Song Pagodas*, Dingzhou, Hebei Province, China), Tokyo, 1997, no. 4.

北宋 雍熙三年銘 銀阿育王塔 高 35.5 厘米



22. A PAIR OF PARCEL-GILT FLOWER-SHAPED SILVER SHALLOW BOWLS

Northern Song Dynasty, A.D. 10th Century

each with slightly flaring rounded sides divided into six petal lobes by deep grooves on the exterior and corresponding ribs on the interior rising to notches at the scalloped lip, resting on a rimless flat base engraved in the center of the interior with a small quatrefoil flowerhead picked out in gilding.

Diameter 5 inches (12.7 cm)

A pair of Northern Song silver dishes of very similar six-petal flower shape with less deep sides in the Muwen Tang Collection is illustrated by Kwan in *Chinese Silver*, Hong Kong, 2004, pp. 154–155, and the author illustrates a line drawing of another very similar silver dish discovered in the underground chamber of Baoyan Temple, erected in the Jin dynasty at Yuyan village, Hu'an, Hebei province, illustrated in *Wenwu*, 1993, No. 4, pl. 6-5, and in a line drawing on p. 16, no. 31. Kwan notes that the plain elegant style of these flower-shaped dishes was "...fashionable among the upper echelons of Song society ... and the form was emulated in lacquer and porcelain of the period."

Six-petal flower-shaped shallow bowls in white porcelain and green-glazed stoneware discovered in 1969 in the underground chamber of Jingzhi Temple (dedicated 977) are illustrated in the catalogue of the travelling exhibition entitled *Chika kyūden no ihō: Chūgoku Kahoku-shō Teishū Hokusō tōki shutsudo bunbutsuten* (Treasures from the Underground Palaces: Excavated Treasures from Northern Song Pagodas, Dingzhou, Hebei Province, China), Idemitsu Museum of Arts, Tokyo, 1997, nos. 71, 73, and 79.

A six-petal flower-shaped silver bowl of very similar form and size excavated in 1970 from a Five Dynasties tomb in Banqiao, Lin'an, Zhejiang province, is illustrated in *Wenwu*, 1975, Vol. 8, p. 72, no. 7.

Compare also the pair of similar dishes of slightly smaller size from the Kempe Collection illustrated by Gyllensvärd and Scott in *Kinesiskt Guld och Silver I Carl Kempe-Samlingen* (Chinese Gold and Silver in the Carl Kempe Collection), Ulricehamn, 1999, p. 209, no. 163.

北宋 鑲金六曲平底銀洗一對 徑 12.7 厘米



23. AN OCTAFOIL SILVER 'TWIN BIRDS' DISH

Southern Song Dynasty (A.D. 1127–1279)

decorated with a pair of long-tailed songbirds shown with wings displayed, flying in opposite directions amidst scattered leafy floral sprays, all incised in fine lines and fully detailed within an octafoil reserve filling the flat center of the dish, the plain flaring shallow sides also divided into eight rounded lobes and the flat rim with raised lip of conforming outline, decorated on top of the rim with a running band of 'classic scroll' incised in a dotted line technique, interrupted by a stamped inscription which includes two characters which may be read as *san lang* (三郎) and two other indecipherable characters.

Diameter 5½ inches (14 cm)

Similar designs of twin birds in flight are seen on Song silver boxes discovered in 1959 in a hoard buried at a temple site in Deyang county, Sichuan, published in an excavation report entitled '*Sichuan Deyang chutu de Song dai yinqi jianjie*' (An Introduction of Song Dynasty Silver Excavated at Deyang, Sichuan) in *Wenwu*, 1961, No. 11, pp. 48–52, illustrated in line drawings on p. 52, nos. 15–16.

The same stamped inscription appears on a set of ten silver dishes excavated in 1996 from a hoard containing late Song – early Yuan objects, illustrated in *Hunan chutu jinyinqi* (Gold and Silver Excavated in Hunan), Changsha, 2009, pp. 97–106, with detail images of two of the inscriptions on pp. 98 and 99.

南宋 八曲花鳥紋銀碟 徑 14 厘米



24. A CHASED SILVER 'RED CLIFF' PICTORIAL DISH

Song Dynasty, A.D. 13th Century

decorated with a scene from the *Former Red Cliff Ode* by Su Shi (1037–1101), finely engraved in painterly *baimiao* style showing the poet in court robes with two companions relaxing in a boat drifting on tranquil water, with a winepot and cups on the table in front of them, one figure playing the flute and the other holding an open book, beside rocky banks with grasses and tall reeds, a willow and a cassia tree, and with a cascade spilling down from high cliffs at the far shore, the sky with a pair of birds flying to the left towards a constellation of seven stars drawn as circles joined by thin lines to form the "Big Dipper" seen through drifting clouds surrounding a full moon engraved with the legendary *yu tu dao yao* (玉兔搗藥) scene of the Moon Rabbit under the cassia tree, pounding a pestle in a mortar to mix his magic elixir of immortality, the shallow plain sides of octafoil bracket-lobed outline rising to a barbed everted rim.

Diameter 10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches (26.5 cm)

Published Itakura, 'Red Cliff in Imagery—Song Dynasty Painting and Artifact,' in *Sōgen no bi: denrai no shikki o chūshin ni* (The Colors and Forms of Song and Yuan China – Featuring Lacquerwares, Ceramics and Metalwares), by Nishida and Tahira (eds.), Nezu Institute of Fine Arts, Tokyo, 2004, p. 44, fig. 3

The *Chibi fu* (Red Cliff Odes) are two prose poems written by Su Shi (1037–1101) as first person narratives of philosophical conversations with friends while drifting past the historic Red Cliff on the banks of the Yangzi River. The poet describes the setting and the actions of his companions in the boating party and records his thoughts on the brevity of life and the futile striving of ambitious men. The picture on this silver dish closely follows the poet's description, and the three Chinese characters inscribed on the book held by a figure in the boat: *qian chibi* (前赤壁, Former Red Cliff), give the popular title of the first ode.

Su Shi was one of the most influential scholar-officials of the Northern Song. He was famous in his lifetime as a statesman, artist, calligrapher, writer, and poet. Su Shi died in 1101, but his reputation and fame continued to grow after his death as shrines and memorials were erected in his honor and connoisseurs collected his poems and calligraphy. Scenes from his life and literature, especially the scene of the Red Cliff Odes, which was his most popular work, were painted soon after his death. A 'Red Cliff' painting by the Southern Song artist Li Song (1190–1225) in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, with a closely related composition showing Su Shi and companions in a small boat on the moonlit Yangzi River, is illustrated in *Eight Dynasties of Chinese Painting: the Collections of the Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum, Kansas City, and the Cleveland Museum of Art*, Cleveland, 1980, p. 54, no. 37. An anonymous Southern Song painting of the same subject, in the National Palace Museum, Taipei, is illustrated by Lee and Lin (eds.), *Juan qi qian dui xue: chi bi wenwu tezhan* (A Thousand Churning Waves: The Legendary Red Cliff Heritage), Taipei, 2009, pp. 82–83, no. 11-3, described as "a typical depiction of *Chibi* (Red Cliff) scene during the Southern Song."

The style of depiction of the trees, rocks and waves on the present dish compares very well to the style of another 'Red Cliff' painting by the artist Qiao Zhongchang (active early 12th century), in the collection of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, illustrated by Lin (ed.), *Da guan: Bei Song shuhua tezhan* (Grand View: Special Exhibition of Northern Song Painting and Calligraphy), Taipei, National Palace Museum, 2006, pp. 164–169. Compare also the 'Red Cliff' painting attributed to Wu Yuanzhi (active late 12th century), depicting a small boat sailing by a steep mountain cliff, in the National Palace Museum, Taipei, illustrated in the catalogue of the same 2009 special exhibition, *op. cit.*, pp. 74–75, no. 11-2.

A Ding ware white porcelain dish with shallow lobed sides and barbed rim very similar in form to the present silver dish is illustrated by Rawson in *The British Museum Book of Chinese Art*, London, 1992, p. 219, no. 160, attributed to the 12th century. Rawson describes the form of the dish as "copied from silver ware of the same period," and suggests that the central scene "Xiniu Gazing at the Moon" may have been reproduced from a contemporary painting.

宋 「前赤壁賦」山水人物銀盤 徑 26.5 厘米



25. A SILVER VASE WITH DRAGON FRIEZE

Southern Song Dynasty (A.D. 1127–1279)

of pear shape with cylindrical neck rising to a wide mouth with squared rim, decorated in relief on the sloping shoulders with a frieze of addorsed dragons with scroll-bodies stretched out and their necks and tails entwined, reserved on a roughened ground between plain horizontal borders, the top of the neck with an incised collar of twin scrolls and lozenge motifs in a zig-zag arrangement, the spreading foot incised with a repeating pattern of stippled leaves on a continuous undulating stem, the base incised in outlined *kaishu* with two large characters: *mei yan* (梅壖), which may be translated as “Plum Cliff,” possibly a place name or perhaps a poetic reference, the metal showing an uneven tarnish overall.

Height 5¾ inches (14.6 cm)

Compare the two silver vases of closely related form and decoration illustrated in *Hunan Song Yuan jiaocang jinyinqi faxian yu yanjiu* (The Discovery and Research on Gold and Silver Wares Unearthed from Caches of Song and Yuan Dynasties in Hunan), Beijing, 2009, p. 29, nos. 57 and 58. The same vases are illustrated again in *Hunan chutu jinyinqi* (Gold and Silver Excavated in Hunan), Changsha, 2009, pp. 107–108, nos. 76–77, attributed to Southern Song – Yuan dynasty.

A plain silver vase of this form unearthed in 1990 from a Southern Song tomb dated by epitaph to A.D. 1250 is illustrated in the excavation report entitled ‘Xu Jun’s Tomb of the Southern Song Dynasty at Chayuan Shan, Fuzhou,’ *Wenwu*, 1995, No. 10, p. 26, no. 11.

Compare the inscription similarly incised in outlined *kaishu* characters, on the bottom of a pear-shaped silver vase (*yuhuchun ping*) excavated in 1994 from a hoard at Shidong village, Qiaotouhe town, Lianyuan city, Hunan province, illustrated *op. cit.*, Beijing, 2009, p. 280, no. 570, and again, *op. cit.*, Changsha, 2009, p. 271, no. 235, attributed to the Yuan dynasty.

Compare also the similar design of repoussé entwined dragons within a double-line border on a silver ewer and warmer set unearthed in 1993 from a Song dynasty silver hoard in Pengzhou, Sichuan province, illustrated in *Sichuan Pengzhou Song dai jinyinqi jiaocang* (The Song Dynasty Gold and Silver Hoard from Pengzhou in Sichuan), Beijing, 2003, color plate 36–1 and 37. The same ewer set is illustrated again in *Song Yun: Sichuan jiaocang wenwu jicui* (*Song Yun: Selected Relics from the Sichuan Hoards*), Beijing, 2006, pp. 142–143.

A Song dynasty silver footed bowl decorated in the same style and technique with a band of scrolling vines, discovered in 1993 in a hoard at Xidajie, Pengchuan city, Sichuan province, is illustrated in *Zhongguo meishu fenlei quanji, Zhongguo jin yin boli falang qi quanji* (Illustrated Classification of Chinese Art, Chinese Gold, Silver, Glass, and Cloisonné), Vol. II, Gold and Silver (II), Shijiazhuang, 2004, p. 153, no. 276, attributed to the Southern Song dynasty.

南宋 雙龍紋銀膽瓶 高 14.6 厘米



26. A PAIR OF CHASED AND PARCEL-GILT SILVER DISHES

Southern Song Dynasty (A.D. 1127–1279)

of flat circular saucer shape, each chased in the center with a medallion formed by a pair of aster-like flowers on curling leafy stems, covered with gilding, the lower edge of the shallow well decorated with a border of striated petal-tips and the flat rim decorated with a running band of cash-diaper enclosed by a half-round lip, with a wash of gilding over both decorative bands, the underside left plain, with the chased designs showing through in faint relief, the surface with scattered tarnish and associated corrosion from burial remaining, each dish chased on the underside in outlined *kaishu* script with a single Chinese character *di* (砥), which may indicate the owner's name.

Diameter 6 inches (15.2 cm)

Compare the small Song silver dish of similar form, also chased with a floral motif in the center and with a cash-diaper border on the flat rim, formerly in the collection of Senator Hugh Scott and now in the Uldry collection, illustrated in the catalogue published by the Rietberg Museum entitled *Chinesisches Gold und Silber: die Sammlung Pierre Uldry*, Zurich, 1994, p. 230, no. 273; together with a Song gold dish of similar form and design also formerly in the collection of Senator Hugh Scott and now in the Uldry collection, illustrated *loc.cit.*, no. 272. The same two dishes were previously exhibited at the China Institute in America and published by Singer in the catalogue entitled *Early Chinese Gold & Silver*, New York, 1971, nos. 90 and 92.

A set of nine small dishes similarly engraved with various floral designs, from a Song dynasty hoard excavated in 1981 in Jiangsu Province, are illustrated by Xiao and Wong in the excavation report entitled '*Jiangsu Suyang Pingqiao chutu Song dai yinqi jiaocang*' (Song Dynasty Silver Hoard Excavated from Jiangsu Province, Suyang County, Pingqiao Town), *Wenwu*, 1986 No. 5, p. 73, fig. 3.

Compare also the two silver saucer dishes with parcel-gilt incised and repoussé floral decoration, from the Muwen Tang Collection, illustrated by Kwan in *Chinese Silver*, Hong Kong, 2004, pp. 170–171, no. 79, attributed to the Southern Song dynasty.

南宋 鑲金花卉紋銀碟一對 徑 15.2 厘米



27. A REPOUSSÉ-DECORATED SILVER 'PLUM BLOSSOM' CUP

Southern Song Dynasty (A.D. 1127–1279)

with steeply rounded sides divided into five lobes by deep grooves on the exterior and with corresponding raised ribs on the interior converging on a five-petal plum blossom in relief in the center, also decorated in repoussé on the interior with a blossoming plum branch extending down from the rim to fill one side opposite a crescent moon beside wispy clouds on the other side, the interior ground punched with repeating rows of linear open-oval motifs to indicate water, as if the moon and prunus branch were reflected on the rippling surface of a lake, the design shown in reverse on the unfinished exterior, the cup raised on a separately made thick disc-shaped foot soldered onto the base, with a square-edged footring enclosing a recessed base engraved with four characters: *wu shen fu zhi* (戊申甫置), the plain band below the lip rim indistinctly stamped with four indecipherable characters on the exterior, possibly indicating the maker or the location of manufacture, the surface lightly tarnished and showing traces of earth from burial.

Diameter 3<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches (9.2 cm)

The two characters *wu shen* incised on the base, from the table of characters used to indicate the year in the traditional sixty-year cyclical dating system, but without inclusion of a reign title or emperor's name, provide an incomplete cyclical date. This cup can be securely attributed to the Southern Song dynasty on the basis of stylistic and other criteria, and therefore the most likely date represented by these two characters is A.D. 1188 or A.D. 1248.

Compare the flower-shaped silver bowl with plum blossom design excavated in 1971 from the tomb of a couple deceased in A.D. 1195 and A.D. 1199 respectively according to the epitaph in the tomb in Jiangpu county near Nanjing, Jiangsu province, illustrated in *Wenwu*, 1973, No. 4, p. 65, fig. 16.

A flower-shaped gilt-silver bowl with matching saucer decorated in repoussé with the same 'moon and prunus' motif, unearthed from a cache at Gu county, Fujian province, now in the collection of Shaowu City Museum, is illustrated in the catalogue of the special exhibition entitled *Dynastic Renaissance: Art and Culture of the Southern Song—Antiquities*, Taipei, 2010, p. 183, no. III-58.

Another Song dynasty silver bowl of five-petal flower shape with a raised flower in the center and further embellished with leaves and engraved blossoming branches picked out in gilding, in the Tokyo National Museum, is illustrated by Nishida and Tahira (eds.) in the catalogue of an exhibition at the Nezu Institute of Fine Arts entitled *Sōgen no bi: denrai no shikki o chūshin ni* (The Colors and Forms of Song and Yuan China – Featuring Lacquerwares, Ceramics and Metalwares), Tokyo, 2004, no. 8.

Compare also the Southern Song Longquan celadon-glazed stoneware bowl incised with a 'moon and prunus' motif on the interior, from the Bernat Collection, illustrated by Wirgin in 'Sung Ceramic Designs,' *B.M.F.E.A., Bulletin no. 42*, Stockholm, 1970, pl. 38b.

南宋 梅月紋花口銀盞 徑 9.2 厘米



28. A GILT-SILVER 'TWIN PHOENIX' BOWL

Song Dynasty (A.D. 960–1279)

of conical form and double-wall construction, decorated in high relief on the interior with a pair of phoenix in flight with wings displayed and surrounded by raised foliate scrolls sprouting numerous exotic blooms, all on an incised ground of meandering cloud motif and with many incised details throughout, the underside plain, raised on a small ring foot with splayed sides and everted rim enclosing a recessed base inscribed with a single incised character *ji* (季), probably a family name.

Diameter  $5\frac{1}{8}$  inches (12.9 cm)

No other Song dynasty bowl of this design in silver or gold appears to have been recorded, but a plain silver conical bowl unearthed in 1959 from a Song dynasty hoard at Xiaoquan, Deyang county, Sichuan province and now in the Sichuan Provincial Museum is illustrated in *Zhongguo meishu fenlei quanji, gongyimeishu bian 10: jin yin boli falang qi* (Compendium of Chinese Works of Art, Arts and Crafts 10: Gold, Silver, Glass, and Cloisonné), Beijing, 1987, p. 49, no. 102 (right). The same conical bowl was previously illustrated in the excavation report in *Wenwu*, 1961, No. 11, plate page 4, no. 1 (left).

The 'twin phoenix' pattern and conical form of the bowl both are well known in Song ceramics. Compare, for example, the Yingqing glazed porcelain conical bowl moulded with 'twin phoenix' decoration from the Karlbeck Collection, illustrated by Wirgin, *Sung Ceramic Designs, B.M.F.E.A. Bulletin* no. 42, Stockholm, 1970, pl. 26b. Another similar Yingqing glazed conical bowl with moulded 'twin phoenix' design in the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, is illustrated by Pierson, *Qingbai Ware: Chinese Porcelain of the Song and Yuan Dynasties*, London, 2002, p. 54, no. 16, attributed to the Song dynasty (13th century).

A gilt-silver box and cover decorated with 'twin phoenix' in high relief, excavated from a Song dynasty tomb at Chayuanshan, Fuzhou city, now in the collection of the Fujian Provincial Museum, is illustrated in *Zhongguo meishu fenlei quanji, Zhongguo jin yin boli falang qi quanji* (Illustrated Classification of Chinese Art, Chinese Gold, Silver, Glass, and Cloisonné), Vol. II, Gold and Silver (II), Shijiazhuang, 2004, p. 136, no. 244. Compare also the Song silver box decorated with a similar 'twin phoenix' motif excavated in 1996 from a cache at Longtanzi village, Nanyan, Peng'an, Sichuan province, illustrated in the same volume, *op. cit.*, p. 172, no. 306.

宋 鑲金雙鳳紋斗笠銀碗 徑 12.9 厘米



29. A PARCEL-GILT SILVER CHRYSANTHEMUM-FORM CUP

Song Dynasty (A.D. 960–1279)

the deep flower-form bowl with two tiers of twenty-four slender petals each recessed on the interior and convex on the exterior, rising to a scalloped rim with inset gilt-edged lip, the domed center of the interior imitating the center of the flower, with rows of rounded bosses above a collar of gilded leaf tips, raised on a hollow tapered foot also petal-lobed and flaring to a scalloped edge.

Diameter 3<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches (8.6 cm)

A very similar silver chrysanthemum-form cup unearthed in 1959 from a Song dynasty hoard at the Xiaoquan town mosque, Deyang county, Sichuan province, is illustrated in the excavation report in *Wenwu*, 1961, No. 11, plate page 4, no. 1 (right). The same silver cup is also illustrated in *Zhongguo meishu fenlei quanji, gongyimeishu bian 10: jin yin boli falang qi* (Compendium of Chinese Works of Art, Arts and Crafts 10: Gold, Silver, Glass, and Cloisonné), Beijing, 1987, p. 49, no. 102 (left).

A gold chrysanthemum-form cup unearthed in 1993 from a Song dynasty hoard is illustrated in *Sichuan Pengzhou Song dai jinyinqi jaocang* (The Song Dynasty Gold and Silver Hoard from Pengzhou in Sichuan), Beijing, 2003, col. pl. 1 and as a line drawing on p. 5, pl. 3.

Compare also the Song dynasty chrysanthemum-form cups in silver and gilt-silver illustrated in *Chinesisches Gold und Silber: die Sammlung Pierre Uldry*, Zurich, 1994, p. 233, nos. 278–279.

A silver chrysanthemum-form cup unearthed from a Yuan dynasty cache discovered in 1996 at Luopingxiang, Shimen county is illustrated in *Hunan chutu jinyinqi* (Gold and Silver Excavated in Hunan), Changsha, 2009, p. 92, no. 61, and the same cup is illustrated again in *Hunan Song Yuan jiaocang jinyinqi faxian yu yanjiu* (The Discovery and Research on Gold and Silver Wares Unearthed from Caches of Song and Yuan Dynasties in Hunan), Beijing, 2009, p. 202, no. 401.

宋 鑲金菊花形銀盞 徑 8.6 厘米



30. A GILT-SILVER WINE CUP AND STAND

Northern Song Dynasty (A.D. 960–1127)

the flower-shaped wine cup with gently rounded and slightly flaring sides divided into ten petal-lobes, chased on the exterior with ten demi-florettes in a band below the lipped rim, the saucer-shaped stand also divided into ten lobes enclosed by a flat foliate rim of conforming outline with squared edge and raised on a high hollow ten-lobed foot, chased in the center of the stand with an undulating band of composite floral scroll, and the splayed edge of the foot chased with a border of pendant petal lappets enclosing demi-florettes, the gilded surface showing a soft luster and scattered dark tarnish, the patination and tarnish more concentrated on the underside of the cupstand where surface has not been as thoroughly cleaned.

Diameter of cupstand  $5\frac{1}{8}$  inches (13 cm)

Diameter of cup  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches (7 cm)

Height overall  $2\frac{1}{8}$  inches (5.4 cm)

A ten-lobed gold cupstand of closely related form excavated in 1958 from the ancient Xixia site at Gaoyoufang, Linhe county, Inner Mongolia and now in the collection of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region Museum, is illustrated in *Wenwu*, 1987, No. 11, p. 66, no. 3. The same cupstand is also illustrated in *Zhongguo wenwu jinghua dacidian: jin yin yushi juan* (The Compendium of Chinese Art: Gold, Silver, Jade and Stones), Hong Kong, 1994, p. 142, no. 156; and again by Watt in the catalogue of the special exhibition organized by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, *The World of Khubilai Khan: Chinese Art in the Yuan Dynasty*, New York, 2010, p. 7, fig. 5. The illustration of the cup and stand bears the caption "Xixia dynasty," but, on the same page, Watt states that they are "... probably of Northern Song origin, as similar articles in lacquer and porcelain are known from Northern Song sites."

The Xixia kingdom (A.D. 1038–1227) was founded by the Tanguts in a loose federation with other Tibet-related people who inhabited an area now designated as the Northwest Chinese provinces of Ningxia and Gansu. Jessica Rawson in *The British Museum Book of Chinese Art*, London, 1992, p. 302 says of the Xixia: "... they were much influenced by the Chinese. Mainly Buddhists, they adopted many Tang dynasty institutions." Rawson goes on to provide a capsule history of the Xixia dynasty, writing: "They recognised the Liao as their overlords and united with them to block any Song advance northwards into their territory. The Song also paid the Xixia handsomely, from 1044 for several decades, in return for peace. From 1115 to 1119 the Song attacked the Xixia without much success, but the Xixia were finally defeated by the Mongols in their campaign of 1225–7 and were incorporated into the Mongol empire with the rest of China."

北宋 鍍金花形銀盞及盞托 盞托徑 13 厘米 盞徑 7 厘米 通高 5.4 厘米



31. A PARCEL-GILT SILVER 'MUSICAL TROUPE' EWER AND COVER

Liao – Northern Song Dynasty, A.D. 10th–11th Century

the hexagonal vessel of tall slender form decorated with six gilded figures in high relief including a dancer, a drummer and four different musicians playing Chinese instruments centering each of the six flat tapering sides, further decorated with a ring-matte punched ground embellished with incised foliate and cloud motifs above and below each figure, and with incised borders of overlapping petal motifs framing each panel, the sloping shoulders and tapering narrow neck also decorated with floral motifs on ring-punched grounds within petal-borders and the upright cylindrical spout and high arch-form handle similarly decorated, standing on a plain splayed hexagonal ring foot and with a small stepped cover with incised foliate decoration surmounted by a large gilded flame-shaped finial.

Height 10 inches (25.4 cm)

No other Chinese silver ewer of this form with figural decoration has been previously recorded, but a plain ewer of similar tall faceted shape is depicted in a painting on the wall of a tomb dated by epitaph to A.D. 1093, illustrated in *Xuanhua Liao mu bishu* (Tomb Murals of Liao Dynasty in Xuanhua), Beijing, 2001, no. 1, described in the catalogue as a scene of preparing tea.

An octagonal silver ewer and cover decorated with peony sprays in panels framed by incised borders of overlapping petal motifs very similar to the borders of the panels on the present ewer, and with a similar flame-shaped knob on the cover, discovered in 1978 in a Liao hoard at Balinyouqi in Ju'udmeng, Inner Mongolia is illustrated by Zhu Tianshu in *Liao dai jinyinqi* (Liao Dynasty Gold and Silver), Beijing, 1998, p. 137, fig. 32, with caption on pp. 94–95.

In the same monograph, *op. cit.* p. 42, Zhu relates that figural decoration is very rarely seen on silver vessels during the Liao dynasty and repoussé figures in high-relief did not appear until the mid-Liao period.

The Liao regarded themselves as successors to the Tang, and they showed a strong preference for Tang dynasty motifs and vessel shapes in their metalwork. 'Silk Road' musicians and dancers are a popular motif in Tang metalwork. Compare, for example, the famous Tang octagonal cups decorated with foreign entertainers discovered in the Hejiacun hoard excavated near Xi'an in 1970 and now in the Shaanxi History Museum, illustrated in *Hua wu da Tang chun: Hejiacun yibao jingcui* (Selected Treasures from Hejiacun Tang Hoard), Beijing, 2003, pp. 74–85, nos. 4–5. One of the same cups from Hejiacun was exhibited at the British Museum and illustrated in the catalogue by Michaelson, *Gilded Dragons: Buried Treasures from China's Golden Ages*, London, 1999, p. 126, no. 90.

遼 — 北宋 鑲金伎樂紋六稜銀執壺 高 25.4 厘米



32. A CHASED SILVER FUNERARY MASK

Liao Dynasty (A.D. 907–1125)

the face of a man well-modelled in relief from a thin sheet of silver, hammered from the back and with details sparsely engraved on the front, the eyes shown closed and with simple curved lines incised to delineate the eyelids under thick eyebrows which curve down to the bridge of the long slender nose, the broad cheeks softly rounded and the mouth very simply incised beneath a recessed channel indicating the philtrum and with an indented dimple in the chin above a short beard, the eyebrows, moustache and beard all chased in short strokes, the small ears simply formed at the extended edges, each ear pierced at the center and through the lobe, the front of the mask smoothly burnished and with lightly encrusted bright green patination widely scattered over the surface, the reverse less finished and with darker encrustation all over.

Length 8¼ inches (21 cm)

J. T. Tai & Co., New York, before 1965

From the Collection of Dr. Arthur M. Sackler (1913–1987)

Funerary masks made of bronze, gilt bronze, silver, and gold foil are a well known feature of Liao burial custom.

Compare the Liao silver mask in the collection of the Musée Guimet, illustrated by Delacour in the catalogue entitled *De bronze, d'or et d'argent: Arts somptuaires de la Chine*, Paris, 2001, pp. 275–277. A gilded silver funerary mask from a Qidan tomb in Hebei province exhibited at the Douglas F. Cooley Memorial Art Gallery, Reed College, Portland, Oregon, is illustrated by Tsao in the catalogue entitled *Differences Preserved: Reconstructed Tombs from the Liao and Song Dynasties*, Seattle, 2000, no. 58 and on the back cover.

Compare the two bronze masks of this type discovered in a Liao tomb at Jiefangyingzi, Inner Mongolia, illustrated in *Kaogu*, 1979, No. 4, pl. 7, fig. 1, attributed to the first half of the 11th century. Compare also the four bronze masks unearthed from Liao tombs in Xiaoliuzhangzi, Ningcheng county, Inner Mongolia, illustrated in *Nei Mongu wenwu ziliao xuanji* (Selected Cultural Relics Materials from Inner Mongolia), Beijing, 1964, pl. 200.

Two Liao gold masks unearthed from the imperial tomb of the Princess of Chen and Xiao Shaoju at Qinglongshan, Naiman Banner, Inner Mongolia, are illustrated by Shen (ed.) in the catalogue of the special exhibition *Gilded Splendor: Treasures of China's Liao Empire (907–1125)*, New York, 2006, pp. 100–101, no. 2 and pp. 108–109, no. 6.

遼 銀覆面 長 21 厘米



33. A GILT-SILVER FLOWER-SHAPED CUP  
Liao – Northern Song Dynasty, A.D. 10th–11th Century

in the form of a large open flowerhead, decorated with lush overlapping petals in varied relief all around the exterior, the rippling surface of the petals finely incised with a dense pattern of striations rising to incised clusters of very thin lines and tiny circles imitating the filaments and anthers below the scalloped lip of the everted mouth, the splayed ring foot decorated in relief with overlapping petal-tips, the exterior of the bowl and foot richly gilded, the designs showing in reverse on the interior and underside.

Diameter 3½ inches (9 cm)

Compare the flower-shaped silver cup of very similar design discovered in 1978 in a Liao dynasty hoard of silver vessels at Balinyouqi in Ju'udmeng, Inner Mongolia, illustrated in *Wenwu*, 1980, No. 5, pl. 5-1, with a line drawing on p. 48, no. 7. The same cup is illustrated again in *Zhongguo meishu fenlei quanji, Zhongguo jin yin boli falang qi quanji* (Illustrated Classification of Chinese Art, Chinese Gold, Silver, Glass, and Cloisonné), Vol. II, Gold and Silver (II), Shijiazhuang, 2004, p. 190, no. 340, and in *Chifeng jinyinqi* (Important Archaeological Sites for Excavated Gold- and Silverware in Chifeng Region), Huhehaote, 2006, p. 152, attributed to late in the Liao dynasty.

A scene including a set of three small cups of very similar flower shape in a mural in a Liao dynasty tomb is illustrated in *Xuanhua Liao mu bishu* (Tomb Murals of Liao Dynasty in Xuanhua), Beijing, 2001, no. 60, described in the catalogue as a scene of preparing a feast.

遼 — 北宋 鑲金花形銀盞 徑 9 厘米



34. A LARGE PARCEL-GILT SILVER FOLIATE STEM CUP

Yuan – Early Ming Dynasty, A.D. 14th Century

the flower-shaped bowl with deep sides formed by two tiers of undulating petals delineated by graceful curving ribs on the interior, radiating from a raised central spiral medallion and extending up to the lobed rim, with finely chased wave pattern on the interior of the lip, repeated around the splayed edge of the matching lobed foot, the exterior of the bowl and the hollow stem with deeply recessed channels indicating the petals, and with a raised half-round band encircling the stem, with traces of gilding on the interior medallion and on the chased decoration around the lip and foot.

Diameter 4¼ inches (10.7 cm)

Height 3¾ inches (9.5 cm)

A Yuan dynasty parcel-gilt silver stemcup of this same form and design in the Meiyintang Collection is illustrated by Krahl in the catalogue of the exhibition at the Musée Cernuschi, *L'âge d'or de la Céramique Chinoise*, Paris, 1999, p. 130, fig. 1.

The shape of this silver stemcup compares very closely to the form of the Yuan white porcelain stemcup from the Mayer Collection now in the Meiyintang Collection, Zurich, illustrated by Krahl, *Chinese Ceramics from the Meiyintang Collection*, Volume I, London, 1994, p. 337, no. 630, and in the Cernuschi exhibition catalogue, *op. cit.*, pp. 130–131, no. 99. The same porcelain stemcup was previously exhibited at the Cleveland Museum of Art and illustrated by Ho and Lee in *Chinese Art Under the Mongols: The Yuan Dynasty*, Cleveland, 1968, no. 124.

A silver foliate stemcup of smaller size and less elaborate design, with similar ripple-edged petals with lobed rims forming the cup and foot, unearthed at Longgang village, Xinghe xiang, Linli county, Hunan province in 1978 and now in the Changde City Museum is illustrated in *Hunan chutu jinyinqi* (Gold and Silver Excavated in Hunan), Changsha, 2009, p. 207, no. 170, attributed to the Yuan dynasty.

元/明初 鑲金花形銀高足杯 徑 10.7 厘米 高 9.5 厘米



35. A SILVER MELON-SHAPED SMALL BOWL

Yuan Dynasty (A.D. 1271–1368)

of half-melon shape, with a wide handle in the form of a knotted ribbon projecting at one side below the rim, above a small ring applied perpendicular to the side of the bowl, the steeply rounded sides divided into long lobes by deep grooves rising to nodes at either end, resting on a flat oval base, chased with a single large character in *lantsa* script within a simple scrollwork border on the interior of the base, the burnished surface showing scattered remains of malachite green encrustation.

Length 4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches (11.2 cm)

Width over handle 5<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches (13.7 cm)

The *lantsa* character in the center of the bowl may be read as "om," which is the first character of the Tantric Buddhist mantra "om mani padme hum."

A very similar melon-shaped silver bowl with knotted ribbon handle and *lantsa* character, excavated from a Yuan dynasty hoard at Guanwang village, Bazixiao xiang, Yuyang county, Hunan province in 1982, now in the Shanghai Museum, is illustrated in *Hunan chutu jinyinqi* (Gold and Silver Excavated in Hunan), Changsha, 2009, p. 263, no. 227. Another similar melon-shaped silver bowl with ribbon handle and *lantsa* character excavated from a Yuan dynasty hoard at Mingjing village, Hongshantou town, Huarong county, Hunan province, is illustrated *op. cit.*, p. 280, no. 244-1.

Compare also the very similar melon-shaped silver bowl with ribbon handle and *lantsa* character in the Muwen Tang Collection, illustrated by Kwan, *Chinese Silver*, Hong Kong, 2004, pp. 184–185, no. 87, described as a brush-washer, for use in the scholar's studio.

元 梵文單耳瓜形銀洗 長 11.2 厘米 寬含把手 13.7 厘米



36. AN OPENWORK GOLD PLAQUE

Eastern Jin Dynasty (A.D. 317–420)

depicting a winged figure riding on a striding dragon surrounded by scroll motifs and enclosed within a linear frame of shield shape, the gold sheet embellished with rows and clusters of granulation throughout, laid over a thin bronze backing with two very small apertures for mounting at the margin on opposite sides.

Width 1 $\frac{3}{8}$  inches (3.5 cm)

A very similar gold ornament excavated in 1979 from a 4th century tomb in southern Jiangsu province, now in the Nanjing Museum, is illustrated by Watt in the catalogue of the special exhibition organized by the Metropolitan Museum of Art entitled *China: Dawn of a Golden Age, 200–750 AD*, New York, 2004, p. 111, no. 10, where the author refers to a pair of gold plaques of this form and design in the Musée Guimet, each attached to a bronze backing, illustrated by Delacour in *De bronze, d'or et d'argent: Arts somptuaires de la Chine*, Paris, 2001, pp. 245–247.

Another very similar gold ornament excavated in 1955 from Meijiashan, Nanjing, Jiangsu province and now in the Nanjing Museum, is illustrated in *Jinse jiangnan: Jiangsu gudai jinqi* (Golden Jiangnan: Ancient Gold Ware of Jiangsu), Nanjing, 2008, pp. 46–47, attributed to the Western Jin dynasty (A.D. 265–317).

Compare the pair of small gold ornaments of this type in the Muwen Tang Collection, illustrated by Kwan in *Chinese Gold Ornaments*, Hong Kong, 2003, pp. 296–297, no. 151. Compare also the two similar small gold ornaments illustrated by Gyllensvärd and Scott in *Kinesiskt Guld och Silver I Carl Kempe-Samlingen* (Chinese Gold and Silver in the Carl Kempe Collection), Ulricehamn, 1999, p. 57, no. 17 and p. 59, no. 19.

東晉 金箔羽人騎龍牌飾 寬 3.5 厘米



37. A SET OF EARLY GOLD HEADRESS ORNAMENTS

Northern Dynasties – Early Tang Dynasty, *circa* A.D. 5th–7th Century

comprising nine repoussé decorated bands, five florette tassels, six hollow beads, and twenty-nine sequins, the largest band decorated in shallow relief with a frieze of round-faced boys wearing lotus-petal skirts and bead necklaces shown grasping the strands of an undulating foliate scroll sprouting palmette motifs between beaded borders punched with tiny holes for attachment, the shorter two narrow bands each decorated with similar undulating foliate scroll sprouting palmette motifs in a continuous pattern between beaded borders, the six small bands decorated with overlapping undulating ropetwist pattern between beaded borders, the five tassels each in the form of an eight-petal florette pierced through the center to receive a thin pendant gold strip of tapered form, and the twenty-nine sequins all of teardrop shape, slightly convex on one side and concave on the other, pierced at the top for suspension, the six beads thinly cast with a mould line across the waist; all the elements showing a higher polish on the front and slightly matte on the reverse, one of the medium-size narrow bands with an ancient repair visible only on the back.

(approx 50 pieces)

Length of the repoussé bands 11 $\frac{7}{8}$  inches (30.3 cm); 8 $\frac{5}{8}$  inches (22 cm); 3 inches (7.5 cm)

Length of florette tassels 2 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches (7 cm)

Length of sequins  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch (1 cm)

Length of beads  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch (1 cm)

The decorative elements from an elaborate headdress, including gold bands, florette tassels, teardrop-shaped sequins, and ornaments with granulated borders, unearthed in 1988 from the tomb of Heruo at Xianyang, Shaanxi province, is illustrated in the catalogue of the special exhibition, *Tō kotei kara no okurimono* (Gifts of the Tang Emperors: Hidden Treasures from the Famen Temple), Niigata, 1999, p. 156, no. 113. The same set of gold ornaments was also illustrated in the catalogue of exhibition, *Wu hua tian bao—Tang dai guizu de wuzhi shenghuo* (Daily Life of Aristocrats in Tang China), Hong Kong, 1993, p. 56, no. 15.

Ornamental gold bands and a small gold crown and headdress decorated with the same undulating palmette scroll in repoussé and showing the same small pierced holes along the edges for attachment, are illustrated in the catalogue published by the Rietberg Museum, *Chinesisches Gold und Silber: die Sammlung Pierre Uldry*, Zurich, 1994, p. 141, no. 121, described as Northern Wei dynasty, early 6th century.

The motif of “putti-like” plump figures within running bands of undulating palmette-scroll between beaded ‘pearl’ borders, as seen on the present gold bands, is discussed by Juliano and Lerner in *Monks and Merchants: Silk Road Treasures from Northwest China, Gansu and Ningxia Provinces, 4th–7th Century*, New York, 2001, p. 80, where the authors cite examples on textiles, paintings and sculpture found at Dunhuang and other 5th–6th century Buddhist sites in Northern China, and illustrate a rubbing of this type of ornament found carved on a stone base in the tomb of Sima Jinlong (d. 484) at Datong, *op. cit.*, p. 79, fig. D.

北朝 — 唐初 金頭飾一組 金箔帶 長 30.3、22、7.5 厘米；金箔花綬 長 7 厘米；金箔水滴形飾 長 1 厘米；  
金珠 長 1 厘米



38. A CHASED GOLD CUP

Song Dynasty (A.D. 960–1279)

decorated with a finely drawn leafy spray bearing a single lotus bud and two stylized lotus flowers in full bloom chased on the interior of the rounded base of the cup, and with a single fruit centering a symmetrical arrangement of leaves chased on the flat flange of lobed crescent shape projecting over a plain loop handle set perpendicular to the side, the exterior rim of the cup with a narrow half-round lip which continues along the upper edge of the flange, the sides left plain and softly burnished.

Width over handle 4 $\frac{3}{8}$  inches (11.2 cm)

From the Ton-Ying Collection, Zhang Renjie (1877–1950)

From the Collection of Mrs. Christian R. Holmes (1871–1940)

From the Collection of Senator Hugh Scott (1900–1994)

Exhibited Allentown, PA, Allentown Art Museum, 1968  
Fredericksburg, VA, Mary Washington College Art Gallery, 1968  
Philadelphia, PA, University of Pennsylvania Museum, 1969  
Richmond, VA, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 1969  
Pittsburgh, PA, University of Pittsburgh Art Gallery, 1969  
Pittsburgh, PA, Carnegie Mellon University, 1970  
New York, China Institute in America, 1971

Published Scott, *The Golden Age of Chinese Art*, Tokyo, 1960, p. 49, no. 12  
Kinsman, *Chinese Art from the Collection of the Hon. Hugh Scott*,  
Fredericksburg, VA, 1968, no. 17a-b  
Wang and Wiant, *Chinese Art from the Collections of the Hon. Hugh Scott*,  
Pittsburgh, 1970, no. 20–12  
Singer, *Early Chinese Gold & Silver*, China Institute in America, New York,  
1971, p. 68, no. 98

Three chased gold cups of this distinctive form but less refined in design and not as finely chased, unearthed or collected from Wulanchabu City and Xilinguole League, Inner Mongolia are illustrated in *Genghis Khan – The Ancient Nomadic Culture of Northern China*, Beijing, 2004, pp. 270–271, described as Jin/Mongol (A.D. 1206–1271).

A Song dynasty silver bowl of very similar form, chased in a rough dotted-line style with a single lotus bloom on the interior and with palmette scroll on the flange handle, is illustrated by Gyllensvärd, *Chinese Gold and Silver in the Carl Kempe Collection*, Stockholm, 1953, pl. 136.

宋 花卉紋單耳金洗 寬沿把手 11.2 厘米



39. AN OPENWORK GOLD 'TWIN FISH' PENDANT

Song Dynasty (A.D. 960–1279)

of flattened teardrop shape, decorated in rounded relief and openwork on both sides with a mirror-pair of confronted fish shown hanging from and festooned with long ribbons tied in ornamental knots and draped down both sides in elaborate symmetrically-arranged scrolls, all within a raised half-round border enclosed by a wide flat edge decorated with a running band of incised zig-zag and punched rings, the fish realistically detailed, with finely chased scales and fins, the uppermost knot of the ribbon surmounted by a central loop for suspension.

Length 3 inches (7.5 cm)

A gold pendant of similar form decorated in openwork with a phoenix and peony design, excavated in 1980 from a Northern Song tomb at Mufushan, Nanjing, and now in the collection of the Nanjing Museum, is illustrated in *Zhongguo meishu fenlei quanji, gongyimeishu bian 10: jin yin boli falang qi* (Compendium of Chinese Works of Art, Arts and Crafts 10: Gold, Silver, Glass, and Cloisonné), Beijing, 1987, p. 41, nos. 86 and 87, with description on p. 25, where the author states that this type of pendant was worn on a silk cord or necklace and used as a pomander.

Another very similar gold pendant, decorated with 'twin ducks' and lotus, in the collection of the Nanjing Museum, is illustrated in *Zhongguo meishu fenlei quanji, Zhongguo jin yin boli falang qi quanji* (Illustrated Classification of Chinese Art, Chinese Gold, Silver, Glass, and Cloisonné), Vol. III, Gold and Silver (III), Shijiazhuang, 2004, p. 18, no. 35, excavated at Wu county, Jiangsu province from the tomb of Lu Shimeng, dated by epitaph to A.D. 1304.

A Song dynasty openwork gold 'twin phoenix' pendant of similar form with very similar borders is illustrated in *Chinesisches Gold und Silber: die Sammlung Pierre Uldry*, Zurich, 1994, p. 240, no. 288. Another similar gold 'twin phoenix' pendant is illustrated in the catalogue of the special exhibition organized by the Art Museum of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, entitled *Celestial Creations, Art of the Chinese Goldsmith: The Cheng Xun Tang Collection*, Vol. I, Hong Kong, 2007, pp. 224–225, described as a scarf pendant and attributed to the Song dynasty.

Compare the Song dynasty gold pendant with double-dragon decoration illustrated by Bunker, White, and So in *Adornment for the Body and Soul: Ancient Chinese Ornaments from the Mengdiexuan Collection*, Hong Kong, 1999, p. 289, no. 131. Compare also the Song dynasty gold pendant decorated with a floral design, illustrated by White, Bunker, and Chen in the catalogue of the special exhibition, *Adornment for Eternity: Status and Rank in Chinese Ornament*, Denver, 1994, p. 186, no. 98; and the Song dynasty gold 'twin ducks' pendant of this form illustrated by Han and Deydier in *Ancient Chinese Gold*, Paris, 2001, p. 175, no. 426.

Twin fish symbolize happiness, as they have complete freedom in water. They represent fertility and abundance because they multiply very rapidly; and because fish often swim in pairs they are also seen as representing conjugal fidelity.

宋 鏤空雙鯉金墜 長 7.5 厘米



40. A REPOUSSÉ AND CHASED GOLD DIADEM (CHAI)

Southern Song Dynasty, A.D. 13th Century

with twenty-two short upright columns joined as pairs and aligned in a rising arc, each slender tapered column decorated in high relief with leafy sprays of prunus and chrysanthemum on both sides and each pair capped with an oval chrysanthemum flowerhead motif, the decoration all in varied relief and with finely chased details throughout, the 'U'-shaped terminals of each pair of columns soldered at the base to the extended terminals of the two outermost columns which are turned back toward the center of the arc and bent straight down to form twin tines, the whole applied on one side with a flat band of gold incised with double-line zigzag decoration incorporating triple-dot motifs on the front, soldered across the looped bases of the twin columns and turned onto the back at both ends to strengthen and complete the diadem.

Width 4½ inches (11.5 cm)

Archaeological finds show that gold and silver multi-flower diadems of this type first appeared in the Song dynasty and continued to be popular through the Yuan dynasty. As discussed in *Hunan Song Yuan jiaocang jinyinqi faxian yu yanjiu* (The Discovery and Research on Gold and Silver Wares Unearthed from Caches of Song and Yuan Dynasties in Hunan), Beijing, 2009, p. 307, gold and silver diadems are commonly unearthed in the South, but they also are found in Song and Jin mural paintings in Shanxi and Henan, demonstrating that they were also fashionable in Central China.

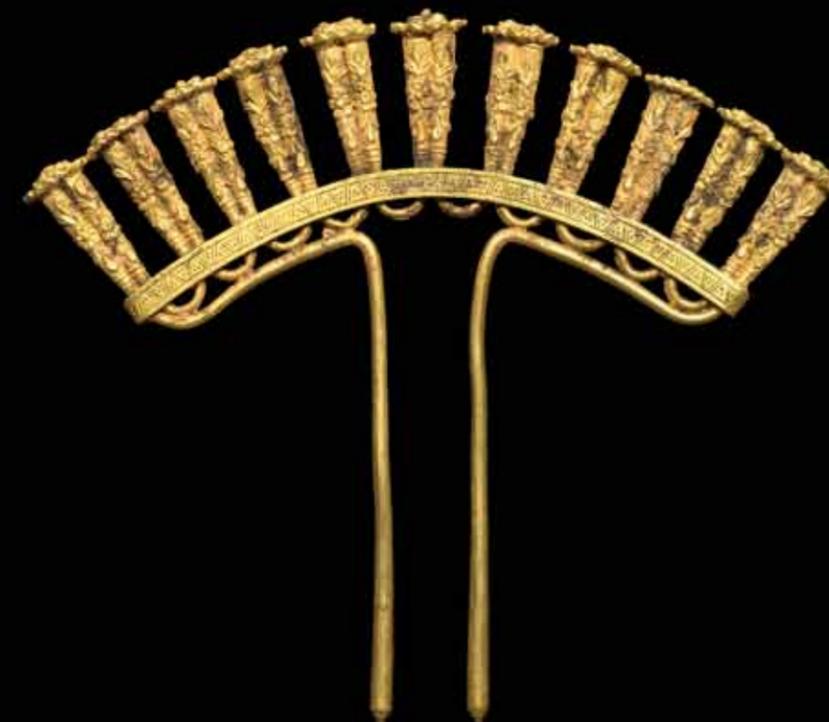
A gold multi-flower diadem with seven pairs of floral columns excavated in 1966 from a Song dynasty tomb at Lucheng, Linxiang county, now in the Hunan Provincial Museum, is illustrated in *Hunan chutu jinyinqi* (Gold and Silver Excavated in Hunan), Changsha, 2009, p. 58, no. 30. Another gold diadem with eleven pairs of floral columns, excavated in 1978 from Longgang village, Xinhe, Linli county, now in the Changde City Museum, Hunan province, is illustrated in the same catalogue, *op. cit.*, p. 124, no. 99, attributed to the Yuan dynasty.

A gold diadem with fifteen pairs of floral columns and a horizontal band across the stems, similar to the present example, excavated in 1978 from Linli county, is illustrated in *Hunan Song Yuan jiaocang jinyinqi faxian yu yanjiu* (The Discovery and Research on Gold and Silver Wares Unearthed from Caches of Song and Yuan Dynasties in Hunan), Beijing, 2009, p. 31, no. 60.

Compare also the gold diadem of this form but lacking the applied band across the base, illustrated by White, Bunker and Chen in *Adornment for Eternity: Status and Rank in Chinese Ornament*, Denver, 1994, p. 178, no. 90, where the author cites two similar gold diadems excavated in 1983 from a Song dynasty hoard at Yongjia, Zhejiang province, illustrated in *Wenwu*, 1985, No. 5, p. 85, no. 11.

A Song gold diadem in the Uldry Collection is illustrated in *Chinesisches Gold und Silber: die Sammlung Pierre Uldry*, Zurich, 1994, p. 243, no. 293, where the author cites a very similar gold diadem from a Northern Song tomb excavated in 1963 at Wangjiawan, Taipingmenwai, Nanjing, illustrated in *Kaogu*, 1961, No. 2, p. 101, no. 3 (center).

南宋 橋形筒花金釵 寬 11.5 厘米



41. A GOLD HAIRPIN (CHAİ)

Song Dynasty (A.D. 960–1279)

with long slender twin tines, the conjoined upper section richly ornamented with leafy sprays and various flowers including lotus, peony, prunus and aster, all in high relief and with chased details, crowned by an oval chrysanthemum flowerhead with ring-punched center and two tiers of radiating petals.

Length 7 inches (17.8 cm)

A very similar gold hairpin discovered in a Song dynasty hoard of gold and silver at Pengzhou city, near Chengdu in Sichuan province in 1993, is illustrated in the excavation report, *Sichuan Pengzhou Song dai jinyinqi jiao cang* (The Song Dynasty Gold and Silver Hoard from Pengzhou in Sichuan), Beijing, 2003, col. pl. 7-1, and as a line drawing on p. 12, no. 12-5.

A pair of similar gold hairpins unearthed in 1975 from a Song dynasty tomb at Linjiang, Zhangshu city, Jiangxi province, is illustrated in *Zhongguo meishu fenlei quanji, Zhongguo jin yin boli falang qi quanji* (Illustrated Classification of Chinese Art, Chinese Gold, Silver, Glass, and Cloisonné), Vol. II, Gold and Silver (II), Shijiazhuang, 2004, p. 117, no. 211.

A pair of gold hairpins from the Mengdiexuan collection is illustrated by White, Bunker, and Chen in *Adornment for Eternity: Status and Rank in Chinese Ornament*, Denver, 1994, p. 184, no. 96, where the authors mention similar silver hairpins excavated from a Southern Song tomb in a suburb of Fuzhou, Fujian province, illustrated in *Wenwu*, 1977, No. 7, p. 10, no. 29. Two gold hairpins of this type are illustrated in *Celestial Creations, Art of the Chinese Goldsmith: The Cheng Xun Tang Collection*, Vol. I, Hong Kong, 2007, pp. 184–185, no. D03, and three smaller gold hairpins in the Muwen Tang Collection are illustrated by Kwan in *Chinese Gold Ornaments*, Hong Kong, 2003, pp. 396–397, no. 242.

宋 筒花金釵 長 17.8 厘米



42. A PAIR OF GOLD DRAGON-FISH EARRINGS

Liao Dynasty (A.D. 907–1125)

each in the form of a leaping fish with crested dragon's head and raised fan-shaped tail, with a "pearl of wisdom" attached beneath the chin, hollow-cast in two parts joined at a longitudinal seam and with numerous irregular apertures on both sides and along the belly, with turquoise bosses held by small pegs in several places, the body of the fish finely engraved with linear details and punched ornament all over, and with a long wire hook emerging from the jaws to allow for suspension from the ear, showing a pale orangey-red surface patina and remains of encrusted earth from burial.

Height 1 7/8 inches (4.8 cm)

Compare the similar gold openwork dragon-fish earring inset with turquoise, from the tomb of Yelü Yuzhi, dated by epitaph to the fourth year of the Huitong reign of the Liao dynasty (A.D. 941) excavated in 1992 at Alukeerqin Banner, Inner Mongolia, illustrated in *Qidan wangchao: Nei Menggu Liao dai wenwu jinghua*, (Qidan Empire: Treasures of the Liao Dynasty from Inner Mongolia), Beijing, 2002, p. 132.

The dragon-fish earring from Yelü Yuzhi's tomb was also illustrated by Shen (ed.) in the catalogue of the special exhibition organized by the Asia Society, *Gilded Splendor: Treasures of China's Liao Empire (907-1125)*, New York, 2006, pp. 150–151, no. 25, together with a pair of gold dragon earrings of this type, *loc. cit.*, no. 26a-b. Compare also the gold earring of similar form in the Mengdiexuan Collection, included in the 1994 exhibition at the Denver Art Museum and illustrated by White, Bunker and Chen in the catalogue, *Adornment for Eternity: Status and Rank in Chinese Ornament*, Denver, 1994, p. 158, no. 71.

遼 摩羯形金耳墜一對 高 4.8 厘米



43. FOUR CUT GOLD FOLIATE HAIR ORNAMENTS

Liao – Northern Song Dynasty, A.D. 10th–12th Century

two gold pins each with two tiers of slender pointed petals chisel-cut from gold sheet, radiating from a central spherical boss raised on a ring of coiled wire and flanked by clusters of leaves lightly incised with veins, soldered onto the flat pin at the back; the third pin decorated with a small bloom with two tiers of six rounded petals with incised details and with tiny knobbed stamens rising from the disc-shaped center, flanked by radiating leaves with serrated edges, soldered onto a flat-shafted pin at the back; the fourth pin decorated with a chrysanthemum-like bloom with three tiers of petals, flanked by four tapering leaves with serrated edges, and with three small buds rising on coiled gold wire stems, soldered onto a thin gold wire pin.

Length 3¼ to 4 inches (7.9 to 10.1 cm)

Compare the group of similar gold foliate hairpins in the form of stylized flowers, attributed to the Liao dynasty, illustrated by White, Bunker, and Chen in the catalogue of exhibition, *Adornment for Eternity: Status and Rank in Chinese Ornament*, Denver, 1994, p. 163, no. 76.

A group of similar gold hairpins is illustrated in a line drawing by Zhu in *Liao dai jinyinqi* (Liao Dynasty Gold and Silver), Beijing, 1998, p. 173, no. 115. Compare also the group of gold foliate hairpins of this type in the Muwen Tang Collection, illustrated by Kwan in *Chinese Gold Ornaments*, Hong Kong, 2003, pp. 496–497, attributed to the Ming dynasty.

遼 — 北宋 花形金髮飾四件 長 7.9 至 10.1 厘米

44. A PAIR OF CUT GOLD FOLIATE HAIR ORNAMENTS

Liao – Northern Song Dynasty, A.D. 10th–12th Century

each with a large flowerhead terminal with two tiers of rounded petals cut from gold sheet centered by a spherical boss raised on a ring of coiled wire, the outer border of the flower made up of six openwork petals formed by notched loops of twisted wire, alternating with pointed serrated leaves incised with veins, all soldered onto a gold disc and a flat pin.

Length 3¾ and 3⅝ inches (9.6 and 9.2 cm)

See footnote to catalogue no. 43

遼 — 北宋 花形金髮飾一對 長 9.6 與 9.2 厘米

45. A PAIR OF CUT GOLD FOLIATE HAIR ORNAMENTS

Liao – Northern Song Dynasty, A.D. 10th–12th Century

each decorated with a large flowerhead with four tiers of pointed petals cut from gold sheet and centered by a spherical boss raised on a ring of coiled wire, surrounded by four long leaves with notched edges radiating in four directions, all soldered onto a gold disc and a flat pin.

Length 3⅝ and 3½ inches (9.3 and 9 cm)

See footnote to catalogue no. 43

遼 — 北宋 花形金髮飾一對 長 9.3 與 9 厘米



46. NINE GOLD 'DRAGON' AND 'BIRD' OPENWORK HAIR ORNAMENTS

Liao Dynasty – Song Dynasty, A.D. 10th–13th Century

each long gold wire pin attached at the back to a thin gold relief-moulded finial, including a leaping dragon with a 'flaming pearl' in its open jaws enclosed within a wide floral frame surmounted by a flying bird with long tail feathers, three similar moulded dragons shown in the same leaping pose with tail curled over the head and each enclosed by a 'U'-shaped floral frame, four phoenix birds shown with wings folded and long tail feathers curled under, enclosed within matching 'U'-shaped floral frames, and a pair of walking geese within a matching 'U'-shaped floral frame.

Length  $2\frac{5}{16}$  to  $3\frac{13}{16}$  inches (6.5 to 9.7 cm)

A group of three gold hair ornaments of this type are illustrated in line drawings by Zhu in *Liao dai jinyinqi* (Liao Dynasty Gold and Silver), Beijing, 1998, p. 174, no. 116.

Another group of similar gold hair ornaments from the Muwen Tang Collection is illustrated by Kwan in *Chinese Gold Ornaments*, Hong Kong, 2003, pp. 494–495, no. 336, attributed to the Ming dynasty.

遼 — 北宋 龍鳥紋鏤空金髮飾九件 長 6.5 至 9.7 厘米



47. FIVE GOLD HAIR ORNAMENTS

Liao–Song Dynasty, A.D. 10th–13th Century

each long pin with a relief-moulded terminal, one pair with oval terminals each moulded with a phoenix, peony and pearl within a beaded border, another pair with oval terminals each moulded with a dragon and clouds, and a single pin surmounted by a double-sided gourd-form terminal with a long-tailed bird at the top, decorated in relief with a dragon on one side and a phoenix on the other side.

Length 2½ to 3½ inches (6.3 to 9 cm)

遼—宋 金髮飾五件 長 6.3 至 9 厘米

48. A CUT GOLD HAIR ORNAMENT

Liao–Song Dynasty, A.D. 10th–13th Century

with terminal in the form of a four-tiered bloom with slender pointed petals radiating from a coiled-wire ring and small bead in the center, surrounded by six large openwork petals, each with coiled wire and flat-cut border, all soldered onto a flat-shafted pin.

Length 3¾ inches (8.6 cm)

遼—宋 花形金飾 長 8.6 厘米

49. TWO FIGURAL GOLD HAIR ORNAMENTS

Liao–Song Dynasty, A.D. 10th–13th Century

a small hammered and chased gold figure of a crowned Buddhist deity seated on a lotus throne, with a halo and three radiating petal-motifs behind, soldered onto a long flat pin at the back; and a small cast gold figure of a heavenly female attendant shown holding a floral offering, with celestial scarves in gold wire, a thin rounded long pin attached at the back.

Length 3 and 3½ inches (7.8 and 10 cm)

Compare the pair of gold figural earrings illustrated by Bunker, White, and So in *Adornment for the Body and Soul: Ancient Chinese Ornaments from the Mengdiexuan Collection*, Hong Kong, 1999, p. 284, no. 126, described as Song dynasty.

遼—宋 人物形金飾二件 長 7.8 與 10 厘米

50. A CHASED GOLD DRUM-SHAPED PENDANT

Liao–Song Dynasty, A.D. 10th–13th Century

of flat circular tambour form, with tiny raised knobs representing the nails holding the ‘drum-skins’ in place on the raised edges of the narrow rounded sides, the circular ‘drumhead’ engraved on each side with a large peony blossom on a leafy branch, with a gold loop and large loose ring for suspension.

Diameter without the loop 1¾ inches (4.4 cm)

The present pendant comes from a set of gold cosmetic accessories, of a type called *jin shijian* (金事件) which first appears in China in the Tang dynasty. A silver drum-shaped pendant chased with very similar peony blossoms, from a set of cosmetic tools excavated in 1992 from a Yuan dynasty hoard is illustrated in *Hunan Song Yuan jiaocang jinyinqi faxian yu yanjiu* (The Discovery and Research on Gold and Silver Wares Unearthed from Caches of Song and Yuan Dynasties in Hunan), Beijing, 2009, p. 215, no. 429 (center).

遼—宋 鼓形金墜 徑不含相連金環 4.4 厘米



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