MUSEUM OF ASIAN ART ON CORFU



HELLENIC MINISTRY OF CULTURE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECEIPTS FUND



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Honorary Director of the Museum of Asian Art

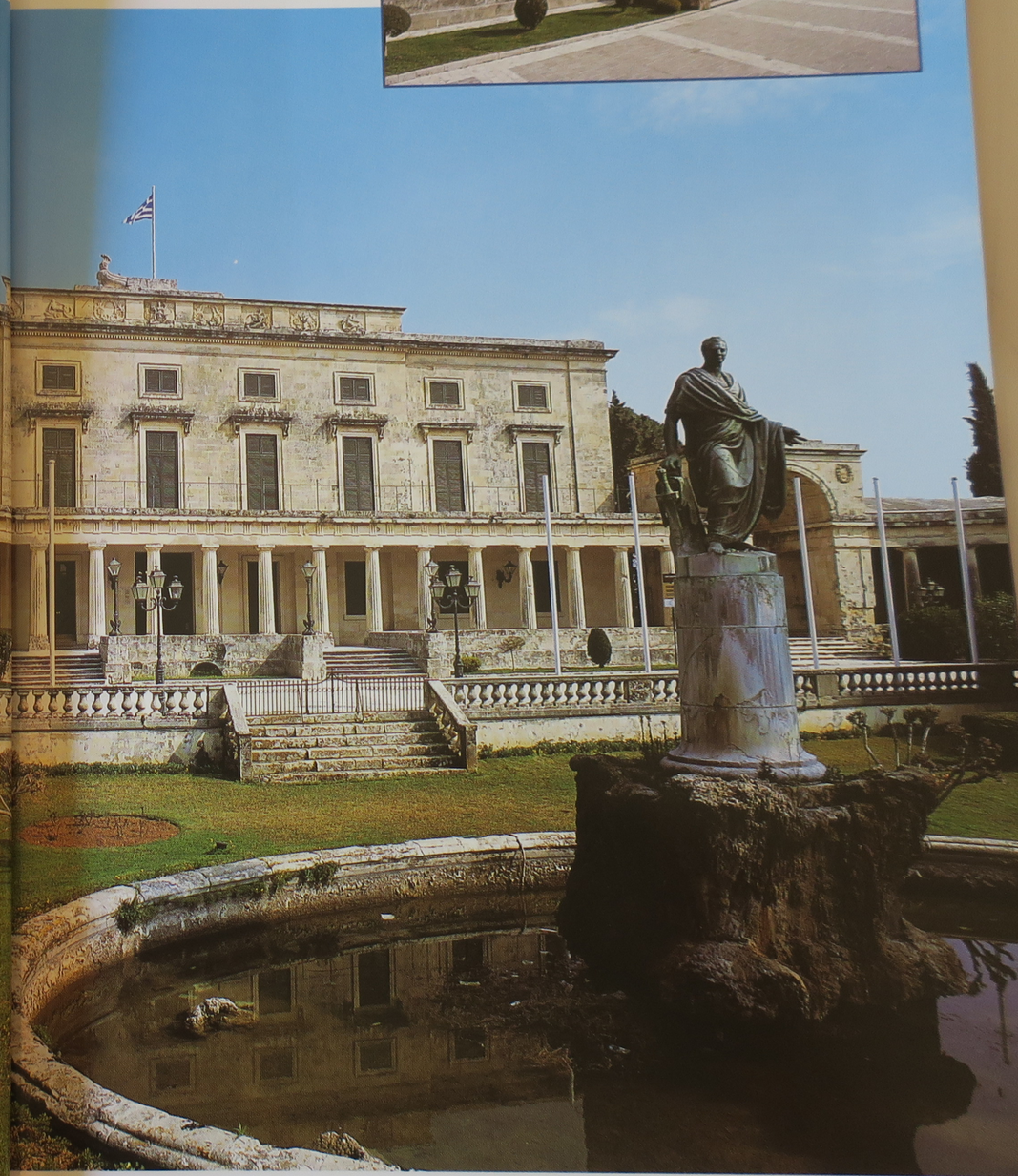
ATHENS 2007

THE PALACE OF SAINTS MICHAEL AND GEORGE

The only museum in Greece devoted exclusively to the art and antiquities of the Far East and India is the Museum of Asian Art on Corfu, housed in the Palace of St Michael and George. This elegant neoclassical building, one of the finest monuments on Corfu, is located in the heart of the town at the north end of Spianada Square (Figs. 1-2).

The Palace was built by Sir Thomas Maitland (1759-1824), Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian islands between 1818 and 1823, a period at which Corfu was a British protectorate (1814-1864). Maitland was also Grand Master of the Order of St Michael and George and it is to this order that the Palace owes its name. In addition to serving as a spacious residence for the High Commissioner, the building was also used as the British administrative centre. At the same time it was the seat of the Ionian Senate and, for a time, of the Ionian Parliament, though it was mainly used as the headquarters of the Order of St Michael and George. The Palace was designed by General Sir George Whitmore (1775-1862), an engineer in the British army and architect. After the end of British rule and the unification of the Ionian islands with Greece (1864), the Palace passed into the ownership of the Greek state. It suffered considerable damage during the Second World War, but in 1953 the three monumental halls on the first floor were restored. The building was conserved once more in 1992, in order to be used for the needs of the Summit Meeting of the member-states of the European Union held on Corfu in 1994.







Figs. 1-2. Palace of St Michael and George. Façade.



The main entrance to the Palace leads into the ground floor (Figs. 3-4). Three of the rooms at the west of the ground floor are given over to temporary exhibitions. A fourth, the room in which the Ionian Senate met, retains its authentic furniture and is open to the public. The east wing of the ground floor houses the Municipal Art Gallery of Corfu.

At the north, opposite the entrance, a broad monumental staircase divided into two sections leads to the exhibition area on the first floor (Fig. 5). This area is dominated by three monumental halls decorated with murals and painted ceilings: the Throne Hall (Fig. 6), the Banquet Hall, and the Rotunda, a circular room connecting the two. These halls are open to

Plans of the ground floor and first floor.

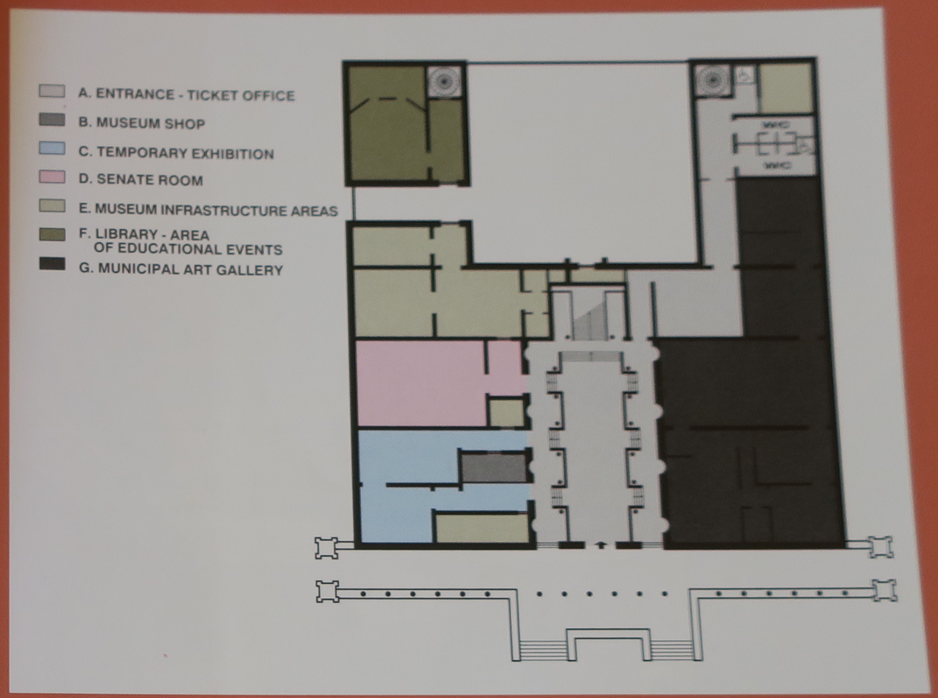




Fig. 6. Palace of St Michael and George. Throne hall of the British Lord High Commissioner.



the public and form a reminder of the glorious past of the Palace. The east wing on the first floor of the Museum, known as the Gr. Manos wing, which includes seven rooms, houses the Chinese exhibition. In the west, or N. Chatzivasileiou wing, is kept part of the Japanese Collection. In the near future, in accordance with the exhibitions programme of the Museum, this will be extended to the second floor.

MUSEUM OF ASIAN ART ON CORFU

HISTORY OF THE COLLECTIONS

The Museum accommodates about 10,500 objects of Asian art, which come from the private collections of Gr. Manos, N. Chatzivasileiou and Ch. Chiotakis. Also included are individual items donated by I. Siniossoglou, P. Almanachos and I. Kollas.

Gregorios Manos (1928), the Greek ambassador to Austria, was the inspiration behind the founding of the Museum. He also lived in France, where he created a collection of about 9,500 objects of Chinese, Korean and Japanese art, which he bought at art auctions in Vienna and mainly in Paris at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. Manos donated his collection to the Greek state in 1919. The Museum was founded in 1927.

Nikolaos Chatzivasileiou (1981) served as Greek ambassador to India and Japan. In 1974, he presented some valuable items from his collection to the Museum, such as Japanese and Korean screens, sculptures and paintings from Nepal and Tibet, and sculptures from Pakistan (Greco-Buddhist sculptures of Gandhara), India and Thailand.

Charilaos Chiotakis (1998), who was born in Asia Minor, came to Greece as a refugee after the Asia Minor Disaster and in 1929 moved to Utrecht, Holland, where he turned his attention to the fur trade.

In 1980, he donated 390 objects of Korean and Japanese art, as well as examples of Chinese porcelain dating from the 16th to the 18th century, which were made for export to Europe.

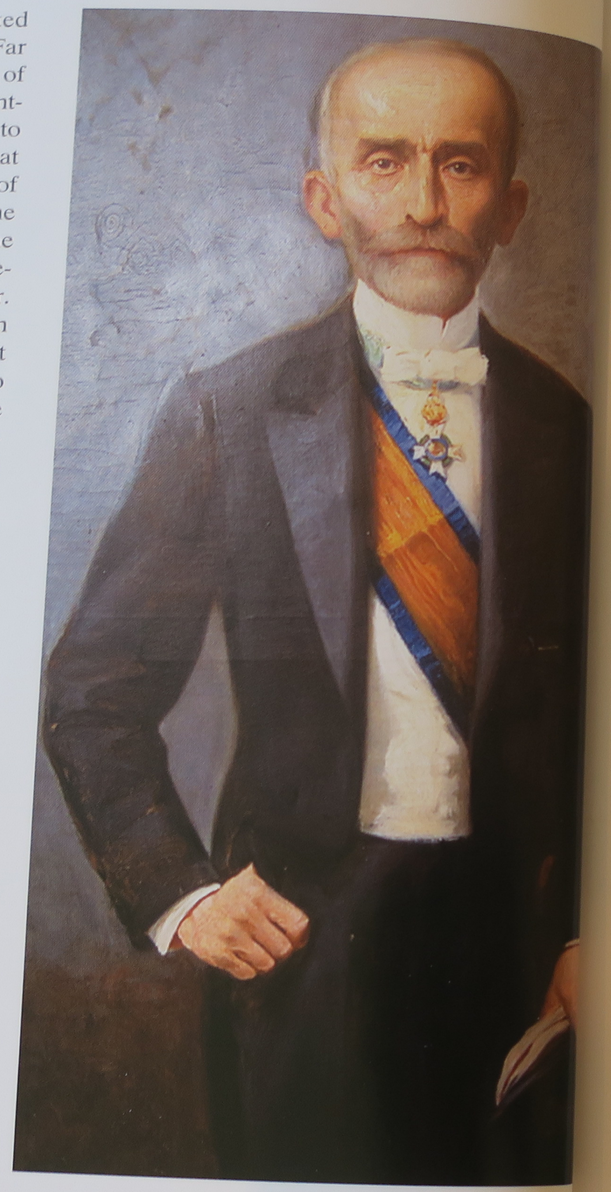
THE GREGORIOS MANOS COLLECTION

Gregorios Manos (Fig. 7), the scion of an old Phanariot family a branch of which had settled in Greece, was born in 1850. At the age of 26 he applied to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with a view to pursuing a career in the diplomatic service.

He graduated through the ranks of the diplomatic service in the embassies of Constantinople, Vienna and Philippoupolis (Plovdiv) and was secretary to the Greek-Turkish committee for the treaty between Greece and Turkey. In 1890, he became ambassador to Vienna, where he remained until 1910.

It is clear from correspondence kept in the Archives of the Museum of Asian Art and addressed to various personalities, including Athos Romanos the ambassador of Greece in Paris between 1890 and 1910, that Gr. Manos amassed a vast collection in Vienna and Paris. He achieved this by taking part in auctions of the day at which he systematically purchased objects from the Far East. In 1910, he retired from active service and settled permanently in Paris, where he devoted his time to filling the gaps in his collection and classifying it.

Fig. 7. Parthenis: Portrait of Gr. Manos. Museum of Asian Art.



In 1919, financially exhausted by his passion for the art of the Far East, Manos decided in the face of pressure from the French, who wanted the collection to stay in France, to donate it to the Greek State so that Greece would acquire a museum of Sino-Japanese art. In exchange, he sought a small monthly pension, the right to live in the museum to be created and to be its first life director. At first he asked for his collection to be housed in the Old Parliament Building in Athens, but when no suitable space could be found there he suggested Corfu, and more specifically the Palace of St Michael and George.

The relevant contract was signed in the Greek consulate in Paris on 6 March 1919 and Manos, together with his collection, arrived on Corfu in 1924. From the correspondence connected with this it is easy to appreciate his enthusiasm for the island and its society, and the fact that he rapidly succeeded in adapting to his new life and making new friends. On 20 March 1927, Manos ceded his collection, then worth 1.5 million French francs, to the then supervisory committee of the museum, consisting of the metropolitan bishop Athinagoras, the mayor D. Kollas and the director of the historical archives S. Theotokis. He also made available the detailed catalogue he had compiled in French, which contains 6,876 entries.

On 5 February 1928, after many problems, endeavours, initiatives, and the passing of legislation, Manos succeeded in inaugurating the Sino-Japanese Museum of Corfu, which was housed in four rooms in the east wing of the first floor of the Palace of St Michael and George on Corfu. He himself, as director, lived in the fifth room. Manos's dream had finally become a reality after a great number of difficulties. He did not enjoy it for long, however, since in the same year he died on Corfu at the age of 79.

One may reasonably wonder why Gr. Manos turned to Asian art, since there is no evidence that he was connected in any way with the East, especially the Far East. Manos lived in Europe from the middle to the end of the 19th century, a period at which the so-called high society was possessed by a true passion for the art of the Far East. From 1850 and following the political opening of Japan to the West, the Goncourt brothers from a Paris publishing house produced a number of volumes containing Japanese woodcuts. These had a great influence on the European artists of the day, such as Van Gogh, Toulouse Lautrec, and others, who sought to imitate the striking, pioneering style of the prints. Very soon after this, many other categories of oriental art from India, China, Japan and the surrounding countries made their appearance at auctions held in the various European capitals. It is not strange, therefore, that Manos turned his attention to this art.

Gr. Manos is known as a diplomat and collector. But he was something more than a mere collector. He may justifiably be described as an art historian and possibly the first Greek specialist in the art of the Far East.

Two factors may be adduced in support of this view.

- The Gr. Manos collection contains Japanese Neolithic tools and weapons, Chinese pottery from the Shang dynasty (the first historical Chinese dynasty, the beginning of which is now placed about 1750 BC) to the last Qing dynasty, Japanese pottery from the 5th and 6th century AD down to the 19th century, bronzes from China from at least the period of the Zhou, the second Chinese dynasty, down to the end of the Ming dynasty in the 16th century, and bronzes from Japan dating from the 17th-19th century. It also includes Chinese *cloisonné* enamel from the Ming period onwards, Samurai arms and armour from the 12th to the 18th century, Chinese painting of the Shang, Ming and Qing dynasties (Figs. 8-10), Japanese painting from the 16th century onwards, Japanese prints of the 17th, 18th and 19th century, Chinese and Japanese miniature art, Japanese musical instruments, Chinese coins, pottery from Korea, figurines from Nepal and Tibet, and so on. Several of the above groups,

Fig. 8. Inv. no. 201. White porcelain vase with coloured decoration. Ming Dynasty (AD 1368-1644). Manos Collection.



Fig. 9. Inv. no. 257. Porcelain vase with a wooden lid. Qing Dynasty (AD 1644-1911). Manos Collection.



Fig. 10. Inv. no. 241. Porcelain vase with decoration of the Mirror Black Family. Qing Dynasty (AD 1644-1911). Manos Collection.



such as Chinese and Japanese pottery, form complete, independent collections. All periods and all the styles that made their appearance during them are represented by one or more examples in the pottery collection of the museum, the only exception being Neolithic pottery, which was not known at the time Manos was forming the collection. It was only in 1921 that the Swede J.G. Anderson excavated in north China and brought to light the first Neolithic levels and finds.

What is true of the pottery is also true, to a greater or lesser degree, of the other groups represented in the Manos Collection. The systematic completion of his collection is thus the first important factor demonstrating Gr. Manos's knowledge of the art of the Far East.

• The second is the classification of the collection. When Gr. Manos made over his collection in 1924, three manuscript catalogues written by the collector himself, in French, accompanied the donation. In these catalogues all the objects in the collection are classified by provenance and material and in several cases described in every detail. This is not a dry description referring only to the object and its material, however: it is a detailed presentation, referring to the decoration and symbolism of each item, its style and terminology, with a fairly accurate date (perhaps conservative in the light of our knowledge today), by period and dynasty, and with references to the artist, a presentation of the seals and the signatures, and generally all the details that are useful for the study of Far Eastern art. These three catalogues may be described as the first handbooks of Sino-Japanese art written by a Greek.

The Sino-Japanese collection of Gr. Manos was the starting point for the creation of the present Museum of Asian Art. It also acted as a magnet for other collections of Asian art, the most important of which were those of N. Chatzivasileiou and Ch. Chiotakis. The Chatzivasileiou collection in particular added about 400 objects from India, Pakistan, Tibet, Thailand and Southeast Asia, changing the strictly Sino-Japanese character of the Museum and leading to a change of name, to the Museum of Asian Art.

THE GR. MANOS CHINESE WING



Fig. 11. Chinese Wing. View of Room 2.

The Chinese collection of the Museum of Asian Art contains about 3,500 items (Rooms 1-7) (Figs. 11-15, 68, 84, 91). Most of them come from the Gr. Manos collection, while a number of porcelain vases (14th-16th c.) are from the Ch. Chiotakis collection.

The Chinese collection consists of pottery, porcelain, bronzes, sculptures, *cloisonné* enamel, lacquer work and ivories, miniature artworks and paintings.

Part of the Chinese collection of the Museum was on display in the east wing of the first floor until 1992. After the Summit Meeting in 1994 and the restoration of the Palace for the requirements of the Museum, and specifically after 2002, the task began of mounting a new display of the most important items in the Manos and Chiotakis collections. These objects form a panorama of Chinese art from its beginnings down to the Qing dynasty and occupy seven rooms in the east wing on the first floor of the Palace.

In the first four rooms of the Chinese Wing, the display is arranged in chronological order. In the next three rooms the exhibits are grouped by subject, allowing visitors to form a deeper acquaintance with certain specialised spheres of Chinese art, such as miniature art, painting and export porcelain.

Fig. 12. Chinese Wing. View of Room 3.



Fig. 13. Chinese Wing. View of Room 4.



Fig. 14. Chinese Wing. View of Room 5.



Fig. 15. Chinese Wing. View of Room 7 (Corridor).



Room 1



Fig. 16.Chinese Wing. View of Room 1. Early Chinese civilisation.

The display in Room 1 is divided into four units devoted to early Chinese civilisation, the Han period, Buddhist art, and the Tang culture.

Early Chinese civilisation

China is a country with one of the most ancient civilisations in the world. It covers a huge, varied geographical area and its history is formed of a constant succession of different dynasties, the names of which define the various periods of Chinese civilisation. China was inhabited from ancient times, as is evident from the remains of Yuanmou man (1.7 million years BC), Lantien man (700,000 BC) and Peking man (500,000 BC). *Homo sapiens* appeared about 40,000 BC. The first permanent villages were created about 10,000 BC and the cultivation of rice began after 7000 BC.



Fig. 17. Inv. no. 1. Tripod food vessel of Li type. Clay with combed decoration. Late Shang Dynasty (14th-12th c. BC). Manos Collection.



In approximately 4500 BC Neolithic communities and settlements extended over the geographical area corresponding with modern-day China. Each Neolithic community developed its own pottery with its own characteristic decoration, revealing the existence of different social and religious beliefs. The dead were buried with vases containing food for the after life and an abundance of other offerings. At this period the foundations of many characteristic features of Chinese religious beliefs and principles were laid. Of the Neolithic cultural phases we may single out those that developed at Yangshao, Qinghai and Longshan. The end of the 3rd millennium BC is marked by the beginning of metal-working with copper, gold and silver and later bronze. Use was also made, throughout the Early Bronze Age, of developed forms of clay Neolithic vases (Fig. 17).

During the 2nd and 1st millennium BC the main expression of Chinese art consisted of distinctive bronze ritual vessels used mainly by the upper levels of Chinese aristocracy, whose social status was characterised by the size and luxury of the items. Chinese ritual vessels are amongst the most important achievements of world civilisation (Figs. 18-19). They were made with the aid of moulds in different sizes and shapes (vessels for food, wine and water) and bore sophisticated engraved and relief zoomorphic decoration. Outstanding amongst the decoration of bronze Chinese vases is the complicated motif known as the taotieh mask. This consists of two confronted stylised animals shown in profile, the meaning of which has never been satisfactorily explained. Inscriptions engraved on the surface of ritual vessels are another typical form of decoration. Some of these inscriptions are quite long and provide a primary source of information on early Chinese history. The bronze vessels were used in official ceremonies in the populous ancient capitals of Anyang and Luoyang. They were presented as luxury gifts, placed in tombs as offerings and were also purely functional objects used during official banquets celebrated by the rulers of the period.

During the Bronze Age (21st-6th c. BC), the Xia, Shang and Zhou dynasties ruled in turn. The religious practices of the Shang and Zhou included the worship of the forces of nature and of ancestral

Fig. 18. Inv. no. 11025. Bronze tripod wine vessel of Jue type, with zoomorphic decoration and a long spout. Stylised engraved and relief decoration. 11th c. BC.

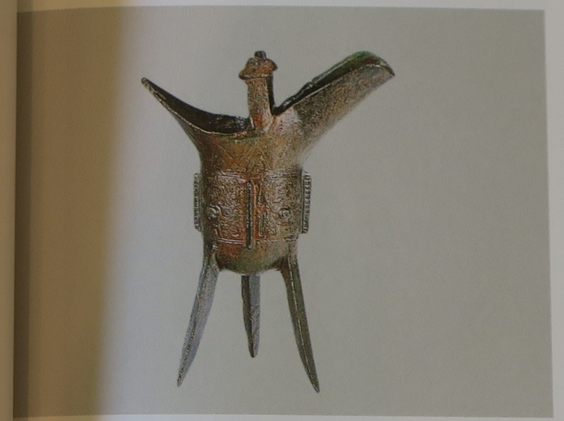




Fig. 19. Inv. no. 1302. Bronze tripod censer - koro. Stylised engraved and relief decoration. Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220). Manos Collection.

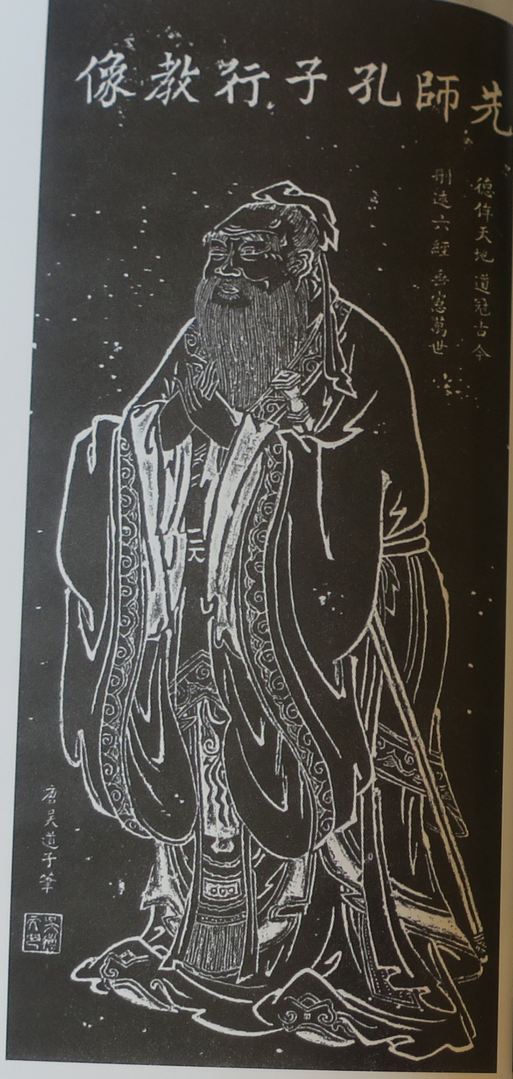
spirits. The Chinese made sacrifices and offerings to these forces and spirits and when they buried their rulers they placed large bronze ritual vessels, weapons and religious objects made of nephrite and jade in their tombs. Carriages complete with their drivers and horses, and concubines, servants and soldier-guards were often buried in adjacent chambers, having been put to death at the time of the burial so that the occupant of the tomb would have enough human company in the next world. During the middle phase of the Zhou dynasty, also known as the Spring and Autumn period (770-476 BC), objects made of iron were used for the first time.

The final phase of the Zhou dynasty, the Warring States period (475-221 BC), despite being a dark age in political terms, with long, fierce struggles between the feudal lords, was a landmark in the development of Chinese art, since it was then that the basic expressions of this art were formulated. The clay vases of the Shang (1600-1028 BC) and Zhou (1027-221 BC) dynasties often imitated the types and patina of bronze ritual vessels.

Chinese religions

A great variety of religious views and convictions are to be found in China. The Chinese always used cult processes and practices selected from different religions, none of which was exclusive. In fact, the rituals frequently exhibit strong mutual influences. Starting from the early worship of the forces of nature, the sky, the earth and the rivers, the ancient Chinese went on

Fig. 20. Portrait of Confucius. The picture is from the catalogue of the exhibition Imperial Treasures from China, National Art Gallery, Athens 2004.



to deify the spirits of their ancestors and important kings or sages at an early date.

These evolutionary processes formed the background from which Confucianism and Taoism emerged in the 6th century BC, starting essentially as social and philosophical currents. Confucius (551-479 BC), the son of a family of officials, lived in a period of political and social upheaval during which ambitious feudal lords fought fiercely for power (Fig. 20). Influenced by these circumstances he proclaimed a new approach to morals, centred on justice, respect, and the family and state hierarchy. He believed that strong families and just monarchs formed the basis for social stability and he encouraged ancestor-worship, since he believed that every being belonged to an extended family that included the living, the dead, and also those that had not yet been born. He was opposed to slavery and the human sacrifices carried out by the ancient Chinese when burying their dead. His teaching had no metaphysical implications.

The Taoists were followers of Lao Tzu (604-531 BC), who taught that people should live simply and in harmony with nature. These ideas are set out in his book Tao-te-Ching ("Classic of the Way of Power"). Taoists worshipped eight immortals, believed to dwell in distant mountains and possess supernatural powers. They taught that it is possible to discover the elixir of life and become immortal and that a person is happy only when he lives tranquilly in nature, with his individual power in harmony with the natural forces. Centred on the teaching of Yin and Yang (Fig. 21), the predominance of the five basic elements in the construction of the world, and Tao (the Way), Tao-



ism's objective was to balance the microcosm and macrocosm in nature and in people's souls. Alongside its philosophical aspect, Taoism had a more popular folk character, including mainly astrology, geomancy and alchemy.

Fig. 21. The taiji diagram with the Taoist Yin-Yang symbol. Ming Dynasty (AD 1368-1644). The picture is from the catalogue East Asian Collection, The University of Chicago Library.

The Han period (206 BC-AD 220)

The emperor Qin Shi Huang Di, now famous for the terracotta army found in his tomb, was the first to achieve the political unification of the various Chinese fiefs and small states. He limited the privileges of the aristocracy and unified the metric and currency systems, the script, and the different legislative regulations. He founded the short-lived Qin dynasty (221-207 BC), which served as a prelude to the longer Han dynasty (206 BC-AD 220). The Silk Road was created during the Han period and Chinese silk travelled as far as Rome, resulting in a systematic exchange of merchandise as well as world-views with neighbouring countries. Pottery flourished during this same period – bronze vases were confined to decorative uses – as was lacquer work, the processing of nephrite, painting (murals) and weaving. The Han tombs are famous and their rich contents provide much information about the urban and rural life of the period (Figs. 22-24). Under the Han dynasty the borders of China extended to Central Asia and North Korea. To protect this vast area from raids by barbarian tribes from the north the Han constructed a series of earthworks that gradually came to form the Great Wall of China.

The fall of the Han was followed by the disintegration of imperial institutions, which had serious social and economic consequences. The country was broken up into many kingdoms, the most important of which were those of the Wei and

Fig. 22. Inv. no. 756. Model of a country house. Clay with an iridescent grey slip. Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220). Manos Collection.

Fig. 23. Inv. no. 750. Figure of a woman and child. Grave offering. Clay with iridescent slip. Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220). Manos Collection.

Fig. 24. Inv. no. 753. Model of a grain silo. Clay with greenish glaze. Grave offering. Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220). Manos Collection.



Fig. 25. Inv. no. 1504. Buddha seated on a lotus flower. Painted stone. Greco-Buddhist style. 6th-7th c. AD. Manos Collection.



the West and East Jin. The Wei (AD 386-534) gradually extended their authority over the whole of north China.

Buddhist art

From the 1st century AD onwards Buddhism from India and Central Asia gradually moved into north-west China. Gautama Siddhartha (born 563 BC), a prince of northern India who dedicated his life to the search for personal tranquillity, is known as the Buddha (Enlightened One). He taught that by denying worldly desires and ambitions and conquering the ego, it is possible to attain supreme enlightenment (nirvana) and escape the misery of human existence and the cycle of reincarnation. Buddha's close attendants (Fig. 25) were the Boddhisattvas who, though enlightened, rejected unification with the divine in order to save every being. The Boddhisattvas are usually depicted wearing richly decorated dress and large quantities of jewellery. The first Buddhist cave-temples, with thousands of sculptures and wall-paintings, made their appearance in the same area in the 3rd century BC. The sculptures in these caves recall the art of Gandhara, which was strongly influenced by the culture of the Hellenistic kingdoms that flourished in Afghanistan and Pakistan from the 3rd to the 1st century BC.

Fig. 26. Inv. no.1507. Stone votive stele with a deity between attendants. 6th-7th c. AD. Manos Collection.

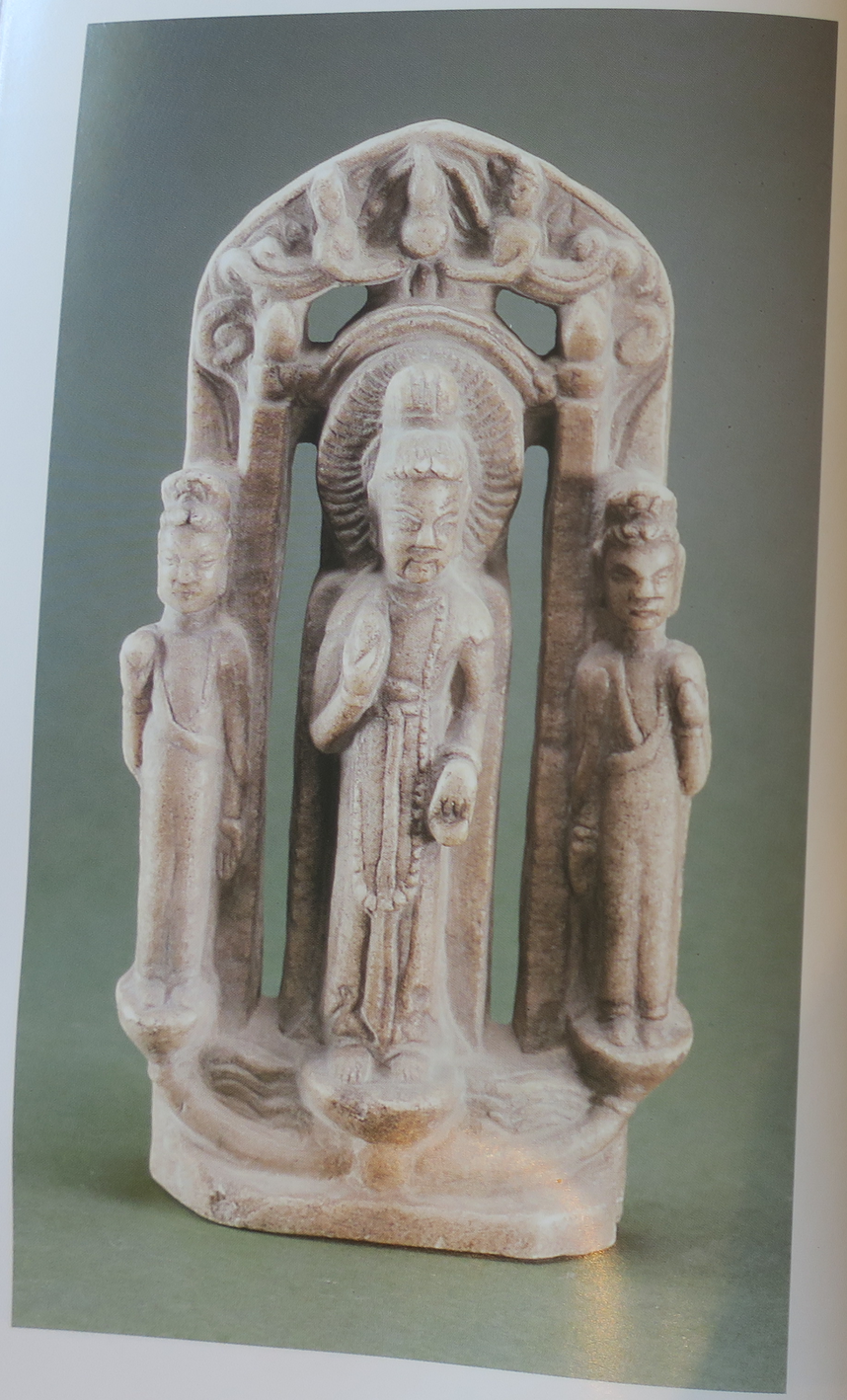


Fig. 27. Inv. no. 1512. Gabled stone votive stele: The goddess Kwannin with attendants. Inscription on the base. 6th-7th c. AD. Manos Collection.

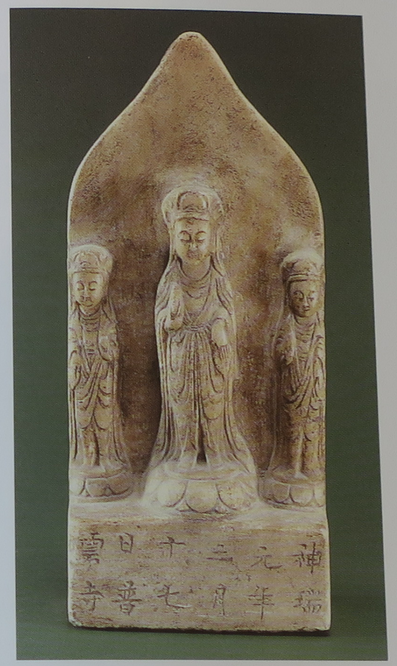




Fig. 28. Inv. no. 1511. Priest with a palm leaf. 6th-7th c. AD. Manos Collection.

The teaching of Buddhism won the support of the Chinese people in the troubled period that followed the fall of the Han (206 BC-AD 220). At the time of the Tang dynasty (6th-9th c.) (Figs. 26-28), Buddhism became the official religion of the state. The end of this period, however, saw a revival of Confucianism and Taoism. Under the Song, Yuan and Ming dynasties (10th-17th c.) that followed, many elements of Buddhism were blended with Confucianism and Taoism, leading to the formation of a distinctive amalgam of religious and philosophical views.

The Tang culture (AD 618-907)

After the 6th century AD China was again unified politically by the Sui (AD 589-618), who promoted agricultural and tax reforms, continued the construction of the Great Wall, and undertook large-scale irrigation programmes, thus initiating the reorganisation of the empire.

They were followed by the Tang dynasty (AD 618-907), which produced many important emperors, amongst them Taizong (AD 626-649) who displayed great political acumen and encouraged the unrestricted spread of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism. He perfected the administrative system, gave an impetus to trade and the economy, and extended the boundaries of the empire. Under his leadership, China rediscovered its past glory. The capital Changan (modern Sian) became a magnificent city with over 2,000,000 inhabitants, including neighbourhoods oc-

Fig. 29. Inv. no. 20. Female funerary figurine. Clay with white slip and traces of paint. Tang Dynasty (AD 618-907). Manos Collection.



cupied by minorities, followers of Mithras and Islam, as well as Nestorian Christians.

Overseas trade developed substantially under the Tang dynasty, with delegations and exotic gifts from the whole of the then known world arriving at the cosmopolitan Chinese court. The Chinese came into contact with the Persians and Sassanid culture, and also with the Byzantines – coins issued by the emperor Herakleios have been found in 7th-century Chinese tombs. The official state religion was Buddhism, but the prevailing attitude was one of religious tolerance, which enabled Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism to exist alongside each other.

Poetry, painting, sculpture, pottery (Fig. 29) and miniature art reached a high level of perfection. At this same period the first vases made of pure white porcelain made their appearance (Fig. 30), and the famous three-colour form of decoration known as Tang Sancai glaze evolved (Figs. 31-32). Great progress was made in the sphere of technology through the appearance of printing and the invention of gunpowder.

Fig. 30. Inv. no. 761. Amphora of Hu type with handles in the shape of a stylised dragon. Clay with off-white vitreous slip. Sassanid influence. Tang Dynasty. 8th c. AD. Manos Collection.



Fig. 31. Inv. no. 68. Hydria-flask with zoomorphic handle and spout. Clay with yellow glaze. Tang Dynasty (AD 618-907). Manos Collection.

Fig. 32. Inv. no. 37. Tripod censer. Sandstone with coloured enamel (Tang Sancai). Tang Dynasty (AD 618-907). Manos Collection.





Fig. 33. Inv. no. 1337. Bronze mirror with lions in vine-shoots and a pierced nail at the centre. Indirect Hellenistic influence. 6th-7th c. AD. Manos Collection.

Fig. 34. Inv. no. 21. Dancing girl. Funerary figurine of clay with traces of red paint. Tang Dynasty (AD 618-907). Manos Collection.





Room 2



Fig. 35. Chinese Wing, View of Room 2. Song (AD 960-1279) and Yuan (AD 1271-1368) Dynasties.



Song (AD 960-1279) and Yuan (AD 1271-1368) dynasties

Constant struggles to secure the borders, and internal rebellions led to the decline of the Tang empire. It was followed by the period of the Five Dynasties (AD 909-960), during which the Chinese empire was split up into a large number of small states until AD 960, when it was united once more under the rule of the Song (AD 960-1279).

Under the Song dynasty Confucianism, now enriched by Buddhist and Taoist beliefs, once again became the official religion of the state, while Taoism continued to influence a large number of the Chinese population (Fig. 36). At the same period various Mongol tribes seized the northern provinces of China, interrupting communications between the country and the important Asian centres of the day. Despite its relative isolation China experienced impressive economic and cultural growth at this period.



Fig. 36. Inv. no. 1289. Seated Buddha. Bronze with engraved floral decoration. Yuan Dynasty (AD 1271-1368). Manos Collection.

Painting (particularly of landscapes), sculpture and pottery flourished and attained a high level of technical perfection. The porcelain and sandstone objects of the Song, which were glazed with various shades of white, cream, dark brown, olive-green and grey (Figs. 37-40), occupy a very important place in the history of world art, since they served as models for the output of pottery workshops in both the East and the West.

Porcelain, in use as early as the Tang dynasty, is a variety of clay that with the admixture of kaolin and other ingredients forms a white material that is malleable, impervious and resistant to very high firing temperatures (about 1400° C), resulting in a surface smooth enough to be receptive to any kind of decoration. Under the Song, the use of porcelain became firmly established and various groups of vases with characteristic decoration and glaze colours made their appearance. The most



Fig. 37. Inv. no. 749. Pillow with cream glaze and brown enamel decoration. 12th-14th c. AD. Manos Collection.

Fig. 38. Inv. no. 63. Vase in the shape of a gourd. Porcelain with cream glaze and brown enamel decoration. 10th-13th c. Manos Collection.

Fig. 39. Inv. no. 773. Seated god of letters. Sandstone with brown-black enamel on the body. Song Dynasty. 10th-13th c. AD. Manos Collection.

Fig. 40. Inv. no. 774. Horse. Sandstone with brown-black enamel. Song Dynasty. 10th-13th c. AD. Manos Collection.

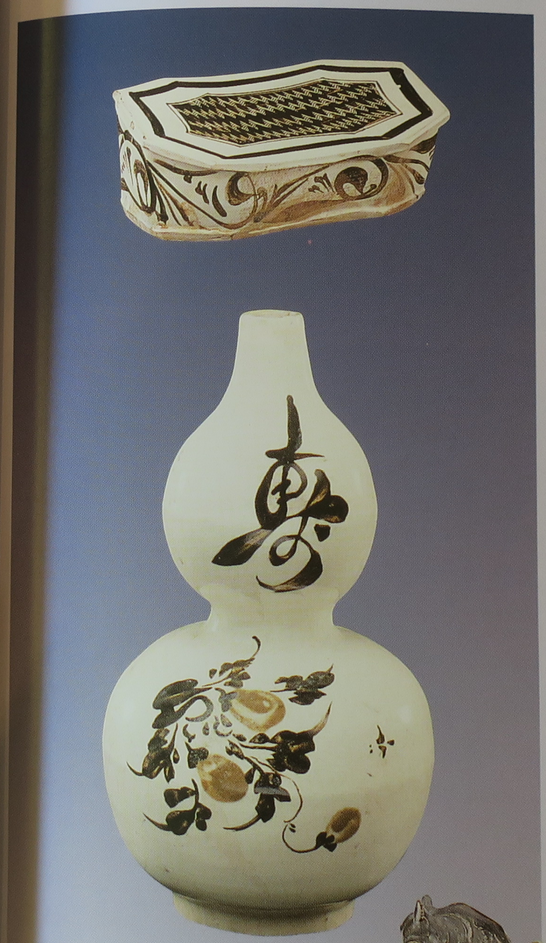




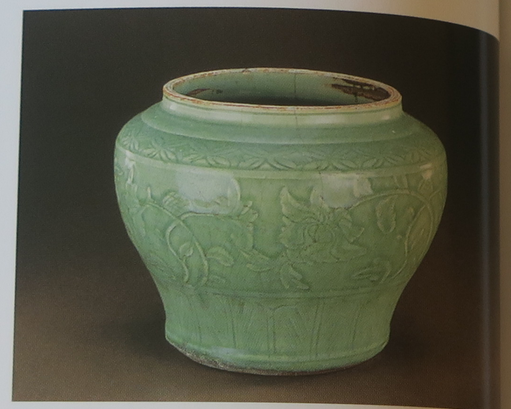
Fig. 41. Inv. no. 657. Flower vase with green crackled celadon glaze. Incised floral decoration beneath the glaze. 12th-14th c. AD. Manos Collection.

Fig. 42. Inv. no. 951. Vase with green crackled celadon glaze. Incised and relief floral decoration beneath the glaze. 12th-14th c. AD. Manos Collection.

famous of these groups are celadon porcelain (Figs. 41-42), which has a light-green glaze covering the relief floral decoration beneath it, and cream porcelain with relief and brown-painted decoration.

Song pottery was imitated by their successors, the Mongol Yuan dynasty (AD 1271-1368), who enriched the spectrum of monochrome glazed pottery with new, very delicate shades, such as moonlight blue (Figs. 43-44). In the middle of the 13th century the Mongol descendants of Genghis Khan, led by Kublai Khan (AD 1215-1294), came down from the north, put an end to the Song empire and founded the Yuan dynasty (AD 1271-1368). The Mongols assimilated the superior Chinese culture and continued the long tradition in art, as is evident from the metal wares on display in this room. In the 13th and 14th century, Mongol dynasties ruled over the whole of Asia. The first blue-and-white porcelain made its appearance in China, under Persian influence, while Chinese painting in turn influenced the famous Persian miniatures. The Yuan established their capital at Beijing, where they created a large sacred city, known as the Forbidden City. It was at this period that Marco Polo visited the newly-founded city of Beijing for commercial purposes.

The oppressive nature and general presence of the foreign Mongol dynasty provoked a large number of protests and constant rebellions in the countryside down to the middle of the 14th century.



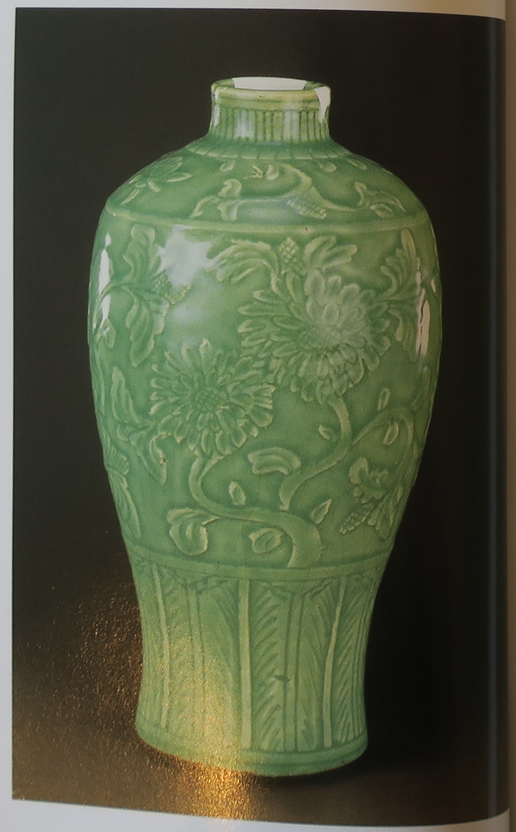


Fig. 43. Inv. no. 96. Bowl with moonlight-blue glaze. Crackled. Yuan Dynasty (AD 1271-1368). Manos Collection.

Fig. 44. Inv. no. 93. Bowl with hare-skin glaze. Yuan Dynasty (AD 1271-1368). Manos Collection.





Room 3



Fig. 45. Chinese Wing. View of Room 3. Ming Dynasty (AD 1368-1644).



The Ming dynasty (AD 1368-1644)

With the death of Kublai Khan (AD 1294) the Mongol Yuan dynasty gradually went into decline leading in AD 1368, after constant oppression of farmers and intellectuals, to the expulsion of the foreign rulers and the foundation of the Ming dynasty (AD 1368-1644). The first concerns of the Ming were to resume the building of the Great Wall of China to keep out new raiders from the north, and to restore diplomatic relations with the surrounding countries. Delegations from the whole of the then known world began to arrive in Beijing once more. Under the Ming dynasty China never managed to acquire the territorial extent it had under the Tang, nor did it regain the cosmopolitan character of that period. Living standards improved, however, after tax exemptions and institutional reforms, and art experienced a new flowering.



Fig. 46. Inv. no. 114. Tile with an apotropaic chimaera. Sandstone with green enamel. Ming Dynasty (AD 1368-1644). Manos Collection.

Fig. 47. Inv. no. 776. Tile. Pupil of Buddha. Sandstone with coloured enamel (Ming Sancai). Ming Dynasty (AD 1368-1644). Manos Collection.

Fig. 48. Inv. no. 118. Buddha between servants. Sandstone with coloured glaze. Ming Dynasty (AD 1368-1644). Manos Collection.



Under the Ming dynasty, painting and pottery in particular prospered. Antefixes with chimaeras (Fig. 46) – mythical creatures with one horn and the head of a lion, often with anthropomorphic features and the winged body of a goat – and other mythical animals, as well as figures of various deities, were set on the roofs of temples and buildings to drive away evil spirits. These antefixes, like the other figurines on display in the showcases in this room, depicting deities from the Taoist and Buddhist pantheon (Figs. 48-49), are made of sandstone, a kind of orange clay of a sandy texture that is fired in kilns at very high temperatures and becomes translucent with a hard, smooth surface, making it capable of receiving a multi-coloured glaze.



Fig. 49 . Inv. no. 115. Buddha seated on a lotus flower. Sandstone with yellow enamel. Ming Dynasty (AD 1368-1644). Manos Collection.

Fig. 50. Inv. no. 226. Offering tray with peaches. Sandstone with coloured enamel. Ming Dynasty (AD 1368-1644). Manos Collection.





In the south-west province of Kiangsi, the imperial Qing-te-chen factories were the centre of Ming pottery production. These produced porcelain of unique shapes, material and decoration, monochrome or polychrome, in which the colours were, once again, influenced by Persian models. These varieties of porcelain, particularly the monochrome, were glazed with brightly coloured enamel. The classification of Chinese pottery into groups or families is based on the colours used in their decoration. In the 14th century, Chinese pottery was enriched by the systematic use of blue-and-white decoration beneath the glaze. Gradually, other colours were added, such as green, red, yellow and grey, creating a new category of vases known as the Five Colour Group (Figs. 51-53).

Fig. 51. Inv. no. 200. White porcelain vase with decoration of the Five Colour Group (Ming Wucai). Ming Wanli period (AD 1573-1620). Manos Collection.

Fig. 52. Inv. no. 212. Jar with chimaera-head-shaped feet. White porcelain with coloured enamel. Ming Wanli period (AD 1573-1620). Manos Collection.

Fig. 53. Inv. no. 952. Bowl with pierced lid. White porcelain with decoration of the Five Colour Group. Ming Wanli period (AD 1573-1620). Manos Collection.









Another innovation by the Ming was the three-colour glaze, with aubergine, green, yellow or turquoise enamel, which recalls the pottery of the Tang.

The vases and figurines of the 14th and 15th century on display in this area are made of rock crystal, stone, wood or precious materials such as ivory. These items, with their archaic decoration, recall corresponding artworks of the early Chinese dynasties, though their use is now purely decorative. Their line and shape, however, attest to a new trend, which liberates their entire structure, making it more flexible and lighter. The different structures of the vases and figurines, combined with the imitation of archaic models, reveals the spirit of the Ming period and the multifaceted, conservative and modernising trends of their culture.

Fig. 54. Inv. no. 1353. Vase with ring-handles suspended from a mask. Cloisonné enamel. Floral decoration on a turquoise ground. Ming Jingtai period (AD 1450-1456). Manos Collection.



At the beginning of the 14th century, the Chinese learned the technique of *cloisonné* enamel indirectly from the Byzantines, through artists who worked in Arabic workshops or in the monasteries of Armenia and Georgia (Fig. 54). This technique was applied mainly in metal artefacts, usually made of bronze. The outline of the design is worked on the surface with very thin metal fibres. Enamel in various colours was inserted in the gaps between the fibres. After this the piece was placed in a kiln, so that the enamel melted and filled the gaps in the decoration, and then it was glazed.

Room 4





Fig. 55. Chinese Wing. View of Room 4. The art of the Qing (AD 1644-1911).

Qing dynasty (AD 1644-1911)

In 1644, new conquerors, this time from Manchuria, put an end to the Ming dynasty and founded the Qing or Manchu dynasty, and Beijing became their capital once again. The new foreign conquerors, too, were strongly influenced by the far superior Chinese culture. Many of the Qing emperors turned to painting as well as art criticism and are regarded as fine artists and collectors in the history of Chinese art. The early phase of the Qing dynasty is looked upon as the last great period of traditional Chinese art. After the middle of the 18th century Chinese art, particularly pottery, was largely subjected to the influence of European features, because of the large number of orders from Europe.

The early phase of the Qing period bears the name of Kangxi (1662-1772), the most important emperor of the dynasty.

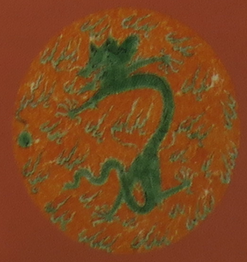


Fig. 56. Inv. no. 1343. Piriform four-lobe teapot. Cloisonné enamel. Coloured geese on a turquoise ground. Reign of Qienlong (AD 1736-1795). Manos Collection.



Fig. 57. Inv. no. 318. Tray with a dragon amongst clouds. White porcelain with green and red enamel. Transitional and early period of the reign of Kangxi (AD 1662-1722). Manos Collection.

Fig. 58. Inv. no. 281. Lidded vase. White porcelain with Green Family decoration. Reign of Kangxi (AD 1662-1722). Manos Collection.





The art of the Qing largely imitated the art of the Song and Ming. The pottery group in which Green Family decoration (Figs. 58-59) was predominant is a development of the Five Colour Group. Polychrome vases, some of them with blue-and-white decoration or blue celadon beneath the glaze, also imitate earlier models (Fig. 60). Kangxi porcelain and sandstone objects are exquisite items, much sought after by collectors worldwide. It should be noted that the Chinese never drew a distinction between sandstone and porcelain, but used the name tzŭ for both, while the term for pottery made of clay was wa.

Fig. 59. Inv. no. 197. White porcelain vase with Green Family decoration. Transitional and early period of the reign of Kangxi (AD 1662-1722). Manos Collection.



Fig. 60. Inv. no. 678. Pierced bowl with crimped rim. White porcelain with blue enamel decoration. Transitional and early period of the reign of Kangxi (AD 1662-1722). Manos Collection.





A feature of the Qing period was the appearance of many new families or groups of porcelain (Fig. 62), which are classified and which were formed on the basis of the predominant colour used in their decoration. The best-known porcelain families include the one with dark red glaze, known as the Ox Blood Family (Fig. 63), and others such as the Mirror Black Family, the Camelia Green Family (Figs. 64-65), and the Imperial Yellow Family.

The second phase of the Qing dynasty is known by the name of the emperors Yung-cheng (AD 1723-1735) and Qian Long (AD 1736-1795).

Fig. 61. Inv. no. 128. The goddess Kwannin. Blanc de Chine porcelain. Qing Dynasty. 17th-18th c. AD. Manos Collection.

Fig. 62. Inv. no. 2090. Porcelain figurine with decoration of turquoise and aubergine glaze. Reign of Kangxi (AD 1662-1722). Manos Collection.

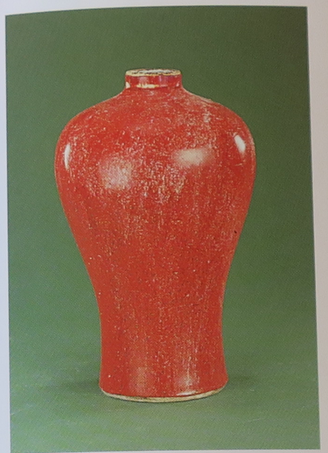




Fig. 63. Inv. no. 329. Piriform porcelain vase. Crackled. Ox Blood glaze. Reign of Kangxi (AD 1662-1722). Manos Collection.

Fig. 64. Inv. no. 309. Porcelain horse with green enamel. 17th-18th c. AD. Manos Collection.

Fig. 65. Inv. no. 306. Porcelain chimaera with yellow and green enamel. 17th-18th c. AD. Manos Collection.







The Rose Family represents a final glimmering of the pottery of the period.

The use of lacquer to manufacture or decorate a variety of vases, furniture and other functional objects, such as boxes for cosmetics or in which to keep foodstuffs, was already known at the time of the early Chinese dynasties. During this early phase, the predominant colours of the lacquer work were brown, red and black and they usually had painted or inlaid decoration. In the Qing period the lacquer work was mainly red with

Fig. 66. Inv. no. 1427. Votive disc on a base. Red Peking lacquer. Relief decoration and the ideogram for Spring on a green ground. 18th c. AD. Manos Collection.



Fig. 67. Inv. no. 1429. Bowl of red Peking lacquer with relief decoration. Black lacquer on the interior. 18th c. AD. Manos Collection.



engraved decoration, though the other colours continued to be used (Fig. 66).

Lacquer is a resin collected from the trunk of the *rhus vernicifera* tree, which grows mainly in southern India. This particular fluid, which has the property of drying quickly even in a humid atmosphere and can be cleaned and painted easily, seals and protects the surface over which it is spread. Wet lacquer is applied with a brush in a series of coats on a wooden, clay or textile core, to give form to the object being made by the artist. Over a hundred coats of lacquer were often required to create an object in a basic colour. A series of layers of different colours was often used, however, so that a bichrome or polychrome surface could be created by suitably carving it (Fig. 67).

Room 6



Fig. 68. Chinese Wing. View of Room 6. Miniature art and objects made of semi-precious materials. 18th-19th c. AD.



Chinese miniature art

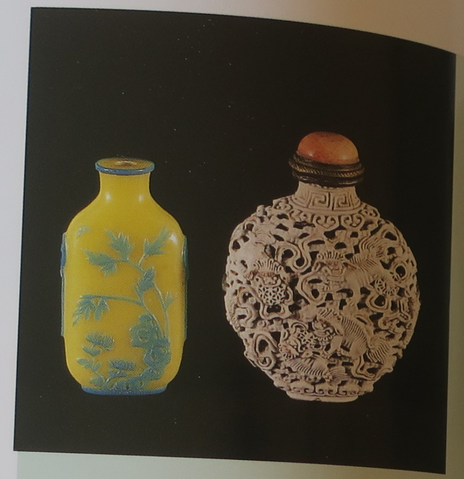
This room contains snuff bottles and items made of semi-precious raw materials, including ivory and jade.

Tobacco snuff bottles (Fig. 69) made a relatively recent appearance in Chinese history. Tobacco came to China at the end of the 16th century. It is difficult to say precisely when it assumed a powder form, though it must have been in the middle of the 17th century. The Chinese believed that pulverised tobacco had healing properties and that its use helped to cure colds, treat migraine, alleviate toothache, soothe the throat, prevent sweating, and control asthma and other complaints. In China, mint, camphor and jasmine were added to pulverised tobacco, and are still added to it today.



Fig. 69. Inv. nos. 1789, 1817. Snuff bottles to hold tobacco in powder form, made of semi-precious materials. Late 18th-early 19th c. AD. Manos Collection.

Fig. 70. Inv. no. 1815. Porcelain snuff bottle. Painted decoration on the glaze. Late 18th-early 19th c. AD. Manos Collection.





Traditional tobacco snuff bottles are small enough to fit into the palm of the hand. They usually have a small spoon attached to the lid, which is frequently covered by a hemispherical piece of precious stone. They probably evolved from the small snuff bottles used for medicines already known in earlier periods. The earliest tobacco snuff bottles dates from 1653, though mass production did not begin until the 18th century. Snuff bottles with painted decoration on the inside date from much later, in the early 19th century.

Snuff bottles were made of a great variety of materials, including coral, ivory, nephrite, jasper, mother-of-pearl, rock crystal, malachite, agate and turquoise, as well as gold, silver and many other exotic materials (Figs. 70-73). Despite the ability to choose from amongst this large number of precious materials, glass remained the most popular raw material for making them and the majority of surviving snuff bottles are made of glass. The most attractive and striking of the tobacco snuff bottles are those with painted representations on the inside walls.

The history of ivory in China is divided into three periods, based on the place of origin of the material. Down to the 8th century BC ivory came from north and central China. From this time until the 10th century AD it began to be imported from Indo-China and India, thanks to the increased demand under the Tang dynasty (AD 618-907). From the Song dynasty (AD 960-1279) onwards, it was mainly imported from Africa.

Fig. 71. Inv. no. 1772. Snuff bottle of opaque glass. Painted decoration on the surface. Late 18th-early 19th c. AD. Manos Collection.

Fig. 72. Inv. no. 1731. Amber snuff bottle. Late 18th-early 19th c. AD. Manos Collection.

Fig. 73. Inv. no. 1843. Lacquer snuff bottle. Relief and carved decoration. Late 18th-early 19th c. AD. Manos Collection.





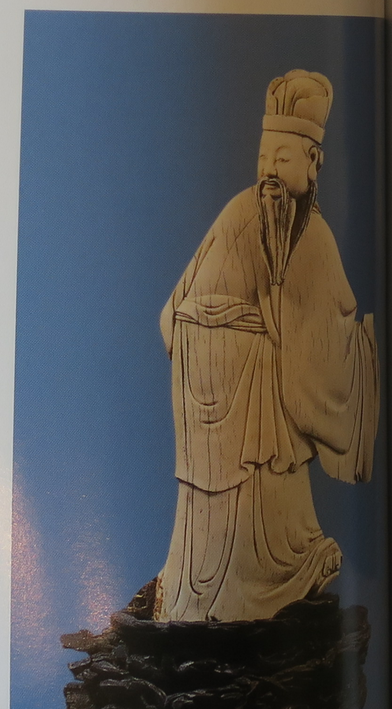


Thanks to its density, durability and above all the fine polish that can be given to its surface, ivory is an ideal material for sculptors. Although it is normally gilded or painted, nothing can compare with the sweet, warm tones of the patina it acquires with use and the passage of time. The Chinese used ivory to make figurines of gods, men and animals, cases for brushes, decorative items for the office, mainly panels and boxes, jewellery, as well as furniture, such as thrones, beds and tables, which were greatly in fashion during the Tang period (Figs. 74-77).

The name jade or yu is given to two different minerals in China: nephrite and jasper. These have similar features but are different in composition. Nephrite and jasper are very hard materials that rarely break or crack. In the eyes of the ancient Chinese, this durability gave these particular minerals a special symbolism. They embodied beauty

Figs. 74-75. Inv. nos. 1478, 1476. Ivory figurines. The details are emphasised by colour. 18th c. AD. Manos Collection.





and stability at one and the same time. The beautiful carved artefacts of nephrite and jasper, with their profound symbolism, occupied a place in the politics, economy, culture, ideology, morals and religion of China that other artworks failed to attain (Figs. 78-79).

In early Chinese societies (*ca.* 7000-1900 BC), jade played an important role in both life and death. It was used in burial ceremonies, probably to protect the body or the spirit of the deceased. In the Bronze Age (21st-6th c. BC), in particular, as rulers fought each other and dynasties multiplied, jade was considered to be a strong symbol of power and wealth. The ancient Chinese associated the natural properties of jade with human ethics, and Confucius asserted that jade possessed the qualities of charity, wisdom, justice, consideration, legitimacy, happiness, reliability, paradise, earth, virtue and truth.

China, a land with enormous reserves of nephrite and jasper, is famous throughout the world for the skill of its craftsmen in carving these minerals. The art of working jade was known from the early Neolithic period, during which carving techniques were unique and already highly advanced. The methods used to convert nephrite and jasper from unworked stones into beautiful artefacts remained unchanged for many centuries.

It is widely believed that nephrite and jasper are exclusively green

Fig. 76. Inv. no. 1502. Small decorative panel on a base. Nobleman with his family. Ivory with engraved decoration emphasised by black colour. 18th c. AD. Manos Collection.

Fig. 77. Inv. no. 1475. Ivory figure of a nude woman lying on her side. Also known as the Doctor's Lady. Used during medical examinations of women. 18th-19th c. AD. Manos Collection.

Fig. 78. Inv. no. 1557. Jade vase with ring-handles and lid. Archaic relief decoration. Qing Dynasty (AD 1644-1911). Manos Collection.

Fig. 79. Inv. no. 1589. Small decorative pillow in the shape of a child. Jade. 18th c. AD. Manos Collection.







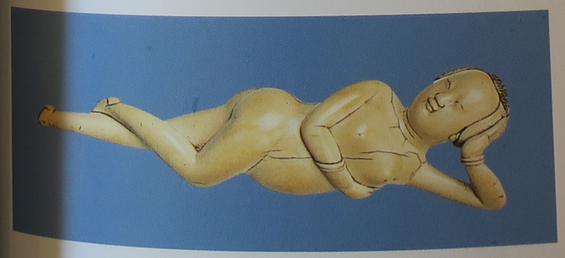


Fig. 80. Inv. no. 1598. The goddess Kwannin with attendants. Rock crystal. Qing Dynasty (AD 1644-1911). Manos Collection.

Fig. 81. Inv. no. 1524. The goddess Kwannin with an attendant. Painted Lardite. 18th-19th c. AD. Manos Collection.

in colour, whereas in fact, these minerals have many different shades. Pure nephrite and jasper are white, but different proportions of other trace elements – mainly iron, chromium and manganese – give them a wide variety of colours. Shades of green, yellow, orange, brown, grey and black are common.

In addition to jade, the Chinese used many other semi-precious stones and precious raw materials to make seals, jewellery and vases, or to decorate bronzes, furniture, arms, armour and clothing. They include mother-of-pearl (nacre), a substance secreted inside shell-fish, tonnes of which were exported to Europe, coral, amber, turquoise, malachite, agate, onyx, various kinds of rock crystal (Fig. 80), such as rose quartz and amethyst, steatite, marble-like or lardite stone etc. (Figs. 81-83).

Chinese artists adapted their subject to the composition and shape of the material they were working, and always took into account the pattern of the coloured veins in the stone, in order to achieve the finest possible result. Most of the surviving decorative objects made of semi-precious materials date from the 18th and 19th century. They include bowls, dishes, wine-jugs, flower vases, snuff bottles, statuettes and other decorative items.



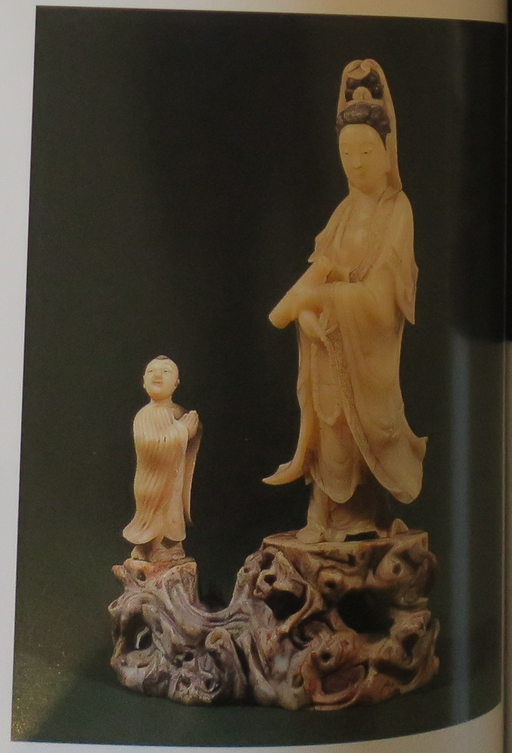
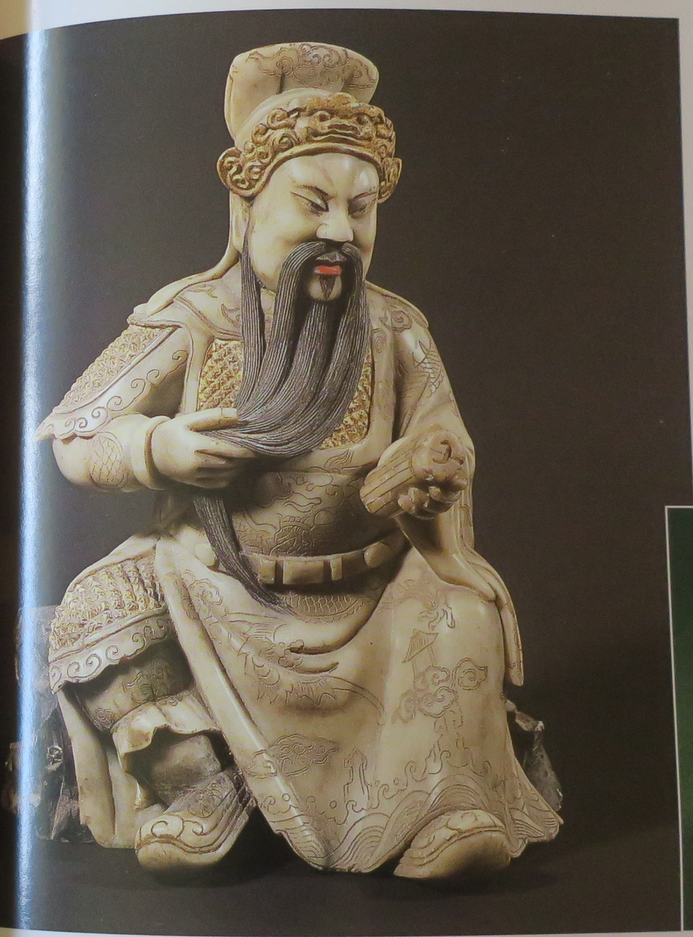


Fig. 82. Inv. no. 1520. Seated official. Lardite. Painted and gilded decoration. 18th-19th c. AD. Manos Collection.

Fig. 83. Inv. no. 1870. Seal of a mandarin. Marble-like stone. Handle in the shape of a chimaera with its young. 18th c. AD. Manos Collection.

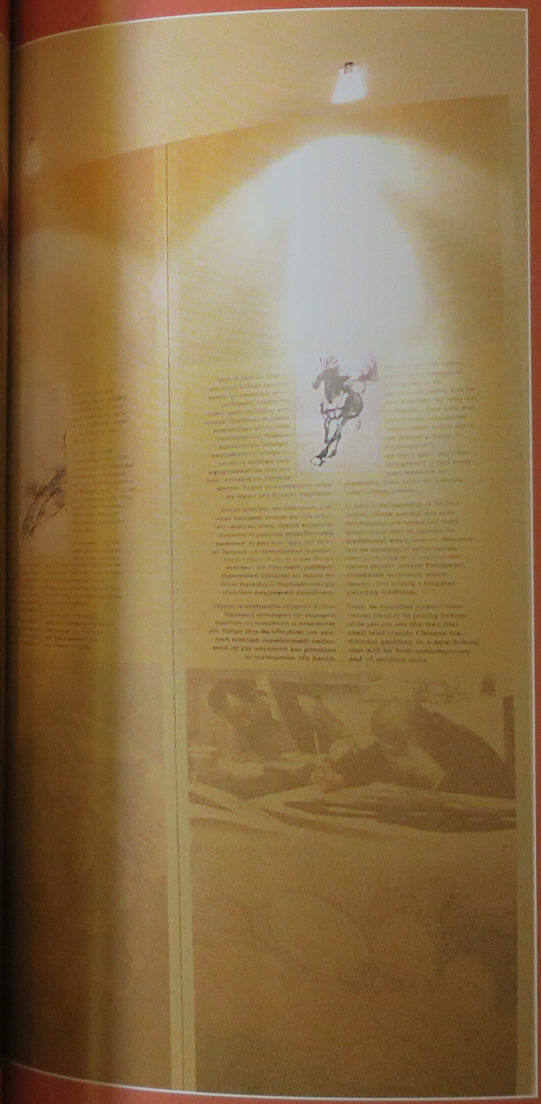




Room 7



Fig. 84. Chinese Wing. View of the Corridor (Room 7) with Chinese painting.



Painting

Calligraphy, poetry, painting and a combination of all three were always regarded by the Chinese as the height of artistic, intellectual and spiritual expression. The competent Chinese calligrapher and painter required years of practice in the use of the brush, ink and paint. Painters were also educated in the artistic tradition of their forefathers and before their own style had been formulated they copied the works of earlier painters. The impressive painted decoration of Chinese Neolithic pottery, the elaborate wall-paintings in temples, tombs and the private buildings of the early Han, along with the decoration of the early lacquer work are amongst the earliest examples of Chinese painting.



Fig. 85. Inv. no. 1877. Hanging scroll (Kakemono). Couple in a landscape. Painting on silk. Artist: Chang Ma Bing. 16th c. AD. Manos Collection.



Fig. 86. Inv. no. 1895. Hanging scroll (Kakemono). Flowers and birds. Painting on silk. Artist: Tchou Chin Min. 15th c. AD. Manos Collection.



Fig 87. Inv. no. 1902. Hanging scroll (Kakemono). Man on horseback in a landscape. Painting on silk. Artist: Tchin Tche Ong. 14th c. AD. Manos Collection.



The first paintings, mainly on silk, made their appearance already in the centuries before Christ. With the passage of time, these works began to be mounted on scrolls which, depending on the subject and size, were either hanging or narrative scrolls (Figs. 85-88). During the Tang (AD 618-907) and Song (AD 960-1279) dynasties, Chinese painting matured and prospered. Landscapes intended to bring the tran-

quillity of nature into the interior space, portraits and individual representations of flowers and birds rendered very realistically were the subjects preferred by the painters of the period. These works had bright colours, though some were executed in ink and embellished with colour.

The famous Imperial Art Academy was founded in the middle of the Tang dynasty. From the 8th to the 12th century, established professional painters, who formed their own schools, worked at the Academy for the emperor, as did apprentices who copied the works of these painters for practice. Alongside these, various peripheral artistic centres developed, at which disaffected imperial painters and several learned artists created their own painting schools. These creative artists bypassed the official realistic trend in the treatment of nature and gave their works a more subjective and poetical dimension. This new trend led gradually to a more expressionist style and the creation of paintings that may be classified amongst the most dynamic examples of Chinese and world painting.

The successive changes of dynasties had their effect on the evolution of Chinese art. This observation is also true of the Mongol Yuan dynasty (AD 1271-1368), which was a particularly dynamic transitional period for Chinese painting. Under the rule of the Yuan, imperial painters abandoned traditional academic painting for the calligraphy and elegance of the Tang and early Song works. At the same period, independent peripheral scholarly painters (literati) dominated the arts and imposed their own ideas, the objective of which was the expression of the emotions of the painter through his works. Mountains, rivers, rocks, trees and bamboo acquired a very dynamic symbolism in the landscapes of famous painters, such as the Four Masters of the Yuan Dynasty. In contrast, the painting of flowers and birds continued to follow the early realistic tradition.

During the Ming period (AD 1368-1644) many painters once more established themselves at the imperial court, where they continued the tradition of the Academy painters under the Song. There were flourishing schools in the peripheral centres, such as those of the famous painters Dai Jin (AD 1388-1462) and Wu Wei (AD 1459-1509). Another group, known as the Wu School, housed the followers of the literati tradition. This school is represented by Shen Zhou (AD 1427-1509) and Wen Zhengming (AD 1470-1559). Their works depict the tranquil, spiritual life of officials who had left the hierarchy and the instability of the imperial court. The objective of these painters was a return to nature and the opportunity for introspection and the spiritual edification offered by a natural life, without excessive luxury.

In the 17th and 18th century, the development of Chinese painting once more followed the course of the social upheavals caused by unstable reigns and chaotic wars. The Qing (AD 1644-1911), a dynasty of Manchurian descent, reestablished the Imperial Art Academy, which experienced a second golden age under the rule of Kangxi (AD 1662-1722) and Kien Long (AD 1736-1795). These two foreign rulers were themselves fine painters and patrons of art. The Academy painters imitated Ming works in their landscapes,

Fig. 88. Hanging scroll (Kakemono). Empress. Painting on silk. 19th c. AD. Manos Collection.



though with regard to their flowers and birds, they copied the Yuan. Some of them also adopted Western techniques to render depth and the sense of light in their paintings, thus combining the Chinese and Western traditions. Down to the early 19th century many new painting schools made their presence felt, with trends that were independent of the dictates of the Academy.

After the middle of the 19th century many Chinese commercial ports opened up to the international market, the best known being Shanghai. These ports rapidly developed into large cosmopolitan centres at which various artists and painters congregated. In keeping with the spirit of the period these painters assimilated many elements of Western art in their work. Their work still influences Chinese painters today. At the same time, Chinese painting enjoyed many new schools and trends, from as early as the 20th century. Several artists continued to imitate traditional models. Their work, however, lacks the dynamism of previous periods. Other artists followed the example of 19th-century painters and imitated European models, and particularly the Western repertoire, thereby creating a distinctive painting tradition.

Today, established modern Chinese artists are returning to the painting tradition of the past and seeking a path that will lead classical Chinese traditional painting into a new School of contemporary style.

Coins

Trade has always been a vehicle by which ethics, customs and also cultural elements have been transmitted from one people to another. The development of the ancient Chinese currency system is closely associated with the growth of the economy and with political history. Specifically, in Late Neolithic China, bovines and domestic animals were used as a means of exchange. During the Shang and Zhou dynasties (ca. 16th c.-750 BC), these substitutes for money were gradually replaced by heavy metals and coins cast in specific shapes, sizes and weights. Early Chinese coins may be divided into those in the shape of a spade or other agricultural tools (Fig. 89), those in the shape of a sword or a knife (Fig. 90), and round coins with a round or square hole at the centre. After the unification of the country by the Qin (about 221 BC), round coins with a hole at the centre became predominant and displaced all the previous types. Round coins circulated continuously down to the Qing dynasty (20th c.). Under the Song dynasty (10th c.) Chinese paper money made its appearance and has been widely used ever since.



Fig. 89. Early metal spade-shaped coins. Manos Collection.



Fig. 90. Metal coins. Top: early coin in the shape of a sword. Bottom: coin in the shape of a dagger. Han period. AD 9-23. Manos Collection.

Room 5



Fig 91. Chinese Wing. View of Room 5 (Chiotakis Room). Export porcelain.

Charilaos Chiotakis (1915-1998) followed Gregorios Manos's example and in 1980 donated 390 notable artworks of Asian origins to the museum. The Chiotakis collection includes porcelain, bronze and bone objects dating mainly from the 17th to the 19th century. These items originated in China and Japan, but were purchased in Europe.

In Room 5, which is named after the donor, examples of Chinese porcelain dating from the Qing dynasty are displayed (AD 1644-1911), with decoration of the Blue-and-White and the Green and Rose Families. They were made in China and exported to Europe to meet the needs of European aristocrats. The same room also has a display of porcelain from the Gr. Manos collection, the decoration of which reveals strong European influences.



Fig. 92. Inv. no. 942. White porcelain plate with blue enamel decoration and a coat-of-arms. Export porcelain. 18th c. AD.



The creation of ceramic objects is a universal achievement. Porcelain, however, is exclusively a Chinese creation. Chinese porcelain has been exported from the 8th c. AD onwards, providing the impetus for international cultural exchanges for over a thousand years. The term Chinese export porcelain is a modern one. The expression used in the past was Chinese trade porcelain.

The current intense interest in Chinese export porcelain reflects the high artistic esteem in which the work of the craftsmen of the Orient is now held. The potters and decorators at the kilns of Qing-te-chen in Canton and Che Hua were aware only that they were producing commercial objects for a Western clientele. Despite this, the best examples were and are still regarded as unique works of art. The main bulk of the porcelain pieces transported in ships to the West from the 16th to the early years of the 19th century were of a functional nature. Although this porcelain was famed for its quality and decoration, the designs made were entirely for domestic use. The variety of export porcelain is inexhaustible, and ranges from dinner

Fig. 93. Inv. no. 565. White porcelain plate with coloured and gold decoration and a coat-of-arms. Export porcelain. 18th c. AD.



Fig. 94. Inv. no. 973. White porcelain plate with coloured gold and Encre de Chine decoration and a coat-of-arms. Export porcelain. 18th c. AD.



plates (Figs. 92-94), various kinds of bowls and associated supplementary accessories, to statuettes of animals and other decorative items. These relatively late pieces have only found their place in large private and public collections in recent years.

The decorative trends of Chinese porcelain are usually described by terms such as Rose Family, Green Family or White of China, *Encre de Chine*, and Jesuite, to mention only the main categories of export porcelain. The main bulk of the export items are decorated with the colours of the Green and Rose Families. An important category is Blue and White porcelain, in which blue is the predominant colour beneath the glaze. The term *Encre de Chine* is used to describe a technique of painting in black, which Chinese porcelain painters perfected by copying European engravings of the early 18th century (Fig. 94). The expression Jesuite refers to items that bear European religious or mythological scenes, which are thought to have been inspired by the Jesuite apostles who settled in Qing-te-chen.

THE GR. MANOS JAPANESE COLLECTION



Fig. 95. Room with Samurai equipment. West Wing.

The Gr. Manos Japanese collection contains about 6,200 objects dating from the 5th to the 19th century (Figs. 95-98). They include tools, early pottery, arms and armour and bronze accessories for Samurai uniforms, woodcuts and paintings by famous Japanese artists, ceramic and porcelain objects, wood-carvings, musical instruments, decorative items such as inro and netsuke (small cases with attachment buttons), NO-theatre masks, writing boxes (Suzuribaco), lacquer vessels, painted scrolls (Makemono and Kakemono), and also folding screens.

In keeping with the approved general design for the new display in the Museum, the Japanese collection will occupy the west wing of the second floor and part of the Chatzivasileiou wing.

Fig. 96. Room with traditional Japanese artworks (porcelain and wood-carvings). West Wing.

Fig. 97. Room with objects from Japanese public and private life. West Wing.





Fig. 98. Room with Japanese screens. West Wing.



Items from the Gr. Manos Japanese collection are displayed in groups based on subject. They include arms and armour, the upper part of a Samurai panoply, and a screen displaying Samurai on horseback (Figs. 99-101), woodcuts of the 18th and 19th century executed by famous artists such as Moronobu, Harunobu, Sukenobu, Toyokuni, Utamaro, Hiroshige and others (Figs. 102-103), classical items from the Edo period (1615-1868) amongst which are some very fine porcelain objects from various workshops (Figs. 104-106), such as those of Kyoto, Arita, Seto, Koutani and the Satsuma region, religious wood-carvings (Figs. 107-109) and a large number of decorative objects made of bronze, ivory, lacquer and wood. Outstanding amongst these are NO-theatre masks (Figs. 110-111), saké bowls with inlaid and painted decoration (Fig. 112), netsuke (Fig. 113), wooden writing boxes (Suzuribaco) (Figs. 114-115), etc.

An endeavour has been made in the Museum to reproduce the atmosphere of a Japanese tea room, with invaluable help provided by Professor Isao Kumakura, an expert on the tea ceremony. The room is decorated with traditional furniture, teapots and paintings (Fig. 116).

Fig. 99. Inv. no. 3544. Metal sword guard (tsuba). Edo period. 18th c. AD. Manos Collection.

Fig. 100. Inv. no. 3396. Upper part of a Samurai uniform. Edo period (1615-1868). Manos Collection.



Fig. 101. Folding screen. Samurai on a gold ground. Edo period (1615-1868) (detail). Manos Collection.



Fig. 102. Woodcut. Before the screen. Artist: Suzuki Harunobu (1725-1770). Manos Collection.



Fig. 103. Inv. no. 4623. Woodcut. In the garden. Artist: Suzuki Harunobu (1725-1770). Manos Collection.





Fig. 104. Inv. no. 2910. Lidded bowl. Blue-and-white porcelain. Artist: Hansuke of Seto. Edo period (1615-1868). Manos Collection.

Fig. 105. Inv. no. 2982. Lady with kimono. Porcelain with Kakiemon decoration. Edo period (18th-19th c. AD). Manos Collection.

Fig. 106. Inv. no. 3014. Porcelain plate with coloured decoration. Nabeshima category. Edo period (1615-1868). Manos Collection.

Fig. 107. Inv. no. 4482. Boddhisattva Jizo. Gilded wood. 14th c. AD. Manos Collection.









Fig. 108. Inv. no. 4483. Boddhisattva. Gilded wood. Edo period (1615-1868). Manos Collection.

Fig. 109. Inv. no. 4477. The god Amida. Gilded wood. Edo period (1615-1868). Manos Collection.

Figs. 110-111. Inv. nos. 4561, 4575. NO-theatre masks. Painted wood. Edo period (18th-19th c. AD). Manos Collection.



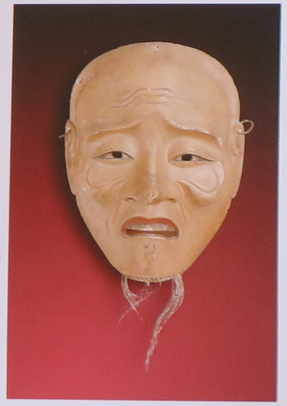




Fig. 112. Inv. nos. 4918-4920. Lacquer saké bowls. Edo period (1615-1868). Manos Collection.

Fig. 113. Inv. no. 5684. Ivory netsuke. Edo period (1615-1868). Manos Collection.

Figs. 114-115. Inv. nos. 4636, 4637. Lacquer writing boxes (Suzuribaco). Edo period (1615-1868). Manos Collection.









Fig. 116. View of the Tea Room. West Wing.



NIKOLAOS CHATZIVASILEIOU COLLECTION



Fig. 117. Inv. no. 10341. Six-fold screen. Emperor and courtiers. Momoyama period. 17th c. AD. Chatzivasileiou Collection.

Fig. 118. Inv. no. 10342. Six-fold screen. Kano School. 16th c. AD (detail). Chatzivasileiou Collection.



The N. Chatzivasileiou collection contains 400 objects, amongst which are superb screens from Korea and Japan dating from the 17th to the 19th century (Fig. 117), painted ritual banners made of silk (Tankas) and sculptures from Nepal and Tibet, religious Hindu and jain bronze sculptures, and Indian wooden sculptures of the 16th-18th century, as well as Buddhist carvings from Thailand and Pakistan.

Outstanding amongst the special collection of Korean and Japanese screens is the pair of six-fold screens decorated with horses, which is attributed to the Kano School and dates from the 16th century (Fig. 118), and the Kuruma Arasoi screen with six sections depicting a landscape with animals on gold clouds, which dates from the end of the Momoyama period (late 16th-early 17th century).

The main bulk of the Chatzivasileiou donation, however, consists of superb Hindu and jain bronze sculptures dating from the early centuries after Christ down to the 18th century. These sculptures, which depict various jain, Buddhist, and above all Hindu deities, such as Krishna, Vishnu in his reincarnations, Siva, Kali, and many other characteristic figures of the Hindu pantheon, give a good idea

Fig. 119. Inv. no. 10374. Krishna playing the flute, and Nandi. Bronze. India. 17th c. AD. Chatzivasileiou Collection.

Fig. 120. Inv. no. 10506. Seated Ganesa. Bronze. Thailand. 15th c. AD. Chatzivasileiou Collection.



of the development of religions in India, and of the power that was, and still is, exercised by religious sentiment in Indians (Figs. 119-120).

A special place in the collection is occupied by 17 Greco-Buddhist sculptures made of schist, which come from Gandhara (modern Pakistan), which are of great artistic value and of particular importance for the spread of Hellenistic art to Central Asia and the Far East. This influence was the result of the passage of Alexander the Great in the 4th century BC combined with the dominance of Greek rulers in Central Asia, Afghanistan and Pakistan from the 3rd to the 1st century BC. This influence can be noted mainly in the disposition of the drapery of the dress, the coiffure of the figures, and the treatment of architectural elements, such as column capitals (Figs. 121-122).

Also of note are the figurines and Tankas from Nepal and Tibet, which have a purely religious character. The figurines depict various deities, are made of bronze, frequently gilded, decorated with paint or inlaid with semi-precious stones, and follow a specific typology and iconography (Fig. 123). Ritual banners (Tankas) depict scenes from the life of deities and are painted in natural colours on silk. In these works elements drawn from Chinese and Indian art can be detected which, in addition to the distinctive natural scenery of the Himalayas, influenced the cultures of Nepal and Tibet (Fig. 124).

Items from the N. Chatzivasileiou collection are on display in the west wing of the first floor, which is named after the donor.





Fig. 121. Inv. no. 10217. Bust of Buddha. Grey schist. Gandhara. 1st c. AD. Chatzivasileiou Collection.

Fig. 122. Inv. no. 10219. Relief with a scene from Buddhist iconography. Grey schist. Peschawar. 3rd-4th c. AD. Chatzivasileiou Collection.



Fig. 123. Inv. no. 10257. Yamandaka – the conqueror of hell. Bronze with painted and gilded decoration. Nepal. 17th c. AD. Chatzivasileiou Collection.



Fig. 124. Inv. no. 10285. Tanka (ritual banner). Painted silk. Tibet. 17th c. AD. Chatzivasileiou Collection.





Map of the Far East and the general cultural area of India.



Map of the Far East and the general cultural area of India.

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21th–16th cent. BC **Xia** — **Ξία** 21ος–16ος αι. π.Χ.
16th–1028 BC **Shang** — **Σανγκ** 16ος–1028 π.Χ.
1027-771 BC **Western Zhou** — **Δυτικοί Τσου** 1027–771 π.Χ.
770-476 BC **Spring-and-Autumn** — **Περίοδος Άνοιξης & Φθινοπώρου** 770-476 π.Χ.
475-221 BC **Warring States** — **Περίοδος των Μαχόμενων Βασιλείων** 475-221 π.Χ.
221-207 BC **Qin** — **Τσιν** 221-207 π.Χ.
206BC-AD24 **Western Han** — **Δυτικοί Χαν** 206 π.Χ.–24 μ.Χ.
AD 25–220 **Eastern Han** — **Ανατολικοί Χαν** 25-220 μ.Χ.
AD 220–265 **Three Kingdoms** — **Τρία Βασίλεια** 220-265 μ.Χ.
AD 220-265 **Western Jin** — **Δυτικοί Γιν** 265-316 μ.Χ.
AD 317-420 **Eastern Jin** — **Ανατολικοί Γιν** 317-420 μ.Χ.
AD 420-589 **Northern & Southern Dynasties** — **Βόρειες & Νότιες Δυναστείες** 420-589 μ.Χ.
AD 589-618 **Sui** — **Σούι** 589-618 μ.Χ.
AD 618-907 **Tang** — **Τανγκ** 618-907 μ.Χ.
AD 907-960 **Five Dynasties** — **Πέντε Δυναστείες** 907-960 μ.Χ.
AD 960-1127 **Northern Song** — **Βόρειοι Σονγκ** 960-1127 μ.Χ.
AD 947-1125 **Liao** — **Λιάο** 947-1125 μ.Χ.
AD 1115-1234 **Jin** — **Γιν** 1115-1234 μ.Χ.
AD 1127–1279 **Southern Song** — **Νότιοι Σονγκ** 1127-1279 μ.Χ.
AD 1271-1368 **Yuan** — **Γιουάν** 1271-1368 μ.Χ.
AD 1368-1644 **Ming** — **Μινγκ** 1368-1644 μ.Χ.
AD 1644-1911 **Qing** — **Τσινγκ** 1644-1911 μ.Χ.


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