



TANG SANCAI

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When a thing ceases to be a subject of controversy, it ceases to be a subject of interest.

William Hazlitt (1778-1830)

*I dedicate this thesis to
Samuel Babecoff,
the man I cherish for his insight, enthusiasm and positiveness,
my source of inspiration in life,
fount of strength in everything I undertake,
the object of my desire and devotion.*

* * * * *

*Perhaps not to be is to be without your being,
without your going, that cuts noon light
like a blue flower, without your passing
later through fog and stones,
without the torch you lift in your hand
that others may not see as golden,
that perhaps no one believed blossomed
the glowing origin of the rose,
without, in the end, your being, your coming
suddenly, inspiringly, to know my life,
blaze of the rose-tree, wheat of the breeze:
and it follows that I am, because you are:
it follows from 'you are', that I am, and we:
and, because of love, you will, I will,
We will, come to be.*

Pablo Neruda – Sonnet LXIX

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Abstract

This thesis studies Tang *sancai*, a multi-coloured lead-glaze ceramic decorated ware which emerged in the Tang dynasty (AD 618 - AD 907), attaining mass production in the middle of the Tang era and declining towards its end. It examines the functions of *sancai* in its different aspects, namely as burial objects, as containers for ritual offerings and as architectural material.

I argue that Tang *sancai* ware as burial objects were employed exclusively by the Tang imperial and elite families. The approach to my argument is made, in a first stage, through the observation of the physical locations of tombs that contained Tang *sancai* wares to demonstrate that these tombs belonged to the Tang imperial and elite family members. In a further step, I bring up two Tang decrees which laid down regulations for burials, to indicate that there was a strict hierarchical system for the allocation and utilization of burial land. These two Tang texts enable us to establish that the tombs located around the area of the imperial tombs belonged to the Tang officials and elite, and therefore not to ordinary people. In addition, the study I

undertake of the structure of the tombs, with layout and organization mirroring palatial environments, reinforces my argument to that end. Lastly, I look at the cost of production of Tang *sancai* showing that it was higher than that of unglazed ceramics and that, consequently, *sancai* wares were, from an economical point of view, inaccessible to the common people. This thesis also reflects on the agency of Tang *sancai*, considering its aesthetic qualities and its suitability in the functions for which it served, as a force in engaging the viewers.

The lasting debate on whether Tang *sancai* utensil-shaped wares were used for everyday eating and drinking is dealt with in this thesis by carefully examining the locations of the shards that were excavated at the sites of imperial palaces. My research enables to point out that this data is not sufficient to ascertain that this type of Tang *sancai* was used as daily wares. On the contrary, on the grounds that these locations were the places where ritual performances took place, I argue that *sancai* utensil wares were used as presentation containers for ritual performances. In the absence of records in Tang texts which could have informed about the relationship between Tang *sancai* and religious practice, I borrow an evidence from Japan, in the form of the hand-brush writing on a couple of Nara *sancai* dishes, which were copies of Tang *sancai* made in Japan during the time of Tang, mentioning that these vessels were specifically for use for ritual ceremonies. Furthermore, on the basis of analyses made on lead-glazed ware, some scholars assert that such ware is poisonous and could not have been used to contain food or drink, as much as no evidence exists to show that ancient Chinese had used lead-glazed wares for that purpose. This leads to the clarification that Tang *sancai* utensil-shaped wares were not produced for everyday use, their purpose having actually been to serve as vessels for offerings in rituals. I further observe that this connection between *sancai* and ritual-themed objects, initiated by the Tang, has in fact pervaded through the succeeding dynasties affirming its role in religious ceremonials.

Finally, this thesis also looks at Tang *sancai* as an architectural material to show that it was skillfully used in decorating buildings, not only as tiles and tile-ends, but also as large-sized roof ornaments. The research reveals, in the process, the possible dates when *sancai* architectural material started to be used popularly during the Tang era.

Introduction

Tang *sancai* 唐三彩 is the name given to ceramics which were produced during the Tang dynasty 唐代 (AD 618-907) using white clay or yellowish loessic clay of bright multi-coloured lead-glazes.

This name, made up of the Chinese words *san* 三, meaning three, and *cai* 彩, meaning colour, was given to this type of ware in the second half of the twentieth century. However, although they were called "three-coloured" as their name suggests, Tang *sancai* objects sometimes had only one colour, or a combination of two, or three or even four colours, consisting of amber, brown, green, blue, creamy white, straw yellow and black.

Tang *sancai* represents an unusual phenomenon in the context of Chinese ceramics. The principal ceramics used at the time carried high fired green, black or white glaze. Multi-coloured lead-glazed wares were not part of the Chinese tradition. The choice of the colours mentioned above is a subject of debate, and may have been a development within China. It is also quite likely that the choice was influenced by the contact with the Middle East.

The great majority of items known today were removed from tombs. The first discovery of *sancai* objects took place in 1905, when tombs were opened during

works for a railway construction¹ at the foot of Mount Mangshan 邙山 in the north of Luoyang 洛陽 city.² Most of the tombs containing *sancai* wares were excavated in the last fifty years. These tombs were located primarily in Shaanxi province 陝西省 and Henan province 河南省. Little was found in Tang tombs in Shanxi 山西省, Jilin 吉林省, Hunan 湖南省 Hubei 湖北 and Hebei 河北省 provinces and in Beijing 北京 (Map 1.1).³ Recent archaeological excavations unearthed Tang *sancai* shards at the site of Daminggong 大明宮, the imperial palace of the Tang⁴ at Xi'an, and in the ruins of Taiyechi 太液池, the garden of the Tang court,⁵ also at Xi'an.⁶ According to reports on archaeological excavations, *sancai* shards were also found at Tang temple ruins, as well as a *sancai* Buddha statue at the site of the Qinglong Temple 青龍寺,⁷ and a Buddha statue and mould at *sancai* kiln sites.⁸

The origin of firing of Tang *sancai* wares remained a mystery till 1957.⁹ Up to the present, four *sancai* kiln sites have been discovered: the Huangye kiln 黃冶窯 in Henan province; the Huangbao 黃堡窯 and the Liqianfang 醴泉坊窯 kilns in Shaanxi province; and the Neiqiu kiln 內丘窯 in Hebei province (Map 1.2).

¹ At the end of the Qing dynasty (AD 1644-1911), the Suihai 隋海 railway line, between Luoyang and Bianluo 汴洛, was under construction. In 1905, when work took place at the foot of Mount Mangshan, which covered a tomb area of the Han 漢 (206BC-AD220) and the Tang dynasties, Tang *sancai* objects were unearthed along with many other precious objects. These objects quickly appeared on the antique markets, Luo Zhenyu 1916, pp.2415-1416.

² Luoyang 洛陽 was the second capital, formerly called the Eastern Capital 東都 during the Tang dynasty.

³ See Table 1.1.

⁴ *Sancai* shards were mingled with *yue* ware 越窯 and *xing* 邢窯 ware at the site of the Daminggong ruins, *KG* 2005, 7, pp. 29-34

⁵ *KG* 2005, 7, pp. 29-34

⁶ See Table 1.2

⁷ Qinglong Temple 青龍寺, a famous Lama temple in the Tang dynasty, is located in the south-east suburb of Xi'an. Monks from Japan and Korea came to the Qinglong Temple to study the Lama School of Buddhism.

⁸ See Table 1.4.

⁹ A survey undertaken in the kiln sites in Henan province by Feng Xianming 馮先銘 and Li Huibing 李輝柄 in 1957 indicates that the kiln producing Tang *sancai* wares was located at Huangye 黃冶, in Henan Province. This was the first discovery of a kiln producing *sancai* wares, *WW* 1959, 3, pp. 56-58

The exact date of the first appearance of Tang *sancai* is also unclear. Archaeological excavations have demonstrated that the earliest excavated pieces of *sancai* to date were from the tomb of Zheng Rentai 鄭仁泰, who died in AD 663 and was buried at Liqian xian 禮泉縣 in Shaanxi province. The tomb of Peishi Xiaoniangzi Mu 裴氏小娘子, who died in AD 850 and was buried at Jialicun 嘉裏村, Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, contains the latest dated example.

Up to now no *sancai* objects were found in the later tombs of the Tang or in the tombs of the Five Dynasties 五代 (AD 907-AD 960), which followed the Tang period. It seems that the firing of lead-glazed *sancai* did not continue in the Five Dynasties in Henan and Shaanxi, where the main production of Tang *sancai* has taken place. However, lead-glazed *sancai* wares re-appeared in the Liao dynasty 遼代 (AD 916-AD 1125), in the Song dynasty 宋代 (AD 960-AD 1279) and in the Jin dynasty 金代 (AD 1115-AD 1234). Production seems to have been massive. A large number of pieces were excavated in the tombs of these dynasties. Among them many *sancai* ritual objects, such as Buddhist sculptures and stupas, were found.¹⁰

Tang *sancai* ware has also been found outside China. Thirty Tang *sancai* pillows were handed down in Japan and are among the treasures of the Shōsō-in in the relics repository at the Tōdai-ji temple at Nara.¹¹ Fragments of Tang *sancai* ware were excavated in Nara (Japan), in Mantai (Sri Lanka), in Fustat (Egypt), and in Samarra

¹⁰ This thesis focuses on Tang *sancai*. However, a brief discussion on Liao, Song and Jin *sancai* will be found in Chapter Three, "Technology and sources of innovation".

¹¹ Shoichi 2000, pp.60-65

(Iraq). Recently 200 pieces of Tang *sancai* were recovered among 60,000 artefacts salvaged from the shipwreck at Belitung, an island west of present-day Indonesia¹². At Yangzhou 揚州, in Jiangsu province 江蘇省, an important commercial city and the major port where goods for export were loaded during the Tang period, 598 Tang *sancai* shards and some other *sancai* objects were excavated.

This thesis will cover the study of all the topics mentioned above from four aspects. The first is Tang *sancai* as tomb objects: this is the first work where all tombs which contained Tang *sancai* wares excavated up to this date are brought together to be examined – a compilation that will help to observe in a more comprehensive way the pattern of employment of Tang *sancai* as burial items. The second aspect is the actual functions of Tang *sancai* in the different locations where the Tang lived: the study will be supported by the scrutiny of the wares that were unearthed in the ruins at these locations and by a research in literary sources. The third aspect is the export of Tang *sancai*: a survey will deal with the much discussed subject concerning cobalt blue decorated Tang objects. Finally, the fourth aspect is Tang *sancai* as viewed from the technique involved in its creation and its production achievements: the study will enable to give an assessment of the value of Tang *sancai* in the context of the development of Tang ceramics.

¹² Guy gives a detailed description of the finds in this 10th century sunken cargo, the Belitung, which carried different types of Chinese ceramics from China on its way to the Middle East. See Guy 2001-2002, vol.66, pp.13-27.

Literature Review

Tang *sancai* wares do not seem to be mentioned in literary sources, unlike *yue* ware 越窯 and *xing* ware 邢窯,¹³ for which textual records can be found in the texts preserved in the *Si Ku Quan Shu* 四庫全書.¹⁴ Tang *sancai* wares represent an unusual case among other wares, in that no pieces are known to have been handed down from the time of their manufacture. As mentioned in the Introduction, it is only in 1905, at the end of the Qing dynasty (AD 1644-1911), that these wares appeared on the antique markets.

In 1916, Luo Zhenyu 羅振玉 introduced Tang *sancai* objects in *Gu Mingqi Tulu* 古明器圖錄, which is most probably the first publication that mentioned and illustrated Tang *sancai* in China. In the preface of his book, Luo Zhenyu recorded the story of his discovery and his purchase of Tang *sancai* items in the antique market in the winter of 1907,¹⁵ yet without any further introduction and description in terms of their function, characteristics and the techniques of their production.¹⁶ Luo wrote:

“During the winter of the year of Dingwei 丁未 (Guangxu 光緒 dynasty 1907), I for the first time acquired two pieces of ancient tomb figures in

¹³ *Yue* ware is a green-glazed ware which was produced in Zhejiang Province; *xing* ware is a white-glazed ware which was produced in Hebei Province. Both *yue* and *xing* wares were ceramics made for the Imperial Tang court (AD 618-907). *Yue* and *xing* wares were mentioned in nine volumes of *Si Ku Quan Shu* 四庫全書: *Tong Ya* 通雅, *juan*, 33; *Yun Lu Man Chao* 雲麓漫抄, *juan*, 10; *Wu Li Xiao Shi* 物理小識, *juan*, 8; *Xing Zhu Ti Ji* 香祖筆記, *juan*, 7; *Yun Shi Zhai Bi Tan* 韻石齋筆記, *juan*, Shang; *Qi Song Tang Shi Xiao Lu* 七頌堂小錄; *Yan Shan Zhai Za Ji* 硯山齋雜記, *juan*, 4; *Lei Shuo* 類說, *juan*, 15; *Shuo Fu* 說郛, *juan*, 34

¹⁴ The *Si Ku Quan Shu* 四庫全書 is a set of books compiled under an edict of Emperor *Qianlong* (AD 1736-1796). This collection, with more than 36,000 *juan*, covers a wide range of subjects including the classics, history, literature, philosophy, geography, politics, governmental rules and regulations, economics, society, astronomy, science, technology, medicine etc. It is the most comprehensive depository of Chinese scholarship from antiquity to the 18th century.

¹⁵ Luo Zhenyu seems to have been the first scholar who mentioned about Tang *sancai* figures in China. Luo Zhenyu, 1916, pp.2415-1416.

¹⁶ Luo Zhenyu 1916, pp.2415-1416.

Beijing Changsi 廠肆, and acquired more afterwards; in the 5th year of the Republic of China (1916), I have selected a marvelous piece from the collection I had built up during the previous years which served for editing *Gu mingqi tulu sijuan* 古明器圖錄 in *Yishu yebian*.” .

During the last fifty years, reports on the archaeological excavations at Tang *sancai* kiln sites, in Tang tombs and at the ruins of Tang architectural sites and cities, were published mainly in *Wenwu* 文物, *Kaogu* 考古 and *Kaogu yu wenwu* 考古與文物, the three most important archaeological periodicals in China. Reports are also found in articles in *Wenwu cankao ziliao* 文物參考資料, *Zhongyuan wenwu* 中原文物, and *Kaoguxuebao* 考古學報. Only little account on tomb excavations could be found in other publications.

The principal tombs and their locations, as well as the various objects excavated, are shown in Table 1.1. This table is based on information compiled from archaeological reports and individual tomb reports.¹⁷ Tomb excavations that have been published in other minor magazines and excavation reports on tomb groups¹⁸ have not been taken into account. From the details of excavations listed in the said Table, it can be noted that Tang *sancai* objects found in the tombs include figures of camels, horses, Heavenly Kings and other tomb guardians, figures of servants, attendants and animals, as well as utensil-shaped items, such as dishes, jars, ewers, cups, bowls, vases, and so forth. Many of these tomb objects carried strong exotic

¹⁷ Some of the important tombs have their individual reports which give detailed information about tomb excavations and tomb status. However, a brief excavation report is usually published in one of the archeological periodicals, *Wenwu*, *Kaogu* and *Kaogu yu wenwu*.

¹⁸ Excavations of tomb groups are often made in a rush, resulting in ambiguous information.

characters; yet it was the *sancai* lead-glaze that enhanced the foreign traits. The pursuit of an exotic lifestyle at the Tang court and the foreign influence on everyday life has been much discussed by scholars.

On the basis of Tang texts, Schafer reviews intensively all sorts of objects imported in the Tang court – more than one hundred and seventy of them – such as animals, spices, gold and silver and so forth.¹⁹ Schafer's discussion draws a significant picture of the exotic lifestyle of the Tang. On his side, Luo Feng 羅豐 studies the relationship between Chinese and Middle Eastern immigrants to China in different periods, through literary sources and through the finds from non-Chinese tombs excavated in the provinces of Shaanxi 陝西, Gansu 甘肅 and Ningxia 寧夏, across which passed the Silk Road trade. Luo's research focuses especially on a time span spreading between the third and tenth centuries. He states that the settlement of Middle Eastern immigrants had indeed a notable impact on Chinese culture.²⁰ Dien concentrates his research on the period covering the third to the sixth centuries. He draws on the archaeological findings from reports as well as from historical and literary sources to discuss the development of religion, arts and culture in China during the said period. He argues that “Apparently only in the Tang did Chinese craftsmen fully incorporate the foreign motifs and forms into their own art out of which emerged much of what is considered to be typical Tang styles.”²¹

¹⁹ Schafer, 1963.

²⁰ Luo Feng, 2004.

²¹ Dien, 2007.

Researches and publications on Tang *sancai* have been frequent. Most of the publications and discussions focus on the praise for the impressive expression of *sancai* objects and on the admiration of the remarkable sculpting skill with which they have been produced. However, some discussions and researches on several issues of Tang *sancai* carried out by scholars lay a good foundation for a deeper study. Recent archaeological excavations have also provided new information for a further examination of this unusual ware. In the following sections of this literature review, I address the subjects in the order in which I shall tackle them in the thesis.

1. Burial objects

Scholars hold different views on the function of Tang *sancai* wares; some believe all kinds of Tang *sancai* objects belong to tomb or burial wares, while others consider that utensil-shaped *sancai* wares were for daily use. Wares commonly accepted as being tomb objects are in the form of guardians, of human male and female figures, horses, camels, utensil objects, miniature furniture and so forth, most of them in featured shapes with bright glazes. The strong characteristic appearance of these *sancai* objects has drawn the attention of scholars, whose discussions focused on their sculptural shapes and artistic values. Li Zhiyan 李知宴 discusses and illustrates some impressive *sancai* tomb objects and states that they reflect the style of the Tang dynasty sculptures.²² Zhang Wanli 張萬里 gathered a collection of Tang *sancai* objects from different museums of the world and illustrated his publication with little

²² Li Zhiyan 李知宴, 1998.

discussion, except in describing shapes and colours.²³ He Zhengguang 何政廣 and Xu Liping 許禮平 also contribute in illustrating Tang *sancai* objects collected by museums and private collectors around the world, without, however, any discussion on each item.²⁴ Tan Danjiong 譚旦罔 studies Tang *sancai* by categorizing them in accordance with their different shapes. He discusses the sources of inspiration for the different shapes of Tang *sancai* and states that camels were inspired by the silk trade, yet he observes that the different forms of tomb guardians were of Chinese origin.²⁵ Hobson's discussion focused on the technique of potters and their inspiration for shaping pottery and porcelain throughout the history of Chinese ceramics. He contributed to the study of the shapes of the Tang tomb figures.²⁶

Scholars often discuss *sancai* tomb figures along with unglazed ones, which share the same features. They view both types as having served for the same functions, noting, nevertheless, that Tang *sancai* figures have a more attractive appearance than the unglazed objects. Some scholars even view tomb objects as art and sculptures. Taking this view further, Bower states: "As a mass-produced art form, ceramic tomb sculpture is part of a larger tradition in China of art made in quantity in workshops or larger facilities that might be regarded as factories, and the origins of which stretch back at least as early as the Bronze Age. Such art works were produced, to greater or lesser extents, through a division of labour in assembly and decoration of parts that

²³ Zhang Wanli 張萬里, 1997.

²⁴ He Zhengguang 何政廣, Xu Liping 許禮平, 1995.

²⁵ Tan Danjiong 譚旦罔, 1980.

²⁶ Hobson (1872-1941) joined the staff of the British Museum (Bloomsbury) in 1897 and, in 1921, he became the keeper of the Department of Oriental Antiquities and Ethnography. Hobson, in his work "*Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*", studied potters' workmanship in China from primitive times to the present day. Hobson, 1915.

were sometimes standardized or prefabricated.”²⁷ Kuwayama stresses that: “The ultimate achievement of Tang funerary art was reached in the late seventh and early eighth centuries.....Ceramic warriors and guardian spirits, princes and grooms, horses and camels, and the utensils of daily life were all modeled in clay. Among the most appealing subjects are the graceful court ladies portrayed dancing or playing musical instruments. The sensitively rendered horses from Yongtai’s tomb are unsurpassed, revealing the technical accomplishment and stylistic maturity of Chinese sculpture at its apogee.”²⁸

Whilst scholars praised such work for the creativity it reflected, the question was debated as to whether these objects are to be considered and discussed within the arena of art and sculpture, even though these objects merely reflected the aesthetics of the time. The same can be said of tomb wall paintings. Scholars argue that the tomb was built to represent the palace where the deceased lived during their lifetime. They suggested that tomb paintings embody the environment of the palace and, as such, they had a function. Fong examined four royal tombs of the Tang,²⁹ and argued that figures painted on the wall have a representation. Eckfeld further argues that the wall paintings show the status of the tomb occupant. “The painted tomb interiors evoked a paradisiac environment for the occupancy of the spirit of the deceased. In the imperial tombs, this often included an outdoor estate, and a grand palace or mansion, fitted out with pavilions and connecting corridors inhabited by all

²⁷ Bower, 2002, p.21.

²⁸ Kuwayama, 1987, p.85

²⁹ The four tombs that Fong discussed are the tomb of Prince Yide (AD 682 – AD 701), the tomb of Princess Yongtai (AD 684 – AD 701), the tomb of Prince Zhanghuai (AD 654 – AD 684) and the tomb of Huaiyang (AD ?). Fong, 1973, pp. 307-334.

sorts of officials, protective guards, companions and servants, and supplied with animals, food and useful articles, all replicated in pottery, stone or paint.”³⁰ Li Xingming, who made a comprehensive study on all the excavated Tang tombs that contain tomb paintings, suggests that the tomb is a dwelling for the deceased, and that each section of the tomb represents a part of the palace. He indicates that, in this respect, the sceneries of tomb paintings change in accordance with the part of the palace they were supposed to represent.³¹ Rawson suggests that Chinese tombs reveal an institutional world that is underpinned by belief or ideology.³² Little has been discussed on the affiliation between Tang *sancai* and unglazed tomb objects, and their setting in tombs.

2. Utensil -shaped *sancai* ware

Debates persist on the reasons of the emergence and function of utensil-shaped *sancai* ware and on the technology and innovations of Tang *sancai* wares in general. The views of the scholars on the role of Tang *sancai* wares as objects of use in everyday life differ widely. Tan Danjiong has argued that most of the Tang *sancai* wares came from tombs and, therefore, they consisted of tomb objects, and served for burial rituals. Yet, he added, they were a great achievement in the history of art, before the Qing dynasty Chinese scholars have barely noticed them.³³

³⁰ Eckfeld, 2005, p.136.

³¹ Li Xingming, 2005.

³² Rawson, 2005.

³³ Tan Danjiong, 1981.

Narasaki recognizes that Tang *sancai* wares were employed as tomb burial objects, but he takes the Tang *sancai* wares found in Japan as evidence that this ware was used for religious rituals as well.³⁴ He based his argument on the fact that Tang *sancai* wares contained lead, which is a poisonous material³⁵ and therefore not fit for containing food.

Although the problem of everyday use is much discussed, Li Zhiyan 李知宴 claims that *sancai* ware produced for export was made to serve for that function. He argues that because *sancai* vessels excavated at kiln sites were found in sets, therefore they were intended for daily use. Li categorized *sancai* wares into two separate groups: one for everyday use, and the other as tomb objects. According to his method of classifying *sancai* wares, vessels were supposed to be for everyday use, while moulded animals and other figures fall in the group of tomb objects.³⁶ Watson also argues that because some of the *sancai* objects were found in inhabited places, such as palace sites, they were used in everyday life.³⁷ Wood said: “The existence of Chinese *sancai* wares, made for export to Iraq, as well as to other countries such as Japan and Egypt, has raised the question of whether Tang *sancai* wares were ever used as luxury wares by those living in China. This is a much-discussed problem, but it now seems possible that Tang *sancai* wares saw some limited use in China as exotic everyday wares.”³⁸

³⁴ Narasaki 2000, pp.60-65.

³⁵ Narasaki 2000, p. 61

³⁶ Li Zhiyan argued in his article about ceramics for everyday use in the Tang dynasty that Tang *sancai* was actually made for everyday life. Li Zhiyan, 1986, p. 6.

³⁷ Watson, 1984.

³⁸ Wood, 2007, p. 206.

Over the last three decades, information from excavations at the ruins of Tang imperial palace sites, as well as in temple sites, has provided new insights. Details of the materials found in places where the people actually lived are given in Table 1.2. *Sancai* shards were found at the ruins of imperial palace sites at both capitals of the Tang era, Xi'an and Luoyang. More *sancai* shards were excavated at Taiyechi 太液池, the garden of Daming Palace 大明宮, an imperial palace in the capital in the Tang era. *Sancai* shards also appeared in the ruins of the Jiucheng Palace 九成宮, a summer palace of the Tang. A few items were found at the garden of Shangyang Palace 上陽宮³⁹ in Luoyang. At the ruins of Jianfu Temple 薦福寺⁴⁰ and Qinglong Temple, two important Tang temple sites in Xi'an, *sancai* shards were excavated. Unfortunately, there is no detailed description of the *sancai* shards which were found in large numbers at the Jianfu Temple. But it is worthy of note that a *sancai* Buddhist statue was found in the excavation at the Qinglong Temple site. However, due to the methodology of Chinese archeological excavation, which gives more importance to typology, it is difficult to have a clear picture of how and where exactly those utensil-shaped Tang *sancai* wares have been used.

3. Architectural material

Tang *sancai* architectural materials were uncovered at the ruins of Daming Palace in Xi'an, of the Huaqing Palace and of the Jiucheng Palace in Shaanxi province, of Shangyang Palace in Luoyang, Henan province, and of Longquanfu Palace 龍泉府 in

³⁹ See details on the Shangyang Palace in Table 1.2.

⁴⁰ See details on the Jianfu Palace in Table 1.2.

the Bohai State 渤海國, in Heilongjing province 黑龍江省. Combined archaeological reports on Tang imperial sites, such as those of the Daming Palace, the Huaqing Palace 華清宮 and the Jiucheng Palace, were published in very recent years.⁴¹ These reports not only encompassed all the archaeological excavation reports that have been published over the years in the major periodicals, such as *Wenwu* and *Kaogu*, but they also included additional studies on the excavated sites, like, for instance, the actual layout of the palaces and the Tang texts concerning them. Although there is still a lack of detailed information on architectural material excavated at the sites, the study of the Tang texts significantly facilitates the research on the sites. These finds of architectural materials were mainly green or brown glazed tiles. The finds at these sites are listed in Table 1.2, with references to the respective excavation reports.

Architectural material was also found at two of the four kiln sites where Tang *sancai* wares were produced. The archaeological excavation report on the Huangbao kiln 黃堡窯 suggests that architectural material was also produced in *sancai* ware, referring to the discovery of a dragon head piece, 24 cm long by 13.5 cm wide by 17.5 high, glazed in amber, yellow, and green colours, and of a moulded beast-looking tile-end glazed in amber and yellow. The find included also a short tile and nine long tiles in green glaze.⁴² Furthermore, at the site of Huangye kiln 黃冶窯, bricks with glaze were unearthed, but no detailed description was reported. During my field work at the *sancai* kiln sites, Zhuo Zhenxi 祿振西, the Chinese scholar who excavated the Huangbao *sancai* kiln, mentioned that a large quantity of tiles were excavated at

⁴¹ Daminggong, 2007; Tang Huaqinggong, 1998; Jiuchenggong, 2008

⁴² *WW* 1987,3, pp.23-32.

Xiaoyan Pagoda where the Tang Jianfu Temple is located. But no information on this subject was given in the excavation report because the experts, at the time of the report, did not yet believe that *sancai* architectural material was produced during the Tang period. Very little research has been done on Tang *sancai* architectural material.

4. T ang *sancai* kiln sites

Up to date, four Tang *sancai* kiln sites have been found in three provinces: the Huangye kiln 黃冶窯 in Henan province; the Huangbao kiln 黃堡窯 and the Xijiao Liquanfang kiln 醴泉坊窯, in Shaanxi province; and the Neiqiu kiln 內丘窯 in Hebei province.

The Huangye kiln site was the first find of a Tang *sancai* kiln site. Archaeological excavations started in 1976 and have been made several times till 1983, and represented the first phase of excavation. Thereafter, another three major excavations have been carried out at the site: in 1984, in 2002 and in 2003.⁴³ Archaeological reports were published separately in recent years. The reports describe kiln structure and mention the kiln tools and shards of Tang *sancai* wares that were discovered at the sites. The highlight of the excavation happened between 2002 and 2003 when cobalt blue decorated wares were unearthed at the Huangye kiln site. This provided the answer to the question as to the kiln that could have

⁴³ Huangye, 2000; Huangye, 2002; Huangye, 2005.

produced the cobalt blue decorated wares that were found at the Tang city of Yangzhou 揚州, a port for exports in the Tang era, and in the Belitung cargo, a sunken trade ship which carried massive Chinese ceramics destined to the Middle East.

The Huangbao *sancai* kiln site was excavated and studied in detail. A comprehensive report on the finds at this site was published in 1992 based on the archaeological excavation that had taken place in 1984-1985. This significant research on a Tang *sancai* workshop reveals the process of Tang *sancai* production.⁴⁴

The excavation at the Neiqiu Tang *sancai* kiln site was overshadowed by the archaeological excavations of the *xing* kilns, which are in the same areas in Hebei province.⁴⁵ Tang *sancai* kiln tools were found, but no excavation of the actual *sancai* kilns have been made so far. Incidentally, recent publications on *xing* kiln sites included the archaeological reports and articles related to the Neiqiu Tang *sancai* kiln site.⁴⁶

No archaeological excavations have been made at the newly found Liqianfang kiln site, which is the only Tang *sancai* kiln site located inside the capital of the Tang dynasty, Chang'an, present-day Xi'an. Kiln tools, however, were unearthed at the site.

The findings in each of the four kiln sites cited above are summarized in Table 1.4,

⁴⁴ Tangdai Huangbao Yaozhi 1992.

⁴⁵ As tribute ware at the Tang court, *xing* was given more importance by Chinese archaeologists.

⁴⁶ Xingyao (a), 2007; Xingyao (b), 2007; Xingyao (c), 2007.

with references to the records in the excavation reports.

Tang *sancai* kiln sites and *sancai* technology have been well studied by scholars in general, but more particularly on the Huangye kiln site in Henan province and on the Huangbao kiln site in Shaanxi province.

The kiln structures, the types of clay used, the technology of shaping, and the different glazes and glazing methods, were well studied by scholars. The most significant and comprehensive study on all these subjects was made by Kerr and Wood and published in their milestone book, "*Science and Civilization in China: Chemistry and Chemical Technology*".⁴⁷ In this book, kilns were examined by their locations and their development in the different regions of China. The discussion of the well-preserved Tang *sancai* kiln structure is based on the archaeological excavation report on Huangbao kiln site recorded by Du Baoren 杜葆仁.⁴⁸ Tang *sancai* technology, in terms of shaping, glazing and firing, are discussed in detail in the frame and the context of development of Chinese ceramic.

5. T ang *sancai* in export trade

The finds of Tang *sancai* shards in present-day Japan, Sri Lanka, Egypt and Iraq have given rise to discussions on exported Tang *sancai*. Sarre seems to have been the first

⁴⁷ Kerr and Wood, 2004.

⁴⁸ Du Baoren made the pioneer archaeological research on the Tang *sancai* kilns that were excavated at the Huangbao kiln sites. Du Baoren, 1987 pp.33-37

scholar who demonstrated that the bright coloured shards found in Samarra in Iraq were Chinese.⁴⁹ The analysis by neutron activation performed by Tite and Rawson supported Sarre's claim and has been established as an essential reference standard for the study of any comparison between the different productions and origins. This analysis contains detailed data of firing temperatures, composition of bodies and glazes – elements which are crucial for further research.⁵⁰

The maritime trade between the Gulf and China during the eighth and ninth centuries is a field that has attracted many scholars, who devoted themselves to deep research. Koyama Fujio compared the shapes of the Middle Eastern ceramics and metal works with Tang *sancai* wares.⁵¹ Hildebrand talks more specifically about the Persian motifs and shapes.⁵² Arthur Lane, author of "*Early Islamic Pottery*", published in 1940, laid the foundation for the further study of Islamic pottery, its influence and its comparison with Chinese pottery.

About ten shipwrecks from the Tang dynasty have been salvaged up to now. It seems that none of them was found to carry Tang *sancai* ware, with the exception of the Belitung cargo, salvaged in 1998. The study of the Belitung cargo, a vessel that sunk on the western coast of Indonesia, suggests that the ship was heading for the Middle East. Flecker discussed the finds of the Belitung, as the richest and largest consignment of early ninth-century Chinese trade ceramics ever found.⁵³ Amongst

⁴⁹ Sarre 1925.

⁵⁰ Tite and Rawson 1987-88, pp. 39-61.

⁵¹ Koyama, 1970

⁵² Hildebrand, 1987, pp. 95-99.

⁵³ Flecker 2000,

60,000 artifacts recovered from the wreck, there were 200 *sancai* pieces.

The study of the role of Tang *sancai* in the export trade leads us to Yangzhou, one of the important commercial cities and ports of the Tang dynasty, which has drawn the particular attention of contemporary scholars when, in 1975, 598 Tang *sancai* shards were found at the ruins of its old Tang city. The most significant discovery of this excavation is that of Tang cobalt blue decorated white wares found here for the first time.⁵⁴

Tang *sancai* wares have contributed to and stimulated the development of *sancai* ceramic production in Japan. Narasaki made significant studies not only on Chinese Tang *sancai* unearthed in Japan, but also on the development of Japanese Nara *sancai*.⁵⁵ He suggests that the production of the three-colour-glazed pottery in Japan started from the middle of eighth century. The appearance of three-colour glazed ceramic in Japan happened when Japanese monks travelled to China to study Buddhism and brought back with them Tang *sancai* wares. The first firing in a kiln of Japanese three-colour glazed wares took place in Nara. According to Narasaki, the development of Japanese three-colour glazed wares started with a three coloured glaze, and then developed to two, and later to a single green colour.⁵⁶ Egami Namio discussed the relationship between Chinese Tang *sancai*, Liao *sancai* and Japanese Nara *sancai*.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ The shards of Tang *sancai* and the cobalt blue decorated white wares have been much discussed by scholars with regard to their connection with the Middle East. The connection between the *sancai* shards of Yangzhou and *sancai* kilns has also been thoroughly examined. More information on recent research and discussion are dealt with in Chapter Three, Section 4.1.1 "Cobalt blue".

⁵⁵ Narasaki, 1977; Narasaki, 1999 and Narasaki, 2000.

⁵⁶ Narasaki 2000, pp.60-65.

⁵⁷ Egami Namio, 1989.

Chapter One

Tang *sancai* ware in tombs

This chapter deals with Tang *sancai* wares found in tombs in China. I shall first illustrate the physical locations of the tombs, with a view to understanding the significance or the purpose of the areas where these tombs were located. As it will become apparent, the status and ranking of the tombs are relevant to the use of *sancai*. To explore this issue, I shall also look at the recorded texts. I shall argue that the majority of the tombs in which *sancai* wares were found belonged to Imperial Tang families and to high-ranking members of the court and the elite.

I shall next consider the setting of Tang *sancai* objects within tombs to demonstrate that Tang *sancai* played a particular role in this context. For this discussion, I shall take the tomb of Princess Yongtai 永泰公主 as a case study and examine most particularly the figures and objects it contained.

I shall conclude with a discussion on the function of the utensil-shaped Tang *sancai* wares and shall argue that they were produced for burial purposes and for ritual offerings, and not for everyday use for eating and drinking.

1. Location of tombs in China that contained Tang *sancai* ware

About 30 tombs containing Tang *sancai* wares have been officially excavated in the last fifty years.⁵⁸ Most of the tombs that contained *sancai* wares were located around Xi'an 西安 in Shaanxi 陝西 province, where the capital of the Tang dynasty was situated. Tang *sancai* wares were found in some of the tombs in that area. Henan 河南 and Shanxi 山西 provinces share a similar number of tombs that contain Tang *sancai*. Some four or five tombs were excavated in and around Luoyang, Henan province, which served as the second capital of the Tang dynasty, and three tombs have been found at Taiyuan 太原⁵⁹, Shanxi province, one of the important cities in the Tang dynasty. One tomb containing *sancai* wares was found in each of the following areas: Hebei 河北 province, Jilin 吉林 province, Hunan 湖南 province, Hubei 湖北 province and Beijing 北京 (Map 1.1).⁶⁰ These were the only regions where *sancai* wares were employed as burial objects in tombs (Table 1.1).

1.1 Location and status of tombs in Shaanxi province

The tombs that contained *sancai* wares in Shaanxi province are mainly situated in the west of Xi'an, but a few are in the east. They are all concentrated within the area

⁵⁸ This statistic is based on the excavation report from the main archaeological periodical. Compared with the numbers of Tang *sancai* objects that are housed in the different museums and those held by institutions and private collectors all over the world, the quantity of objects listed in the excavation reports is relatively low. This is due to the fact that, as reported in archaeological reports, most tombs were pillaged before official excavations have been undertaken. Some of the tombs were looted several times.

⁵⁹ Taiyuan was called Jinyang 晉陽 at the time of the Tang. It was designated as the North capital of the Tang in AD690. Tang important literary figures, like Bai Juyi 白居易 (AD772-AD846), and Wang Zhihuan 王之渙 (AD668-AD742) were natives of Jinyang.

⁶⁰ There were probably many more tombs at Xi'an and Luoyang, but they have been looted. This observation is based on the large number of pieces known to exist in Western museums, such as the British Museum (See Rawson, 1992), the Cleveland Museum (See Watson, 1984) and the Tokyo National Museum (See Yokogawa 1982).

around the imperial tombs. During the 290 years of the Tang's rule, twenty emperors and one empress governed China. Except for the tomb of Emperor Zhaozong 昭宗 (AD 888-AD 900), located in Henan province, and that of Emperor Zhao Xuandi 昭宣帝 (AD 904-AD 907), known as Ai Di 哀帝, located in Shandong 山東 province, all the tombs of the Tang rulers are in Shaanxi province. Empress Wu Zetian 武則天 (AD 624-AD 705) and Emperor Gaozong 高宗 (AD 628-AD 683) have a joint tomb, known as the Qianling 乾陵. There are, therefore, in total, eighteen imperial tombs in a 102 degree open fan-shaped area from the north-east to the north-west of Xi'an, the Tang capital (Map 1.3).

The Tang imperial tombs are each located 70 to 80 kilometres from Xi'an. Except for the tomb of Emperor Ai Di,⁶¹ none of the other Tang imperial tombs has as yet been excavated. To date excavations have concentrated on subordinate tombs around the principal burials. Without excavation of imperial tombs proper, it is not possible to determine exactly the extent of the use of Tang *sancai* in the lavish burials of Tang emperors themselves.

However, some relatively minor tombs in which Tang *sancai* wares were found were located in the same area as the imperial tombs. These minor tombs are called *peizang mu* 陪葬墓 or attendant tombs, of which more details are found further on in this chapter under section 1.1.1: "Tang texts on the location of elite tombs".

⁶¹ Reports on the tomb of Ai Di do not give any information, except that the tomb has been severely damaged.

The tomb occupants in the attendant tombs, according to the archaeological excavation reports, were not ordinary people, but members of the imperial family or high officials. Compared with the emperors' tombs, attendant tombs are smaller in size and of a lower standard. The imperial tombs and their attendant tombs were spread over six counties, Qian Xian 乾縣, Li Quan 禮泉, Jing Yang 涇陽, San Yuan 三原, Fu Ping 富平 and Pu Cheng 蒲城, all on the north side of the Wei River 渭河. Their distribution extends over 150 kilometres, between the Qianling 乾陵 (the joint tomb of Emperor Gaozong and Empress Wu Zengtian) at the western end, and the Tailing 泰陵 (the site of the tomb of Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 (AD 685-AD 762), at the eastern end. The sites can be divided into two groups: one group is on the plain, an extensive, open area, with an altitude of 500 to 800 metres, where tombs were dug and earth was piled on top of them; the other group is in the mountains, 750 to 1200 metres high, where natural rock was hollowed out and tombs placed in it.

Located on the plain, along with their attendant tombs, were the tombs of four emperors, namely:

- the Xianling 獻陵, tomb of Emperor Gaozu 高祖 (AD 618 - AD 626);
- the Zhuangling 莊陵, tomb of Emperor Jingzong 敬宗 (AD 824 - AD 827);
- the Duanling 端陵, tomb of Emperor Wuzong 武宗 (AD 840 - AD 846);
- the Jingling 靖陵, tomb of Emperor Xizong 僖宗 (AD 873 - AD 888);

whereas on mountain sites, along with their attendant tombs, were located fourteen tombs, namely:

- the Zhaoling 昭陵, tomb of Emperor Taizong 太宗 (AD 626 - AD 649);

- the Qianling 乾陵, a joint tomb of Gaozong 高宗 (AD 649 - AD 683) and Wu Zetian 武則天 (AD 690 - AD 705);
- the Dingling 定陵, tomb of Emperor Zhongzong 中宗 (AD 684, 705 - AD 710);
- the Qiaoling 橋陵, tomb of Emperor Ruizong 睿宗 (AD 684 - AD 690, AD 710 - AD 712);
- the Tailing 泰陵, tomb of Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 (AD 712 - AD 756);
- the Jianling 建陵, tomb of Emperor Suzong 肅宗 (AD 756 - AD 762);
- the Yuanling 元陵, tomb of Emperor Daizong 代宗 (AD 762 - AD 779);
- the Chongling 崇陵, tomb of Emperor Dezong 德宗 (AD 779 - AD 805);
- the Fengling 豐陵, tomb of Emperor Shunzong 順宗 (AD 805);
- the Jingling 景陵, tomb of Emperor Xianzong 憲宗 (AD 805 - AD 820);
- the Guangling 光陵, tomb of Emperor Muzong 穆宗 (AD 820 - AD 824);
- the Zhangling 章陵, tomb of Emperor Wenzong 文宗 (AD 827 - AD 840);
- the Zhenling 貞陵, tomb of Emperor Xuanzong 宣宗 (AD 846 - AD 859);
- the Jianling 簡陵, tomb of Emperor Yizong 懿宗 (AD 859 - AD 873).

As shown in Table 1.1.1, among the nineteen tombs in Shaanxi province that contained Tang *sancai* wares, seventeen are attendant tombs located inside this region, from the north-west to the north-east of Xi'an; the other two tombs, which I have numbered as tomb No. 17 and tomb No. 18, are in different locations. The former is located outside of the east gate of Tang Chang'an city, and the latter in the south of Xi'an. In the following section dealing with the Tang texts on the location of elite tombs, I shall go into more details on these two tombs and shall give further

information on the relationship between the imperial tombs and their attendant tombs.

Of the above mentioned eighteen tombs containing Tang *sancai* wares, the following eight were recorded in the *Tang Huiyao* 唐會要⁶² and the *Chang'an Zhi* 長安志⁶³ texts as attendant tombs to the tombs of emperors (Table 1.5):

- Li Feng's tomb 李鳳墓⁶⁴ is an attendant tomb of the Xianling;
- Zheng Rentai's tomb 鄭仁泰墓⁶⁵ and Yuewang Li Zhen tomb's 越王李貞墓⁶⁶ are attendant tombs of the Zhaoling;
- Princess Yongtai's 永泰公主墓⁶⁷, Prince Zhanghuai's tomb 章懷太子墓⁶⁸ and Prince Yide's tomb 懿德太子墓⁶⁹ are attendant tombs of the Qianling;
- Prince Huizhao tomb 惠昭太子墓⁷⁰ is an attendant tomb of the Jingling;
- Jiemin taizi tomb 節潛太子墓⁷¹ is an attendant tomb of the Dingling.

Because Tang *sancai* wares were found in tombs of imperial families and the elite in limited areas of Shaanxi province, it is important to survey the strict hierarchy in tomb locations in the Tang period. I shall discuss this issue by examining Tang period texts.

⁶² *Tang Huiyao* 唐會要 is a work on the institutional history of Tang dynasty, it consists of one hundred *juan*. It was compiled by Wang Pu 王溥 (AD 922–AD 982).

⁶³ *Chang'an Zhi* 長安志 is a text on the layout of the Tang capital Chang'an and its affiliated cities and districts. It consists of twenty *juan*. It was compiled by Song Minqiu 宋敏求 (AD 1019-AD 1079).

⁶⁴ Li Feng tomb 李鳳墓, *KG*, 1977, 5, pp.313-326.

⁶⁵ Zheng Rentai tomb 鄭仁泰墓, *WW*, 1972, 7, ZRT, pp.33-41.

⁶⁶ Yuewang Li Zhen tomb 越王李貞墓, *WW*, 1977, 10, pp. 41-49.

⁶⁷ Yongtai gongzhu tomb 永泰公主墓, *WW*, 1964,1, pp. 7-18.

⁶⁸ Zhanghuai taizi tomb 章懷太子墓, *WW*, 1972, 7, ZH, pp. 13-19.

⁶⁹ Yide taizi tomb 懿德太子墓, *WW*, 1972, 7, YD, pp. 26-31.

⁷⁰ Huizhao taizi tomb 惠昭太子墓, *KGYWW*, 1992, 4, pp. 46-55.

⁷¹ Jiemin taizi tomb 節潛太子墓, *Jiemintaizi*, 2004

1.1.1 Tang texts on the location of elite⁷² tombs

Each monarch of a new dynasty in China, Chinese or non-Chinese, always viewed himself as the real successor, demonstrating that he was sent by Heaven to correct the corrupt. Considering himself to be the Son of Heaven, Tianzi 天子⁷³ in Chinese, the new successor, having conquered the territory and triumphed over the ruling powers, would give priority and importance to demonstrate his legitimacy mainly by carrying out ritual performances to Heaven and Earth and to the Gods the people believed in,⁷⁴ as well as by selecting the location of his tomb.

“Manmade spaces and buildings do more than provide physical frameworks for social,

⁷² The word elite as used in this thesis refers to high rank officials. There are Nine Ranks of officials, from First Rank to Ninth Rank by descending hierarchical order. Salaries paid according to ranks were often supplemented by special allowances of many sorts. The Jiupin 九品, nine-rank system originated at the end of the Han dynasty 漢代 (206 BC – AD 220), and was kept in place till the Qing dynasty 清代 (AD 1644 – AD 1911). The Tang graded functioning officials in nine ranks subdivided into thirty classes called Deng 等. The highest ranks, from the first through the third, were each divided into two classes, Zheng 正 and Cong 從. From the fourth till the ninth rank, each class was further subdivided into an upper class, Shang 上, and a lower one, Xia 下. High level elites are those belonging to the first till the third rank. For more details, see Hucker, 1985, pp. 29-37.

⁷³ The term Tianzi 天子, Son of Heaven, was mentioned in the book *Chunqiu Fanlu* 春秋繁露, *Luxuriant Dew of the Spring and Autumn Annals*, written by Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (179 BC-104 BC), a thinker and statesman of the Han dynasty. Although this was not the first text that talks about Tianzi, it relates more clearly than in any other text the interaction between Tianzi and Heaven: “To have received the mission from Heaven, [should be considered that] authority has been given by Heaven to be called the Son of Heaven. Heaven should therefore be regarded as father and served with piety. 受命于天，天意之所予也，故號為天子者，亦視天如父，事天以孝道也。”*Chunqiu Fanlu*, juan.10. Shencha Minghao 深察名號, 35.

⁷⁴ Feng 封 and Shan 禪 rites explain the idea. Zhang Shoujie 張守節(?), a historian of the Tang, wrote a book titled *Zheng Yi* 正義, commenting on *Shi Ji* 史記 (Records of the Historian) of Sima Qian 司馬遷 (who was born in 145 BC). Zhang Shoujie explained that Feng and Shan are sacrifices dedicated to Heaven and Earth. In the beginning of the 28th juan of *Shi Ji*, *Feng Shan Shu* 史記封禪書, Sima Qian wrote: “Among the emperors and kings who from ancient times have received the mandate to rule from Heaven, why are there some who did not perform Feng and Shan sacrifices? For all who were blessed with the heavenly omens signifying their worthiness to perform these rites hastened without fail to Mount Tai to carry them out, and even some who had not received such signs took it upon themselves to perform them. Yet others, though they enjoyed the mandate to rule, felt that their merit was not yet sufficient; or, though their merit was sufficient, they felt that their virtue had not been fully manifested to all creatures; or again, though their virtue had been fully manifested, they felt that they could not spare the time to carry them out. This is the reason why these rites have seldom been performed! 自古受命帝王，曷嘗不封禪？蓋有無其應而用事者矣，未有睹符瑞見而不臻乎泰山者也。雖受命而功不至，至梁父矣而德不洽，洽矣而日有不暇給，是以即事用希。”(translation after Wechsler 1985, p.170) The historical texts record that Feng and Shan rites are methods to express gratitude for the blessing of Heaven and Earth. Modern scholars argue that Feng and Shan rites are means used by the emperors as an announcement to Heaven and Earth that the ruler has unified the empire and brought peace to the world, namely that the divine mission had been fulfilled, thus confirming their legitimacy of imperial power and reinforcing their rule. See Wechsler 1985, pp170-194; Lewis, 1999, pp.50-80.

military and political institutions. They may make physically visible very complex abstract beliefs, which in the case of religions refer to the supernatural and otherwise invisible forces.”⁷⁵ This argument by Rawson applies to the underground construction framework for the afterlife. Chinese believed that “life after death resembled life”. Rawson further argues that the material construction gave shared beliefs a form.⁷⁶

One of the important ways of showing the imperial legitimacy was the size and the location of imperial tombs. Rawson argues: “If tomb size is to be an effective indication of social status or political power, it must be possible to compare one tomb or related structure with another, implicitly if not explicitly. Such comparisons are indeed present in all human and much animal activity. People assess one another, indeed, by making such comparison. China seems to have fostered societies in which those differences are to be accurately assessed. It is helpful if they are clearly defined.”⁷⁷

Such indications and comparisons can be ascertained from the orders given by Emperor Gaozu, Li Yuan 李淵, on the construction of tombs of Tang ancestors. In AD 618, the year the Tang was founded, this emperor immediately gave an order to construct the tombs for his ancestors, his grandfather Li Hu 李虎 and his father Li Bing 李昉. He also awarded his grandfather the posthumous title of Jing Huangdi 景皇帝,

⁷⁵ Rawson interprets the Han dynasty tombs from material, institution and conceptual points of view. In this article, Rawson formed her theory of the three levels. Rawson, 2005, p. 104. I shall look further at this theory in section 2.2 of this Chapter: “The Agency of, and the Agency for, Tang *sancai* Tomb Objects”.

⁷⁶ Rawson, 2005, pp. 104-105.

⁷⁷ Rawson discussed what the material that ancient Chinese employed tells us about their ritual practice and beliefs. Rawson, 1999, pp. 29-30.

Emperor Jing (AD?), and upgraded his tomb to Ling 陵,⁷⁸ with the name of Yongkangling 永康陵. He also awarded his father the title of Yuan Huangdi 元皇帝 (AD?), Emperor Yuan, and upgraded his tomb to Ling, naming it the Xingningling 興寧陵. Eckfeld argues that “The scale of the tombs of the two Tang ancestor emperors⁷⁹ was relatively modest. They were built at a time when Tang control was limited to the capital, Chang’an, and a number of other groups had the potential to overthrow them, thus limiting the human and material resources which could be devoted to imperial tomb building. Nevertheless, they were bold political statements at the founding of the Tang dynasty. Significantly, the Xingningling 興寧陵⁸⁰ was built in close proximity to the Changling 長陵⁸¹, the tomb of the first Han emperor, Gaozu (Liu Bang, r.206-195BC), which had been constructed across the Wei River directly to the north of Han Chang’an. The proximity of Xingningling to Changling suggests that it was the Emperor Gaozu’s intention to glorify his own family as the source of state power, and to boldly declare his ambition that his father be seen as the wellspring of a long period of dynastic succession like Han Gaozu 漢高祖.^{82,83}

Imperial death had therefore always been of a momentous state concern.⁸⁴ On the

⁷⁸ Ling 陵 is the Chinese word for "high and large grave" and is the title give to the tomb of an emperor.

⁷⁹ The two Tang ancestor emperors referred to by Eckfeld are the grandfather and father of the first emperor of the Tang, Emperpor Gaozu, Li Yuan 李淵. The two tombs are the Yongkangling 永康陵 and the Xingningling 興寧陵.

⁸⁰ The Xingningling 興寧陵 is the tomb of the father of Tang Emperor Gaozu, Li bing 李昉, who was given, in the year AD 618, the honorific title of Emperor Shizu Yuan Huangdi 世祖元皇帝.

⁸¹ The Changling 長陵, is the tomb of the first emperor of the Han dynasty 漢代 (206 BC-AD 220), and is located north of the Wei River 渭水, at the foot of Mount Jiujun 九峻山.

⁸² Han Gaozu 漢高祖, Liu Bang 劉邦 (256BC-195BC), is the emperor who established the Western Han dynasty 西漢 (206BC-AD8). Gaozu 高祖 means great founder or great ancestor in Chinese. The first emperor of each new dynasty in Chinese history took the reign name of Gaozu 高祖. Han Gaozu, for example, is the first emperor of the Han.

⁸³ Eckfeld discussed the Imperial tombs in the Tang dynasty. Eckfeld, 2005, p. 12.

⁸⁴ “Where the first Tang tombs of the emperor ancestor expressed dynastic aspirations those which followed proclaimed with increasing audacity and pride the success and continuity of the dynasty. The Tang imperial

occasion of the death of the Tang emperor, Emperor Gaozu, Emperor Taizong promulgated a statute on burial, twenty years after the establishment of the Tang. The first emperor of the Tang was a nobleman-general in the Sui dynasty.⁸⁵ Being from the elite family of the previous dynasty, Emperor Taizong was familiar with the ritual practice. The decree is named *Ci Gongchen Peilingdi Zhao* 賜功臣陪陵地詔⁸⁶ (Note 1.1). This decree is recorded in the *Tang Da Zhao Ling* 唐大詔令⁸⁷ as the first decree on attendant tombs of the Tang. The decree indicates the precise date of the establishment of the Tang burial system: the eleventh month of the eleventh year of Zhenguan 貞觀 (AD 627-AD 649),⁸⁸ which corresponds to the year AD 638.

The decree starts by stressing the importance for monarch and officials to work together to rule the country:

"Like the coordination between heaven and earth, which results in effortless achievements, monarch and officials also, as one entity, will be able to govern in harmony. 乾坤合德，爰著易簡之功；君臣一體，克成中和之治。",

emphasizing that they represent one entity:

"...like a boat crossing in a big river, and like a head on body with arms and legs. 若舟楫之濟巨川...猶股肱之戴元首。",

ancestors' tombs were used to express Tang power and political legitimacy with a degree of subtlety, relying on references to and parallels with the Han emperors' tombs to make their point. In the case of Gaozu's Xianling, despite the declared intention of understatement and restraint, the evident expenditure of human and financial resources demonstrate that this principle was beginning to wane in practical terms. By the time the tombs of the second and third Tang Emperors, Taizong and Gaozong, were commissioned, this diffidence had been abandoned in favour of flagrant statements in the form of tombs of giant dimensions." Eckfeld, 2005, p. 16.

⁸⁵ Li Yuan 李淵 (AD 556-AD June 25, 635), procurator-regent (*liushou* 留守) of Taiyuan 太原 (modern Shanxi), staged a rebellion in AD616 and occupied the capital Chang'an. He became the first emperor of the Tang dynasty. He governed the country from AD 618 to AD 626. The successor was his second son Li Shimin 李世民, known as Taizong 太宗.

⁸⁶ *Ci Gongchen Miqi Mudi Dongyuan Miqi Zhao* 賜功臣陪陵地詔 (Decree on allotting tomb land to officials), *Tang Da Zhao Ling Ji*, p316.

⁸⁷ *Tang Da Zhao Ling* 唐大詔令, a work containing a collection of part of the emperors' decrees during the 290 years of the Tang on politics, military, economy and culture, was compiled by Song Minqiu 宋敏求 (AD1019-AD1079). It consists of one hundred and thirty volumes. In the preface of his book, Song Minqiu wrote on the importance of the decrees he had collected, specifying that these decrees represented orders from the emperors and were the basis for many institutions of the court.

⁸⁸ Zhenguan 貞觀 (AD 627-AD 649) period is the reign of Emperor Tang Taizong, one of the most important periods during the Tang.

and repeatedly accentuates the importance of remaining closely tied:

"...Hearts and minds shall remain together also after death, and so officials shall be buried in closeness. 同心葉契，在歿以之，故諸侯列葬。"

"...Being together, we will ultimately return together to Mount Niu [mountain site]. All previous sages showed the model of how the monarch and his officials should be buried, and left behind records of regulations and wishes, pointing to this duty and the high virtue of accomplishing it. Following an honest heart as one had in the past, the big idea from the beginning till the end will be the devotion to duty. 夷吾相齊，終托牛山之墓。斯蓋往聖垂範，前賢遺則，錄曩昔之宿心，篤終始之大義責也。"

Ritual seems to have been thought capable not only of producing social unity but also of clarifying and reinforcing social differences.⁸⁹ The same decree says that to practice the system of attendant tombs is a rule of virtuous performance that King Wen⁹⁰ had established, and that the following dynasties had applied:

"...King Wen, in the Zhou dynasty has established a rite of burials, where officials were to be buried in tombs adjoining the tomb of the Emperor. This rule has been re-emphasized by [Emperor] Wu of the Wei.⁹¹ 周文創陳其禮；大臣陪陵，魏武重申其制。"

Therefore, the new established imperial government should also practice this system.

Furthermore, the decree declares that this is a way to honour the close relatives of the

⁸⁹ Wechsler further explains that "the ritual affirms status differences, in that ritual actors adopt special modes of dress that emphasize in an exaggerated way the formal social distinctions among them. Ritual actors move in ceremonial procession in an order that further comments on their relative social values. It confers legitimacy upon the particular social interpretation a society has of itself. This leads us to a consideration of ritual as a powerful force for conservatism and authority." Wechsler, 1985, pp21.

⁹⁰ King Wen, known as Zhou Wenwang 周文王 (his birth and death are unknown), established the Western Zhou dynasty 西周 (1121BC-771BC), and is well-known for his alleged humanity and righteousness in ruling his state.

⁹¹ Emperor Wu of the Wei refers to Cao Cao 曹操 (AD155-AD220), who was Emperor of the Wei Kingdom 魏國. The Wei Kingdom 魏國 together with the Shu Kingdom 蜀國 and the Wu Kingdom 吳國, were called the Three Kingdoms 三國 (AD220-AD280).

imperial families and those who have made great contributions to the state. The decree instructs the officials responsible for burials to help in the attendant tomb burial arrangement by allotting to the elite and imperial family members a piece of land for tomb usage and by offering them for the deceased a Dongyuan Miqi 東園秘器,⁹² a term used for addressing the coffin of the Emperor or the elite:

"...Close family members and relatives of the Emperor, because of their past ethics and virtues and achievements for having followed the rules of the previous dynasties, were given special rewards on their death. 及密戚懿親，舊勳宿德，委質先朝，特蒙顧遇者。

From the date on which the decree concerning burials is issued, the office responsible for burials is advised to allot to the family of the deceased a parcel of land on the left side of the Xianling tomb and to offer immediately the coffin and the burial objects, as well as to attend with great care and express profound condolences for the lost one...自今以後，身薨之日，所司宜即以聞。並於獻陵左側，賜以葬地，並給東園秘器。事從優厚，庶敦追遠之義，以申罔極之懷。"

The allotment of the parcel of land – on the left side of the Xianling tomb – demonstrates that a rule was established for the specific designation of the location of attendant tombs. Nine years after this first decree, another decree on attendant tombs, named *Gongchen Peiling Zhao* 功臣陪陵詔 (Note 1.2), was announced in the eighth month of the twentieth year of Zhenguan 貞觀 period, corresponding to the year AD 646.

There are two significant pieces of evidence in these two historical texts that can be

⁹² This term is explained as follows in The Book of Han 漢書, which was written by Ban Gu 班固 (AD32-AD92) and narrates the history of the Western Han 西漢 from 206 BC till AD 23: "Dongyuan 東園, a name of the Bureau, Dongyuan Miqi means coffin, raw wood, length two Zhang 丈, with four chi 尺. 東園，署名也。漢舊儀云東園秘器作棺梓，素木長二丈，崇廣四尺...". *Han Shu* 漢書,juan. 93, p. 3735

employed in the investigation of the hierarchy of the location of tombs. One is the first decree, *Ci Gongchen Peilingdi Zhao*, which clearly gives the categories of people that can be buried in attendant tombs, such as:

"...Strategists and military officials...civil servants...Close family members and relatives of the emperor....及謀臣武將...密戚懿親"

The other is the mention in the second decree, *Gongchen Peiling Zhao*, of:

"...Descendants of persons buried in adjoining tombs in an allotted land have the right, if they wish, to be buried in the same parcel. 其父祖陪陵，子孫欲來從葬者，亦宜聽許。"

This confirms that the tombs that are located around the emperors' burial are either those of imperial family members or those of officials and their families. Moreover, in the second decree, we read that:

"...Under the decree, order is given to the office responsible for burials to put a boundary around the allotted piece of land, in the south of Zhaoling, at the left and the right of the area, and to place a sign board indicating the burial territory assigned to the officials who have contributed with services to the state. 宜令所司，于昭陵南左右廂，封境取地，仍即標誌疆域，擬爲葬所，以賜功臣。"

This confirms that the imperial burial area was strictly assigned for this use only. In the same decree, Emperor Taizong, also indicated where his subjects could be buried:

"...Ordinary people shall be buried in weed land where birds fly, not near dirty waters, but next to rivers where fish live. 庶在鳥耘之地，無污魚之水道。"

We have no idea where these weed lands with clean rivers were located, where ordinary people were buried, and which the Emperor thoughtfully mentioned in his

decree. Nevertheless, it is not surprising that the commoners could not place their coffins in imperial burial land; as a result, no tombs of ordinary people were found in the area where tombs of emperors are located.

During the period of the establishment and consolidation of the Tang dynasty,⁹³ official scholars instituted decrees for imperial burials, taking as the basis previous burial ritual codes and adapting them to the dynasty for which they were compiled.⁹⁴ Archaeological surveys show that the attendant tomb burial system was well established in the early and middle Tang dynasty, but not in the late period.⁹⁵ The above mentioned two decrees suggest that the location of imperial tombs and their attendant tombs was strictly implemented for the elite burials but not for those of the common people.

1.1.2 The Zhaoling and its attendant tombs

The Zhaoling 昭陵, the tomb of Emperor Taizong (AD 626-AD 649), was built as a complex with attendant tombs, and its layout provides evidence of the hierarchical

⁹³ The period between the year AD 618, when the Tang were established, and the year AD 627, when Emperor Taizong ascended to the throne, is considered as that of the foundation and consolidation of Tang power. From AD 618 till AD 624, the newly established dynasty, the Tang, undertook campaigns against separatist regimes and to quell some uprisings. The victory against the Turks in AD 628 resulted in the unification of the country. Meanwhile, in the year AD 626, Li Shimin 李世民, the son of Emperor Gaozu, executed his two brothers, who challenged his superior position, in a coup called the Xuanwumen zhi bian 玄武門之變. Two months after the coup, Emperor Gaozu abdicated in favour of his son Li Shimin, who became Emperor Taizong of the Tang.

⁹⁴ For more discussion see McMullen 1999, pp.192-196.

⁹⁵ Chen Anli's research on the eighteen Tang emperors' tombs suggests that the attendant tombs became fewer and fewer in number over the period of the Tang dynasty. Emperors, from Xuanzong 宣宗 (AD 846-AD 859), the twenty-first emperor of the Tang, whose tomb is the Zhenling 貞陵, till Yizong 懿宗 (AD 859-AD 873), the twenty-second emperor of the Tang, whose tomb is the Jianling 簡陵, did not have any attendant tombs. There is no mention of them either in historical texts or in archaeological surveys. (The last two Tang emperors' tombs are not in Shaanxi province: Emperor Zhaozong 昭宗's tomb is located in Henan province and that of Emperor Aidi 哀帝 is located in Shandong 山東 province). Chen Anli, 2001, pp. 242-243.

burial practice. It is located on the southern side of Mount Jiuzong 九嶷山, twenty-two kilometers north-east of Liquan county 禮泉縣, Shaanxi Province. The order to build it was given by Emperor Taizong on the 28th July AD 636, the day of the death of his wife, the Empress Wende 文德皇后 (AD 601-AD 636). The construction lasted thirteen years till the death of the Emperor himself in AD 649. The Zhaoling is a joint tomb of Emperor Taizong and Empress Wende. It had a cemetery wall running about fifteen kilometres from north to south and about ten kilometers from east to west. The perimeter is about sixty kilometres, covering an area of about fifteen kilometres from north to south, and about ten kilometres from east to west. The Zhaoling occupies about twenty thousands hectares. It has the largest number of attendant tombs of any Tang Imperial burial ground (Table 1.6). Both the *Jiu Tang Shu* 舊唐書 and the *Xin Tang Shu* 新唐書 record that there were seventy-four attendant tombs of the Zhaoling, while the *Tang Hui Yao* 唐會要 gives the number of one hundred and fifty five, and the *Chang An Zhi* 長安志 one hundred and sixty-five. Nevertheless, archaeological excavation reports in the past years claim that there are one hundred and ninety four attendant tombs at the Zhaoling.⁹⁶

Unlike the tomb of the first emperor of the Tang, the Xianling 獻陵, the land allocated for the attendant tombs of the Zhaoling extends from the east to the north-east. This

⁹⁶ See Chen Anli, 2001, pp.251-296, and Liu Xiangyang, 2003, pp.56-71. The difference in the numbers between the textual records and the archaeological report is due to the fact that the text recorded only the important family members of the emperor and the eminent officials, but the relatives of the officials that were also buried in the same area were not yet recorded in the texts. The decree said: "...Descendants of persons buried in attendant tombs in an allotted land have the right, if they wish, to be buried in the same parcel. 其父祖陪陵，子孫欲來從葬者，亦宜聽許。 Among one hundred and ninety four attendant tombs, occupants of only seventy three tombs have been identified.

kind of arrangement followed the layout of the emperors' tombs of the Han dynasty.⁹⁷

The attendant tombs of the Zhaoling are situated in the south to the south-east (Map 1.4), lined up according to the kinship with the Emperor and the rank of the tomb occupant. Tombs of close family members, such as those of princesses or consorts of the Emperor, were closest to the Zhaoling, while those of officials were normally situated further down to the south or south-east.

As shown in Map 1.4, the tombs that are within the closest range and to the left of the Zhaoling are the tomb of Consort Wei 韋貴妃 (AD 590-AD 665)⁹⁸ and the tomb of Consort Yan 燕妃 (AD?)⁹⁹, both Consorts of Emperor Taizong. Other close tombs are those of concubines, such as the tombs of Yinpin 陰嬪 (AD?), of Jieyu 婕妤 (AD?)¹⁰⁰ and of Wei Zhaorong 韋昭容 (AD?)¹⁰¹. Also in close proximity were the tombs of princesses, such as those of Princess Changle 長樂公主 (AD 621-AD 643),¹⁰² Princess Chengyang 城陽公主 (AD?-AD671)¹⁰³ and Princess Xincheng 新城公主 (AD 643-AD 662).¹⁰⁴ Because of his outstanding merit, Wei Zheng 魏征 (AD 580-AD 643), who held the post of Prime Minister and Emperor's privy counselor during his reign, was interred in one of the tombs located in the closest proximity to

⁹⁷ Chen Anli, 2001, p. 251.

⁹⁸ Consort Wei 韋貴妃 was buried in AD 666. Guifei 貴妃 is one of the four Consort titles of the imperial consort system of the Tang, the other three Consorts are Shufei 淑妃, Defei 德妃 and Xianfei 賢妃. *WW* 1987, 1, pp.87-94

⁹⁹ Consort Yan 燕妃 was buried in AD 671. She held the title of Consort Defei 德妃. Chen Zhiqian, 1994, pp. 114-119.

¹⁰⁰ No archaeological reports on the tombs of Yinpin 陰嬪 and of Jieyu 婕妤 have been published. Yinpin 陰嬪 and Jieyu 婕妤 (Handsome, Fair), are titles of the Emperor's concubines.

¹⁰¹ Wei Zhaorong 韋昭容 is one of the Emperor's concubines. Zhaorong 昭容 is one of the nine Concubine titles of the consort system of the Tang, the other eight are Zhaoyi 昭儀, Zhaoyuan 昭媛, Xiuyi 修儀, Xiurong 修容, Xiuyuan 修媛, Chongyi 充儀, Chongrong 充容 and Chongyuan 充媛.

¹⁰² Princess Changle 長樂公主 was the fifth daughter of Emperor Taizong.

¹⁰³ Princess Chengyang 城陽公主 was the sixteenth daughter of Emperor Taizong.

¹⁰⁴ Princess Xincheng 新城公主 was the youngest daughter of Emperor Taizong and Empress Wende.

the Zhaoling and a most privileged place to the right side of the emperor's tomb. The tombs of officials were placed from north down to south by chronological order of their burial; civil officials were buried to the left of the Emperor's tomb and military officials to the right. This set up was an application of the decree which specified that

"...Under the decree, order is given to the office responsible for burials to put a boundary around the allotted piece of land, in the south of Zhaoling, at the left and the right of the area, and to place a sign board indicating the burial territory assigned to the officials who have contributed with services to the state. 宜令所司，于昭陵南左右廂，封境取地，仍即標誌疆域，擬為葬所，以賜功臣。"

For instance, Duan Zhixuan 段志玄 (AD?-AD 642) who was the Left Guard of General-in-Chief 左衛大將軍, a military post, was buried in AD 642 in a tomb to the right of the Emperor's tomb, the Zhaoling; Yu Wenshi 宇文士 (AD?-AD 642), the Director of the Department Secretariat 中書令, a civil post, was buried in a tomb to the left of the Emperor's tomb; Wang Jun'e 王君愕 (AD?-AD 645), who held a military post as the Left Guard General 左武衛將軍 was buried to the right side of the Emperor's tomb; and Xue Yi 薛頤 (AD?-AD 646), who held a civil post as Taishiling 太史令, or Grand Astrologer, was buried to the left side of the Emperor's tomb. The layout of the attendant tombs of the Zhaoling definitely confirms how the two decrees on the burial system were strictly implemented, at least until AD 722, seventy three years after the death of Emperor Taizong and the year Chishi Shangguang 持失善光 (AD?-AD 722), the Left Jianmen General, was buried. That was the latest burial known for attendant tombs of the Zhaoling.

Some tombs, however, were placed at variance of the burial system, but there were specific reasons for such cases. What could seem to be an unusual placement of a tomb was, on the contrary, the exception that confirmed the rule. Take the case of Aishinazhong 阿史那忠 (AD?-AD 675), the Right Xiao Guard of the General-in-Chief 右驍衛大將軍, was buried in a tomb located to left of the Zhaoling. As a military, his tomb should have been to the right. But there was a hierarchical order that took precedence over the decreed tomb system. Aishinazhong's wife was Princess Dingxiang 定襄縣主 (AD?-AD 653), daughter of Emperor Taizong and of a concubine. Following the normal court practice, the site of her mother's tomb had to be to the left of the Zhaoling. When Princess Dingxiang died in AD 653, she was buried in an attendant tomb to her mother's. Her husband Aishinazhong, who died two years later, was buried in his wife's tomb.¹⁰⁵

Other exceptions have other explanations. In later years, tombs were built in clusters grouped at the lower part of Jiuzong mountain, probably for geographical reasons, the land being flatter there than at the higher part where the Zhaoling and close family tombs were located. In all cases and all areas, the application of the elements of the decrees on the burial system can be clearly noted¹⁰⁶

Among attendant tombs of the Zhaoling, two tombs, those of Zheng Rentai 鄭仁泰

¹⁰⁵ Eckfeld's claim that "While old theories that civil official were buried to left of Zhaoling mausoleum and military officials were buried to the right have been proved unreliable, the presence, scale and decoration of particular graves at the complex is a significant sign of their occupants imperial favour" does not hold. Eckfeld did not give much information, explanations or analysis on the layout of the Zhaoling before presenting her claim. Eckfeld, 2005.

¹⁰⁶ For more details see Chen Anli, 2001, pp. 251-297.

(AD?-AD 663)¹⁰⁷ and of Li Zhen 李貞 (AD?-AD 688),¹⁰⁸ have been found to contain Tang *sancai* ware. Archaeological excavations have demonstrated that the earliest excavated pieces of *sancai* to date were from the tomb of Zheng Rentai 鄭仁泰, who died in AD 663.

As observed above, the tombs that contained Tang *sancai* objects were located in the areas reserved exclusively for imperial and elite family members. The two decrees that were issued on attendant tombs on the occasion of the death of the Tang dynasty's founder, Emperor Gaozu, and the physical location of the attendant tombs of Emperor Taizong's Zhaoling demonstrate that a well defined and established hierarchical burial system in the early Tang dynasty had been applied.

Here I revert to Table 1.1.1, which lists the tombs containing Tang *sancai* unearthed in the imperial burial site in Shaanxi province, to examine the status of the tomb occupants. The list reveals that there are six tombs of Princes (Prince Zhanghuai, Prince Yide, Prince Li Feng, Prince Li Zhen, Prince Huizhao and Prince Jiemin) and two tombs of princesses (Princess Yongtai and Princess Jinxiang). The other tombs containing *sancai* where something was known about the tomb occupants suggest that those tombs belong to the elite or their family members, such as those of:

- Zheng Rentai 鄭仁泰 (AD?-AD 663) who bore the title of Youwuwei dajiangjun

¹⁰⁷ Zheng Rentai 鄭仁泰 (AD?-AD 663) bore the title of the Youwuwei Dajiangjun 右武衛大將軍, Right Guard General-in-Chief, a military title.

¹⁰⁸ Li Zhen 李貞 (AD?- AD 688) was the eighth son of Emperor Taizong, who died in AD 688 and reburied in AD 716.

右武威大將軍, Right Guard General, a military title, Third Rank. His tomb is located in the west of Xi'an, in the burial land for attendant tombs of Emperor Taizong.

- Gudu Sizhen 孤獨思貞 (AD 623-AD 679), whose epitaph records that he had the title of Chaoyi Dafu 朝議大夫, Grand Master of Remonstrance, Fifth Rank. His tomb is located in the east of Xi'an.

- Wei Meimei 韋美美 (AD 715-AD 732), eldest daughter of Cao Xunru 曹恂如 (AD?), who bore the title of Zuo Weiweicang 左威衛倉, Left Guard Director, a military title. Her tomb is in the east of Xi'an.

- Wen Sijian 溫思曛 (AD?-AD 695), who bore the titles of Shangzhuguo 上柱國, Sinong Shaoqing 司農少卿 and Taizhong Dafu 太中大夫. Among the three titles, Shangzhuguo, Supreme Pillar of State, Second Rank, was the highest and represented a great honorific designation dating from antiquity. Sinong Shaoqing, Vice Minister of the Court of the National Granaries, Fourth Rank, was one of the administrative positions in the central government. His third title, the Taizhong Dafu, Grand Master of the Palace, was an honorific designation with Fourth Rank. His tomb is located in the east of Xi'an.

- Yao Wupo 姚無陂 (AD?-AD 697), Pingzhou Sicang 平州司倉, Director of the Treasury Bureau of Pingzhou, an Eighth Rank. His tomb is located in the south

of Xi'an.

Thus on the evidence of tombs at the site of Mount Jiuzong, running from the north-east to the north-west of Xi'an, it appears that Tang *sancai*, as burial objects, were employed by the imperial families and the elite and their family members, from the highest rank down to the Lower Eighth Rank.

For those tombs that have no indication of occupants due to damage or looting, it is their location in a prestigious or privileged area, the imperial burial land, which designates that their occupants were from the Tang elite or members of their family.

1.1.3 Tombs outside imperial burial sites

Outside the imperial burial sites, two tombs containing Tang *sancai* wares were excavated in Shaanxi Province.

One tomb, No. 17, was excavated outside of the east gate of Tang Chang'an city, in Xi'an. As recorded in the excavated tomb tablet, it was occupied by Kang Wentong 康文通 (AD 617 – AD 696),¹⁰⁹ who died in AD 696 at age seventy-nine and was buried in AD 697. Although he came from a noble family, he held the title of Chushi 處士¹¹⁰, which was not a very high rank in the Tang; his father was a Sandafu 散大夫,

¹⁰⁹ *WW*, 2004, 1, pp. 17-30.

¹¹⁰ The title of Chushi 處士 is given to an elite of a branch of the Military Affairs administration. Kang Wentong 康文通 is not mentioned in the Tang texts.

Grand Master, a prestigious title for officials in the Tang, and his grandfather was the Shangguozhu 上國柱, Supreme Pillar of State, a highly honorific designation.

The other tomb, No. 18,¹¹¹ was excavated in the south of Xi'an city, as mentioned in the archaeological report. The report did not give any other information than that of the location, nor has it given any information about other tombs that were excavated at the same time. It is not possible, from the location of this tomb, to determine its status. The tomb was looted before the excavation; the epitaph is missing.

At this juncture, I shall refer to the analysis of the Tang tomb structure made by Su Bai 宿白¹¹² to examine the status of the tomb. On the basis of the excavation of the tombs in the area of Xi'an, Shaanxi province, Su Bai demonstrates that there are clear criteria for tomb structures in this region which apply in particular to Shaanxi and Henan provinces. Su Bai categorized the Tang tombs into three periods, basing his study on the changes of tomb structure, materials of coffin and shapes of coffin (Note 1.3). The total length of tomb No.18 is twenty-two and half metres, with a downward inclination of 24°. The tomb consists of a tunnel, hallways between three light wells, two side-niches, and a corridor leading towards a single rectangular chamber. The chamber, at 3.5 x 2.4 metres, is rather large. According to Su Bai, if a tomb consists of a single chamber less than 3.5 square metres and has a brick coffin platform, it would belong to an occupant of Fourth Rank to Fifth Rank, namely

¹¹¹ The report is unusually brief about the location, and there is no map or drawing of the place. It gives no information about other tombs, other than briefly mentioning that there are seventy-five Han, Tang and Ming 明代(AD1368-AD1644) dynasties' tombs that were excavated together with this tomb, which bore the number M31. *WW* 2004, 1, pp. 31-61.

¹¹² Su Bai 宿白 is the pioneer scholar who made a significant contribution on researching the tomb structures of the Tang dynasty.

someone with a prominent status, or perhaps the relative of a notability. In this tomb eighty-three abandoned objects were unearthed, of which forty-seven are *sancai* wares and seventeen painted standing pottery figures and animals. The find of Tang*sancai* objects in this tomb is quite remarkable.¹¹³ Therefore, we can determine that this tomb owner is either an official whose rank is not lower than fifth, or the deceased is a member of a noble family.

It is a most significant observation that eighteen emperors and one empress out of the twenty-one emperors and empresses of the Tang dynasty were buried in the area extending from the north-east to the north-west of Xi'an. From the east to the west of this imperial burial land, over a stretch of one hundred and fifty kilometres, were located the emperors' attendant tombs, where relatives of the emperors, the elite and their family members were buried. Thus a major area near the capital was dedicated to the tombs of the emperors, their relatives and their highest officials. It is likely that the area was regulated in accordance with the above mentioned two decrees. Tang *sancai* wares were unearthed mainly from tombs in this stretch of land. Some *sancai* has also been found in two tombs outside this area. But it seems likely that they too belonged also to elite and noble family members. In consideration of these observations, it can be argued that, in the Shaanxi region, Tang *sancai* wares as tomb objects were exclusively employed by the imperial and elite families.

¹¹³ Although this report is incredibly poor, it contains interesting coloured plates. Nevertheless, one of them shows a finely formed 45cm-high horse decorated with rare blue and brown glazes; another plate is that of an unusual *sancai* object: an acrobat 40.8 cm high. In yet another, we see an acrobatic scene with a yellow-glazed strong man, on whose head stand two boys in blue-glazed trousers. On the joint shoulders of the two boys, stands one boy in green trousers, and on each of his shoulders stand two other boys in a yellow dress. Finally, in the form of a pyramid, those two boys hold on their shoulders a boy in blue glazed trousers who is seen piddling. No information is given on the display of objects in the tomb. *WW* 2004, 1, p. 54.

1.2 Location and status of tombs in Henan province

In Henan, Tang *sancai* ware was first encountered in 1905 as tomb burial objects at the foot of Mount Mangshan 邙山.¹¹⁴ In the last decades, twenty-one tombs which contained Tang *sancai* wares were officially excavated in that area. Mount Mangshan is an eastern part of the Qinling Mountains 秦嶺. The altitude of this part of the range is between 150 and 200 metres. The Luohe River 洛河 runs to the south of the Mount Mangshan, the Chanshui River 澗水 is on its east side (Map 1.5).

This section encompasses the piece of land where tombs were piled on top of each other over a long period.¹¹⁵ Large groups of tombs of the Eastern Zhou dynasty 東周 (770 BC-221 BC) and of the Han dynasty were excavated there.¹¹⁶ Thirteen emperors of the Eastern Han 東漢 (AD 25-AD 220) ruled China over 195 years in the city of Luoyang. The eleven Eastern Han emperors were buried near Mount Mangshan and Mount Shouyangshan 首陽山 near Yanshi 偃師.¹¹⁷ There are also tombs from successor dynasties that have also been excavated in that area. It seems that there was a tradition to place tombs at the foot of Mount Mangshan, where the altitude is around 140-150 meters, about five kilometers north of Luoyang city.

Luoyang is located in the western part of Henan province, known as the ancient

¹¹⁴ There is no report on the occupants of the tombs that were discovered for the first time with Tang *sancai* ware.

¹¹⁵ ZG KG 50 years - HN 1999, pp. 247-276.

¹¹⁶ See *Luoyang Beiyao* is a report on archaeological excavation of the Western Zhou (1046BC -771BC) tombs at Beiyao, Luoyang, Henan province. *Luoyang Beiyao*, 1999; Luoyang Shaogou is a report on the Han tombs that were excavated at Shaogou, Luoyang, Henan province. Luoyang Shaogou, 1959.

¹¹⁷ Cheng Yongjian studied the important Eastern Han tombs that were found in Luoyang, Henan province. Cheng Yongjian, 1999, pp. 113-129.

capital of nine dynasties.¹¹⁸ In the time of the Tang, it not only served as the East Capital 東京, but has also been designated as the capital when Empress Wu Zetian founded the Zhouwu period 周武 (AD 690–AD 704)¹¹⁹. During the Tang dynasty, Luoyang was always one of the important political, cultural and commercial cities. The elite of the Tang society who lived in Luoyang wished to be buried at the foot of Mount Mangshan.

Wang Jian 王建 (about 767-830?),¹²⁰ a Tang poet, noted how valuable it was to have a piece of burial land in the area of the Mangshan Mountains. In the first four lines of his poem *Bei Mang Xing* 北邙行, he writes:

There is no free ground on Mangshan.

Ancient tombs are populated with Luoyang people.

Many burials were related to old family tombs.

Even with a golden hill one cannot buy a place [in Mount Mangshan].

北邙山頭少閑土，

儘是洛陽人舊墓。

舊墓人家歸葬多，

堆著黃金無買處。¹²¹

¹¹⁸ Luoyang city was built during the Western Zhou (about BC 11-BC 771) dynasty. It became the capital of Eastern Zhou 東周 (770 BC-256 BC), Eastern Han 東漢 (AD 25-AD 220), Northern Wei 北魏 (AD 386-AD 543), Western Jin 西晉 (AD 265-AD 420), Sui 隋 (AD 581-AD 618), Tang (AD 618-AD 907), late-Liang dynasty 後梁 (AD 907- AD923), and late-Tang dynasty (AD 923-AD 936).

¹¹⁹ When Emperor Gaozhong died, Wu Zetian declared herself emperor after deposing her son, Emperor Ruizong 睿宗, and founded the Zhouwu dynasty 周武 (AD690-AD704).

¹²⁰ Wang Jian 王建 (about 767-830?), was born in Yingchuan 潁川 (presently Xuchang 許昌), Henan province. He was born poor but became Presented Scholar (Jin Shi) 進士 in the tenth year of Dali 大曆十年, corresponding to AD 775.

¹²¹ Wang Jian 王建 *Bei Mang Xing* 北邙行 (*Traveling North to Mount Mangshan*), *Quan Tang Shi* 全唐詩 Vol. 298.

A saying from ancient times among local people renders an understandable description: "Mount Mangshan is 50 miles long, but there is no room for a cow to lie down. 五十裏邙山，竟無臥牛之地。" There are also various poems portraying burial scenes in Mount Mangshan.¹²²

From the above references, we get a sense of a very crowded burial land. The archaeological excavations show that because the tombs of later dynasties were placed on top of the earlier ones, the latter were destroyed or badly damaged.¹²³

Famous Tang poets Du Fu 杜甫 (AD 712-AD 770)¹²⁴ and Yan Zhenqing 顏真卿 (AD 709-AD 785)¹²⁵, were among the people buried in the area.

As shown in Table 1.1.2, all the tombs are located in the south slope of Mount Mangshan. The surviving tomb tablets show that the tomb occupants were ranked between the Third Rank and Ninth Rank. The tombs are mostly mid-sized, with some features of elite status.¹²⁶ No tombs from common people of the Tang were

¹²² Shen Quanqi 沈佺期 (circa AD 656-AD714/715), the Tang poet, was born in Neihuang 內黃, Xiangzhou 相州, presently in the province of Henan. His poem *Bei Mang Shan* 北邙山 (*Traveling North to Mount Mangshan*) pointed out that the area of Mount Mangshan is full of tombs of ancestors. "Tombs are lined up in Mount Mangshan, /Histories and past are looking at Luoyang. /Songs and music are played in the city [of Luoyang] day and night,/Only whispers of pine trees can be heard in the [Mangshan] mountain site. 北邙山上列墳塋，萬古千秋對洛城。城中日夕歌鐘起，山上惟聞松柏聲。"

Bai Juyi 白居易 (AD772-AD846) was born in Xinzheng 新鄭, presently in Henan province 河南. His ancestral home was Taiyuan 太原, presently in Shanxi province 山西. His ancestors moved to Weinan 渭南, presently in Shaanxi province 陝西. When this famous Tang poet complained on the passing years and fate, in his poem *Hao Ge Xing* 浩歌行 (*Grand Farewell Song*), he wrote: "The wise and fool, the noble and humble will all die, Tombs and graves are high at Mangshan. 賢愚貴賤同歸盡，北邙塚墓高嵯峨。"

¹²³ Luoyang Beiyao 1999, pp. 3-10.

¹²⁴ Du Fu 杜甫's tomb is located at Yanshi 偃師縣 county, Henan province. According to the record in *Jiu Tang Shu*, "In the middle of Yuanhe year, (second son of Du Fu) Zong Wu's son Tong Ye moved the coffin (of Du Fu) from Leiyang back to Yanshi county and buried at front of Shouyan Mountain north-west (of Yanshi county)" "元和中，宗武子嗣業，自耒陽遷雨之樞歸葬偃師縣西北首陽山之前。" *Jiu Tang Shu* 舊唐書, *juan.* 190 xia, 卷一百九十下, p. 5055.

¹²⁵ Yan Zhenqing 顏真卿's tomb is located at Yanshi county, Henan province. Yan Zhenqing, Duke of Lu 魯郡公, was a Governor of Pingyuana 平原太守 and a famous calligrapher. *Jiu Tang Shu* 舊唐書, *juan.* 128, 卷一百二十八, p. 3588.

¹²⁶ Fang Xiaolian made a significant research on the Sui and Tang dynasty tombs located in Luoyang, and which

found in the same area.¹²⁷ As argued above, the area of Mount Mangshan was the burial land for the elite. The last two sentences of Wang Jian's poem ('*Many burials were related to old family tombs. Even with a golden hill one cannot buy a place [in Mangshan Mountain]*'), hinted that the occupants of many tombs were related to the old elite families, that that burial area was strictly used by them, and that even wealthy people could not buy a piece of land there at any price. It is possible that the two decrees which established the Tang's hierarchical burial system and the use of burial land may have applied to this area and perhaps also to other areas.

1.3 Location and status of tombs in Shanxi province

Tang *sancai* wares were found in three tombs in Taiyuan 太原, Shanxi 山西 province, (Map 1.6). Taiyuan is in the north part of Shanxi province, at an altitude of about 750 metres. It was a secondary capital and political centre during the dynasties of Eastern Wei 東魏 (AD 534-AD 550) and Northern Qi 北齊 (AD 550-AD 557), and was the one of the important centres of Buddhism at the time. The Tianlongshan Grottoes 天龍山石窟, a major Buddhist site, were hollowed out of the cliffs on the south slope of Tianlong Mountain 天龍山, south-west of Taiyuan.¹²⁸ Taiyuan was the area where Li Yuan 李淵 and his son Li Shimin 李世民 started the rebellion against the Sui Dynasty in AD 617 to found their own Tang dynasty. Li Yuan became Emperor

were excavated in the last forty years. Fang Xiaolian, 1996, pp. 40-50.

¹²⁷ Yanshi Xingyuan is an archaeological report on the tombs excavated in Yanshi Xingyuan area in Henan Province. Yanshi Xingyuan, 2001, pp. 370-384.

¹²⁸ Carving of the Tianlongshan Grottoes 天龍山石窟 started in the Eastern Wei dynasty and continued in the Western Qi and the Sui dynasties, till the Tang. The total length of the Grottoes, from east to west, is about five hundreds metres. About twenty-five caves and about five hundred Buddha statues are preserved till today. Shanxi Fence, 2006, p. 520.

Gaozu 高祖 and Li Shimin inherited the throne from his father, becoming Emperor Taizong. The city of Taiyuan served the Tang dynasty as the Northern Capital 北京.¹²⁹ Few Tang tombs have been excavated in Taiyuan.¹³⁰ The archaeological excavations in the last fifty years indicate that Tang tombs were mainly found in two places in Shanxi province: Taiyuan and Changzhi 長治.¹³¹ Of the three tombs that contained Tang *sancai* ware, two are in the south suburb of Taiyuan and one is at Datong 大同; because the tombs were badly damaged, it has not been possible to establish who their owners were (Table 1.1.3). However, according to the archaeological reports on the two tombs in Taiyuan, these two tombs were decorated with tomb paintings.¹³² This indicates a high status of tomb occupants who were probably imperial family members or elite of the Tang. There is no clue that can be tracked regarding the burial system in the Taiyuan area at that time. The archaeological report on the tomb in Datong gives no information to determine the status of the tomb.¹³³

To date the largest of the Tang tombs excavated in Shanxi province is that of Xue Jing 薛儼 (AD 678-AD 720),¹³⁴ who married the seventh daughter of Emperor Ruizong. He was given the title of Yinqing Guangludafu 銀青光祿大夫, Grand Master of Imperial Entertainments with Silver Seal and Blue Ribbon, which was a prestigious

¹²⁹ Tang divided Taiyuan County into three small counties. Moreover, the whole region in an extended 40-km radius took the title of North Capital 北京 in AD 690. GJDM, 2005, p.428

¹³⁰ Zhang Qingjie compiled a summary of the archaeological excavations in Shanxi province. Zhang Qingjie, 2000, pp. 7-14.

¹³¹ Changzhi 長治 is the place where many tombs from pre-Tang were found. KG 1964, 8, pp. 407-419.

¹³² KG 1960, 1, pp. 37-39; WW 1988, 12, pp. 50-59. A detailed study on the Tang tomb paintings, which is based on the hundred and twenty Tang tombs with paintings that were excavated up to now, reveals that tombs with wall paintings belong to imperial family members, nobles, officials or their family members. For more details, see Li Xingming, 2005.

¹³³ WW, 1998, 11, pp. 65-66.

¹³⁴ A complete archaeological excavation report on the tomb of Xuejing was published giving detailed information on the tomb owner, Xuejing. Xuejing, 2000, pp. 66-73.

title for civil officers of the Third Rank. The tomb is located in Wanrong county 萬榮縣, south west Shanxi province, which is enclosed by the Yellow River on its south and north sides and where the altitude is between 350 to 500 metres. The tomb was pillaged several times. Except for a stone coffin and a tomb painting, there were hardly any burial objects left when the official excavation took place. The earliest dated tomb (AD 663) that was excavated containing Tang *sancai* wares is that of Zheng Rentai, an attendant tomb of the Zhaoling in Shaanxi province. In the tomb of Xue Jing, who died in AD 720, no Tang *sancai* wares were found, although it might have been assumed that such tomb burial objects would have been interred with him considering his title and close relationship with the imperial family. The possible thefts could also account for the absence of Tang *sancai* objects in this particular tomb.

However, as Taiyuan was the Northern Capital of the Tang, it must have been the place where elites and imperial family members, like Xue Jing, a native of Shanxi province, lived, died and were buried. Because few archaeological excavations of Tang tombs have taken place in Shanxi province,¹³⁵ no further information is available to enable the examination of the burial hierarchy in that area. But the wall paintings in the tombs that contained Tang *sancai* ware suggest that tomb occupants were from the elite or noble family members.

¹³⁵ Zhang Qingjie, 2000.

1.4 Location and status of tombs in other provinces

Only one tomb with *sancai* wares was found in each of the provinces of Hebei 河北, Jilin 吉林, Hunan 湖南, Hubei 湖北 and the city of Beijing 北京 (Table 1.1.3).

Hebei province is quite an unusual case: only one tomb containing Tang *sancai* burial objects was found there, despite the presence in the province of a Tang *sancai* kiln. Little information can, therefore, be derived from the physical location of tombs in this area to demonstrate anything with regard to the burial system.¹³⁶ The possible explanation as to the small number of tombs containing Tang *sancai* ware in one of the areas where Tang *sancai* was produced is likely due to the fact that not many high-ranking officials were buried in Hebei province. Another reason could be that Tang *sancai* wares was not allowed to be used by ordinary people.

A tomb containing Tang *sancai* ware in Jilin province is located in Helong county 和龍縣, about five kilometers north east of the ruins of Zhongjing city 中京¹³⁷ in Bohai State 渤海國¹³⁸ at an altitude of about 700 metres. The excavation report on the tomb was not clear enough to determine the burial system in that area. Nothing in the tomb was found to give an indication on the identity of the tomb occupant. However, the discovery in the tomb of two sets of belts, one of which is attractively

¹³⁶ The archaeological report on the tomb that contained *sancai* ware in Hebei province provides limited information. This tomb was among the fifty tombs from the Tang dynasty to the Qing dynasty 清代 (AD 1644-AD 1911) which were excavated at the same time.

¹³⁷ Zhongjing 中京 is one of the five capitals of Bohai State.

¹³⁸ Bohai State was a kingdom that existed from AD 698 to AD 926. It covers the area from south of the Xiao Xinganling Mountains 小興安嶺 to north of the Sanjiang Plain 三江平原; from the east of the Xihuote Mountains 錫霍特山脈 to the Songliao Plain 松遼平原. Bohai State was founded by an ethnic tribe in northeast China. It had close ties with the Han culture in the Tang Dynasty (618-907) and was influenced by the latter's government institution.

ornamented with bronze and the other with a gilt twelve-bronze ornament, suggest that this was a tomb of an official or of an imperial family member.¹³⁹ According to the report, two *sancai* objects were found in the tomb: one vase about 18 cm high, decorated with splashes of green, brown, white and yellow colours, and one marble-patterned *sancai* bowl 11 cm in diameter. The report claims that the lead-glazed colour of the vase was not as bright as the *sancai* wares found in central China.¹⁴⁰ Nevertheless, the discovery of Tang *sancai* ware in the region of Bohai State, in current Jilin province 吉林省, is very significant. Since it is quite a long distance to Jilin province, from Shaanxi, Henan and Hebei provinces, where Tang *sancai* kilns were excavated, the question remains as to how and why Tang *sancai* wares were brought to that area for burial. Was there a kiln for making lead glazed pottery locally to satisfy demand? Questions have been raised by scholars, but as yet no answers have been found. *Sancai* decorated architectural fragments were found in Jilin and Bohai States. I shall discuss this point together with matters concerning architectural material in Chapter Two of this thesis: "Tang *sancai* ware found in China in sites other than tombs".

In Hunan province, Tang tombs are located at the foothill in the suburb of Changsha 長沙. Over five hundred of these tombs were excavated in the last decades, but very few Tang *sancai* wares were unearthed. The report on the findings of Tang *sancai* in Changsha, Hunan province, unfortunately does not mention anything about the tomb

¹³⁹ *WW* 1994, 1, pp. 35-49.

¹⁴⁰ *WW* 1994, 1, p. 43.

in which Tang *sancai* was found, nor on the status of the tomb occupant.¹⁴¹ Hardly anything can be obtained from the report to discuss the find of Tang *sancai* in Hunan province.

In Hubei province, one tomb containing *sancai* was found. According the epitaph, the tomb occupant was Li Hui 李徽 (AD?-AD 683), grandson of Emperor Taizong, Duke of Xin'an 新安郡王 and second son of Prince Litai 李泰 (AD 618-AD 652), who was the third son of Emperor Taizong.¹⁴² Four *sancai* objects were found in the tomb. Except for a 21cm-high vase, the other three items are small, though all in delicate metal shapes: a molded petal-shaped bowl 9.4 cm in diameter, a dragon-handle cup and a horn-shaped cup. This find of *sancai* objects in a tomb of a member of the imperial family in a province outside of the region of the capital of the Tang reinforces the suggestion that Tang *sancai* was employed exclusively for imperial and elite burials in the Tang era.

The above study on the tombs that contained Tang *sancai* in the provinces of Hebei, Jilin, Hunan, Hubei and in the city of Beijing suggest that few Tang *sancai* were employed as tomb objects in areas except where the tombs of officials and nobles were located, like in Shaanxi, in Henan and in Shanxi provinces. This reinforces the argument that Tang *sancai* as burial objects was employed only by the elite and nobles.

¹⁴¹ In a general report on Tang tombs that were excavated in the suburb of Changsha mentioned that Tang *sancai* was found in a tomb. It gives no information on the tomb; therefore, it is not possible to examine the location, nor the status of the tomb owner. *WW* 1959, 9, pp. 23-26.

¹⁴² It was the general practice for any ruler nominated by the emperor to reside in the place which he was given to rule. Li Hui, who was granted the tile of Duke of Xin'an 新安郡王, moved to Xin'an in Hubei province, where he took residence and died.

The special case of Hebei province, where only one tomb was excavated with *sancai* ware, suggests that Tang *sancai* was not made for ordinary burials. In fact, Hebei province is the place where one of the Tang *sancai* kilns, the Neiqiu kiln 內丘窯, is located. Many Tang *sancai* objects would have been unearthed if Tang *sancai* were permitted as tomb items for ordinary people. Moreover, the tomb of Li Hui in Hubei province gives further indication that for imperial and noble burials, fine tomb objects like Tang *sancai* could have been brought to Hubei from one of the kilns¹⁴³ in the other provinces to meet the demand of the hierarchical burial system of the Tang. The finds of Tang *sancai* in Jilin province is another special case. The type of *sancai* wares unearthed in tombs in that area and the architectural material that was found in the ruins of the Longquanfu Palace 龍泉府¹⁴⁴ appears to be different in terms of glaze and shaping from the *sancai* ware that was produced in the kilns of central China. There is a possibility that another kiln, not yet discovered, existed in Jilin province and produced this different type of lead-glazed *sancai*. This subject will be further considered in Chapter Two.

2. Tang *sancai* wares used for burials

In this section, my arguments will be presented in two parts. In the first part, I shall study the setting of Tang *sancai* objects in tombs in order to understand their function and, in particular, the role that Tang *sancai* has played among other pottery tomb

¹⁴³ Up to the present, four *sancai* kiln sites have been discovered: the Huangye kiln 黃冶窯 in Henan province; the Huangbao 黃堡窯 and the Xijiao Liqianfang 西郊醴泉坊窯 kilns in Shaanxi province; and the Neiqiu kiln 內丘窯 in Hebei province

¹⁴⁴ *KG* 1999, 8, pp. 74-80.

objects.¹⁴⁵ For that purpose, I shall take the tomb of Princess Yongtai 永泰公主 (AD684-AD701) as a case study. In the second part, I shall address issues on the purposes and agencies of some categories of Tang *sancai* objects by looking at their origins and sources. In the end, I shall also examine ongoing debates on the purpose of the utensil-shaped of Tang *sancai* objects.

2.1 Setting of Tang *sancai* objects in the tomb of Princess Yongtai

Almost all the good quality Tang *sancai* wares that were found in the tombs were from the period preceding the An Lushan 安祿山 rebellion, AD 755 to AD 762.¹⁴⁶

Among all the tombs that contained Tang *sancai*, there is only one tomb, that of Cui Shen 崔沈¹⁴⁷ in Yanshi 偃師, Henan province which was well preserved, though not many of the objects found represented a sufficiently good example for a case study. The other tombs were all looted. The tombs of Prince Yide 懿德太子 (AD 682-AD 701) and Princess Yongtai 永泰公主 (AD 684-AD 701) have a higher status than those of other tombs.

Prince Yide, the crown prince, was the grandson of Emperor Gaozong and Empress Wu Zetian, the eldest son of Emperor Zhongzong 中宗. Prince Yide was suspected of intrigues and insurgency. He was executed by Wu Zetian in AD 701, at the age of

¹⁴⁵ Other pottery tomb objects are meant here to be unglazed pottery wares that have the same shapes as Tang *sancai*, such as Tomb Guardians, horses, camels and so forth, excluding any precious metal and jade items.

¹⁴⁶ An Lushan 安祿山 (AD 703?-AD 757), was a military leader of Sogdian origin during the Tang Dynasty. He rose to prominence by defending the north eastern border from the Khitan and other northern threats. His opposition with rival generals created military tension within the Empire. The promotion of Yang Guozhong to Chancellor precipitated the catastrophic An Shi rebellion, which lasted from AD 755 to AD 763, weakening the economy of the Tang and shaking the central power of the Tang Empire.

¹⁴⁷ *WW, CKZL*, 1958, 8, pp. 64-66.

nineteen and buried in Luoyang. When his father became Emperor Zhongzong on the abdication of Wu Zetian, Prince Yide's body was brought back from Luoyang and reburied in a dignified tomb in AD 706 as an attendant tomb of Qianling, in Shaanxi province.

Princess Yongtai, Li Xianhui 李仙蕙, was the younger sister of Prince Yide. It was arranged for her to marry Wu Yanji 武延基 (d.701), the first son of Wu Chengsi 武承嗣 (d.689), who was a nephew of Empress Wu Zetian. For the same reason as for Prince Yide, Princess Yongtai and her husband were executed by Wu Zetian in AD 701 and were buried in Luoyang. After her father, Emperor Zhongzong, ascended the throne, Princess Yongtai and her husband, like Prince Yide, were reburied in an attendant tomb of Qianling in AD 706, in the north area of Qian county 乾縣, 76.5 kilometres east of Xi'an.

Such was the rank of these two members of the Imperial family, that their tombs were accorded the title of Ling 陵. This term is the same as the title used for describing the tomb of an emperor. Unfortunately, Yide's tomb was heavily pillaged and could, therefore, not be of any help for the intended research.

Princess Yongtai's tomb, one of the most well preserved Tang tombs that have been excavated to date, contained Tang *sancai* wares from the period of the height of their production. As the seventh daughter of Emperor Zhongzong and the grand-daughter of Emperor Gaozong and Emperor Wu Zetian, her tomb indeed

represents a good illustration of the Tang imperial burial system.

Princess Yongtai's tomb, built in the form of a long tunnel, has a length of 87.5 metres (Drawing 1.1). The entrance to the tunnel, facing south, consists of a slanting passageway, 23.35 metres long, with a downward inclination of 18°, which leads to a first corridor, on both sides of which are four niches, each niche being roughly 1.8 metres by 1.8 metres. In between the niches, there are four hallways. (In Drawing 1.1, the niches are referred to as YT(a) and YT(b) for the first hallway on the right and left side respectively, YT(c) and YT(d) for the second hallway, YT(e) and YT(f) for the third hallway, YT(g) and YT(h) for the fourth hallway). At the end of this first corridor, a second corridor starts, along which are two hallways, and leads to a front chamber which, through a passage of about 12 metres, conducts to the last area of the tomb – the back chamber, where the coffin is laid. The width at the entrance to the passageway of the tomb is about 3.9 metres, and at the far end, where the back chamber is located, it is about 6 metres¹⁴⁸.

Archaeologists have claimed that it is rare to see a tomb of such an impressively large size. The tomb is well decorated, with paintings covering almost all the walls inside, from the entrance of the passageway till the back chamber. Scenes in the wall painting differ in each section of the tomb. At the front passageway, a flying dragon amidst clouds is followed by guards of honour and grooms with their horses; a set of halberds that symbolized rank and power, occupies one side of the wall; the same

¹⁴⁸ In the archeological report this number was mistyped as 16.

theme, but a tiger instead of a dragon traversing clouds, is painted on the other side of the wall. After the passageway, both sides of the walls of the four hallways are painted with figures of male and female attendants. Before the first chamber, in the first hallway of the second corridor, and in the passageway before the back chamber, the theme of the wall paintings is similar: garden scenes with flowers, plants, garden rocks and figures are intermingled. In the two chambers, except for a set of paintings on the north wall figuring musicians, the paintings portray mainly attendants with different duties in different poses.

Despite the looting, a large number of objects were found: some 1250 items, including painted pottery figures, Tang *sancal* wares, wood figures, gold ornaments, coins, bronze and iron objects, were excavated (Table 1.1.1). Among these, there were 172 Tang *sancal* objects: 24 male mounted figures, 3 female mounted figures, 6 female standing figures, 24 male alien-looking standing figures, 1 foreign-looking mounted figure, 10 horses, 9 dishes, 10 bowls, 4 cups, 5 miniature cooking stoves, 6 boxes, 1 miniature cooking utensil, 1 vase, 23 bottles, 2 jars, 1 spoon, 1 shallow cup with a single handle, 3 lids, 1 plate, 2 candle holders, 3 stands, 31 bottle lids. These Tang *sancal* wares were mingled with other tomb objects being placed in different parts of the tomb. Normally tomb objects were placed in the niches as well as in the chambers.

The majority of objects from Princess Yongtai's tomb were found in the eight niches on both sides of the corridor. Those across the third and fourth hallway were

plundered and what was left was in disorder. Unfortunately, the two principal chambers were also plundered, and there was hardly anything left there. Nonetheless, with those valuable remains, I shall present the different shapes of Tang *sancai* tomb objects, and shall study the manner in which objects in general were set in the tombs. For certain shapes of Tang *sancai* wares that were missing in Princess Yongtai's tomb, I shall refer to the findings and paintings of some other Tang tombs.

In Table 1.7 are listed all the Tang *sancai* wares that were found in the eight niches in Yongtai's tomb. The archaeological report does not give a precise description of certain Tang *sancai* wares. It simply mentioned that dishes, bowls, cups, miniature cooking stoves etc., without giving any order of display, were found in niches YT(e), YT(f), and YT(g), YT(h), on both sides of the third and fourth hallway, as well as in niche YT(a), where they were muddled up by the looters. It seems, however, that a prescribed order for placing tomb objects existed. In niches YT (a) and YT (b),¹⁴⁹ on both sides of the first hallway, there were primarily Tang *sancai* male figures mounted on horseback, painted pottery alien-looking grooms, alien-looking figures, male figures with wind-protecting hats in painted pottery and in wood, as well as wooden horses. The same arrangement was found in Prince Yide's tomb, which had a setup similar to that of Princess Yongtai. Yide occupied a two-chamber brick tomb. The total length of Yide's tomb is 100.8 metres, with four niches on each side. The niches on the sides of the first and second hallways in Yide's tomb (Drawing 1.2) were stuffed with armed figures mounted on horseback, figures with wind-protecting

¹⁴⁹ According to the report, YT (a) and YT (b) were not touched by tomb thieves.

hats and musicians mounted on horseback. In the four front niches of Yide's tomb, all the figures are male.

The Tang *sancai* figures in Princess Yongtai's tomb were not large, measuring only 27.8 cm to 35 cm, and were similar in size to the painted pottery figures that were mixed up with them. The Tang *sancai* figures mounted on horseback, in YT(a), YT(c), were between 23 cm and 40 cm high,¹⁵⁰ males and females. The male mounted figures have different poses; some sit straight up on horseback, both hands raised up in a rather stiff position, as if holding something, probably a weapon.¹⁵¹ Some other male figures show hunting gestures, positioned as if they are holding bows and arrows ready for shooting.¹⁵² In Princess Yongtai's tomb, male mounted figures were found in niches on both sides of the first hallway but not female ones. Female figures, appearing in niches of the second hallway, have similar gestures as those of males and somehow seem to express a mood of enjoyment of leisure activities.¹⁵³

In the four niches YT(e), YT(f), YT(g) and YT(h), on both sides of the third and fourth hallways of Yongtai's tomb, objects were found which were intended for daily

¹⁵⁰ Figures mounted on horseback were found in different tombs. The sizes of these figures vary from 25 cm to 40 cm. As an example, female figures mounted on horseback from the tomb of Gongyi shipin chang Tang mu 鞏義食品廠唐墓 are about 28.5 cm high. *WW*, 1998, 11, pp.37-50. In the tomb of Jinxiangxianzhu mu 金鄉縣主墓, these types of figures are between 35.2 cm and 35.9 cm high. *WW*, 1997, 1, pp 4-19.

¹⁵¹ See tomb of Yongtai Plate 1. *WW*, 1964, 1.

¹⁵² *WW*, 1964, 1. Also see tomb Zheng Rentai Plate 11, *WW*, 1972, 7, ZRT.

¹⁵³ The tombs of Princess Yongtai and Prince Yide have a lot in common. They were built at the same time, and were given the status of Ling. Both the Princess and Prince were reburied in the same year AD 706. Yet the display of objects and the paintings in both tombs, a subject discussed in the following section of this chapter, suggest that in spite of a certain standardization, some differences were noticed, such as those that relate to the gender of the tomb occupant. In Yongtai's tomb there were more female than male figures, and vice-versa in Yide's tomb.

use by the deceased, such as dishes, bowls, cups, miniature cooking stoves, candle holders and so forth. Four niches were severely plundered, and what were left were minor objects of little market value. These abandoned objects were mixed up. The archaeology report briefly mentioned that these items were found in the four niches. It is doubtful, however, that all the objects found in the four niches are the ones originally placed there and that these four niches contained only this type of objects. The report on Princess Yongtai's tomb did not give the actual size of a niche, but it could be assumed that, as in Prince Yide's tomb, a niche would be about 1.8 by 1.8 meters. The archaeological report on Yongtai mentions 264 pottery male standing figures, 19 cm high, which were found in the niches of YT(a) and YT(b). Each niche contains over a hundred figures.¹⁵⁴ The report on Prince Yide's tomb mentions that the number of pottery figures that were found in one niche is 227.¹⁵⁵ A total of 878 figures were excavated from Princess Yongtai's tomb, and almost all of them were in the niches of the first two hallways. This indicates that a large number of objects had been taken away by tomb looters from the other two pairs of niches across the third and fourth hallways, namely YT(e), YT(f), and YT(g), YT(h), which should have contained at least a similar number of figures and objects. What kind of objects could have been placed in these two pairs of niches at the time of the burial? I shall explore the answer to this question in the following section, "Correlation between wall paintings and the setting of tomb objects".¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ *WW*, 1964, 1, pp. 10-11.

¹⁵⁵ *WW*, 1972, 7, YD, p. 29.

¹⁵⁶ In the light of Rawson's observations, I draw the inference of the correlation between wall paintings and the arrangement of tomb objects, which will help to survey the setting of tomb objects in different parts of tombs despite their absence as a result of the looting.

There is no information or evidence with regard to the position that was given to Tang *sancai* figures among other objects in Princess Yongtai's tomb. Were they lined up to be seen in priority over other items, or were they placed without any particular order amongst other objects?

The archaeological report on Prince Yide's tomb observed that the pottery armed figures mounted on horseback, decorated with gold leaf, were positioned in the front line of the niche, while *sancai* decorated musicians mounted on horseback were lined up in the middle, and other *sancai* figures mounted on horseback were placed at the back. Pottery figures with wind-protecting hats were set at the two ends of the front sides (Drawing 1.3). Perhaps this arrangement represents the lineup of a phalanx of a guard of honour. The pottery armed figures mounted on horseback and decorated with gold leaf, possibly considered more valuable, being more costly to produce than lead-glazed *sancai* or painted pottery figures, were placed at the front. As the arrangement demonstrates, the most attractive objects were given a privileged position.

This observation is supported by another excavation. Gudu Sizhen 孤獨思貞(AD 641-AD 697),¹⁵⁷ a noble family member of the Tang, was buried in AD 699 in a tomb with one chamber and two niches, neither of which has been tampered with by looters, although the main chamber of the tomb was pilfered. In those niches were found

¹⁵⁷ Gudu Sizhen 孤獨思貞 (AD 641-AD 697), was born in Luoyang, Henan province. He held the title of Chaoyi Dafu 朝議大夫, Grand Master for Court Discussion, a prestigious title for officials of the Third Rank in the Sui, Fifth Rank in the Tang. See Sui Tang Mu, 1980, pp.29-42.

horses, 59.5 cm to 63.5 cm high, decorated in colours of a combination of amber, straw yellow and creamy white lead-glaze, as well as double-hump camels, 62.5 cm to 68 cm high, in brown and green, brown and purple, with an impressive mask pattern decorating a double-bag hanging between their two humps. These striking objects were placed at the front line of the niches (Figure 1.1).

Another example is Prince Jiemin's 節潛 (AD?-AD707)¹⁵⁸ tomb, which has two chambers. Although it was pillaged, there were still some objects left. The first chamber had a wooden door, decayed at the time of the excavation. The archaeological report did not separate the findings in the part of the corridor preceding the entrance of the front chamber with the findings in the first chamber. The description mentions Tang *sancai* horses, broken shards of Tang *sancai* camels, painted pottery guardians in the form of Heavenly Kings, figures mounted on horseback, civil officials, horses, elephant-head decorated jar and a carved lotus-shaped stone lamp (Figure 1.2).

The report says that the most important tomb objects, such as valuable metals, jade or other rare objects, including pottery or Tang *sancai* ware, were placed in the rear side of the tomb, the smaller sized figures were stored in the first row of niches. The report also indicates that the objects found in the chamber area are of large size and that the *sancai* items are of a particularly magnificent and skillful manufacture.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ Crown Prince Jiemin 節潛太子(AD?-AD707), the third son of Emperor Zhongzong, was executed by Empress Wu Zetian. The exact year of his birth was not mentioned in any Tang texts. He was reinstated with the honorific title Crown Prince when he was rehabilitated after death. Jieminzaizi, 2004, p.164.

¹⁵⁹ This explains the reason why looters have broken in tombs by making holes mainly in the chamber walls or in

Here the evidence emerges of the role that Tang *sancai* tomb objects played among other tomb objects. Visually they have a superior and more powerful appearance than the painted pottery objects.¹⁶⁰ The thickness of glaze layers and the tone that resulted gave Tang *sancai* objects a superficial splendor and a greater value. Moreover, because of a high production technique they were more costly.¹⁶¹ As a consequence, Tang *sancai* ware, resembling metal work, were probably treated as superior objects and were placed in the foremost places in the niches closer to the chambers. Very possibly, the finer Tang *sancai* objects, more sophisticated and in larger sizes, as can now be found in museums and in private collections, were placed in the main chambers where the tomb occupant was laid.

Archaeological reports show that looting of the niches close to the tomb chambers was the most severe, and the majority of the tomb chambers were empty by the time an official excavation took place. Can the discussion on the setting of tomb objects be established even in the absence of all the objects? The next section will attempt to provide a key to this issue.

2.1.1 Correlation between wall paintings and the setting of tomb objects

At this juncture, I shall develop the argument based on the observation made by

the rear corridor, according to archaeological reports. Jiemintaizi, 2004, p. 164.

¹⁶⁰ The technique of producing painted pottery is first to fire the bare ceramic in a low temperature, between 700°C to 950°, then apply a layer of colour foundation to smooth the surface. The final step is to paint on the body. Pottery can be covered with very fine painting, but the paint does not hold long because the foundation layer tends to break down in conditions of humidity.

¹⁶¹ Technically, it is more costly to produce Tang *sancai* figures than figures made of painted pottery. Painted pottery requires a one-time firing, whereas glazed pottery needs to be fired two times, first firing the bare ceramic body, then firing again after glazing. More details in Chapter Three of this thesis, under "Technology and Sources of Innovation".

Jessica Rawson¹⁶² on the very likely correlation between the three-dimensional tomb objects and their positioning, on one hand, and the wall paintings inside the tomb, on the other hand – a striking element which other scholars do not seem to have ever taken into account. Rawson has argued that “All Chinese tombs contain a mixture of real objects employed in life by the tomb occupant and some measure of representation. The central concern of this paper is with the balance between real objects and representations of them in pictures and models. A larger representation embracing a whole tomb might be created from a composition of real objects or from one containing a mixture of real objects and representations-pictures and models.”

Further, Rawson suggested that “Tombs with the painted scenes seem to coincide in date with pottery tomb figures. Large numbers of figures were deposited in the niches along the ramps of the princely tombs and of higher level aristocratic tombs in the Xian area.”¹⁶³ This observation offers us a basis for a discussion regarding the arrangement of tomb objects, despite the absence of a large number of pieces due to looting. I shall, therefore, suggest a link or parallel between the paintings on the walls inside the tombs and the objects and their positions in the niches.

As scholars have argued, the layout of the tomb represents that of a court. The passageway represents the outer area of a courtyard or a palace; the hallway represents the courtyard; further inside the tomb, a long corridor which represents an

¹⁶² On the strength of tomb objects, Rawson examined the changes in the representation of life and the afterlife in the Tang and Song dynasties. Rawson, 1996, pp. 23-38.

¹⁶³ Rawson, 1996, pp. 24-25; p. 30.

inner courtyard, leads to the private quarters, which are constituted by one or two chambers (Drawing 1.5).¹⁶⁴ The paintings all along the tomb walls are made to simulate the contents and environment of a palace.

Right from the entrance to Princess Yongtai's tomb, on the right side of the passageway (Drawing 1.4),¹⁶⁵ the paintings start with the scene of a troop of protecting guards, followed by a flying dragon; next on the painting appears a city gate tower, followed by warriors standing in groups, just before the first niche; then come two foreign-looking grooms with their horses in front of a set of halberds, *ji* 戟¹⁶⁶ in Chinese, set on their stands. These halberds were an indicator of rank.

At tomb passageways, the wall paintings usually showed guards, a guard of honour, and the muscular, foreign-looking grooms with their horses ready to serve their masters. It is of particular interest to observe that, in the niches after the first hallway, there are figures wearing wind-protecting hats and looking very similar to the troop of protecting guards painted on the wall. In the niches, there are hundreds

¹⁶⁴ Li Xingming made a significant study on the Tang tombs excavated throughout China which contain mural paintings. Li Xingming, 2005, p. 56.

¹⁶⁵ On the opposite side of the wall, i.e. on the left side of the passageway, the painting presented the same subject, except for the dragon which was replaced by a flying tiger.

¹⁶⁶ *Ji* 戟 is a kind of weapon with two blades at right angles to each other forming a single weapon. It is also used as decoration in front of temples for ancestors, shrines, palaces and halls. It is an emblem of the ranking system. There should be a set of twenty-four *Ji* in front of the aforesaid buildings. Eckfeld studied the halberd display: "The tradition of using halberds as a signifier of status began in ancient times when guards of honour armed with wooden halberds marched ahead of officials on tour. During the Sui and Tang dynasties, a system of displaying halberds in front of gates developed as a means to show power. According to the *Xin Tang Shu*, halberd racks were placed at Buddhist and Daoist temples, palaces, halls, offices of governors and mansions of male officers above the third rank. The earliest documented regulations are in the *Da Tang Liu Dian* and date from 741, the last year of the Kaiyuan period. Further official regulations on halberd entitlements were published in 747, the sixth year of Tianbao, and in 789, the fifth year of Zhengyuan. In the 741 regulations, there were six ranks in halberd display: 10, 12, 14, 16, 18 and the maximum, 24. Twelve halberds were the entitlement of those of the first rank, and eighteen were the entitlement of Crown Princes; the Eastern Palace, that is the Crown Prince's palace in Chang'an, had eighteen halberds. Twenty-four halberds were placed at the gates of temples and palaces." Eckfeld, 2005, p. 102. Li Mingxing made more study on halberds on tomb painting. He suggests that the number of halberds in the Tang tomb paintings accords with the status of the tomb occupant. Li Mingxing, 2005, pp. 156-158.

of horse-riding figures, representing probably a group of guards of honour, again with exactly the same foreign-looking grooms and their horses provided in the wall paintings (Figure 1.4).

The same coherence is noticed in other parts of the tomb. The wall paintings in Princess Yongtai's tomb have unfortunately been quite damaged in some places. However, the paintings in the tombs of Prince Yide and Prince Zhanghuai 章懷太子 (AD 654-AD 684),¹⁶⁷ which are in a better condition, exhibit, after the city tower, a procession scene, a polo game (Picture 1.5, Figure 1.6), Chinese courtiers and foreign delegates.¹⁶⁸ The tomb of Prince Zhanghuai has two chambers and six niches; three on each side, the total length of the tomb is seventy-one metres. According to the archaeological excavation report on Prince Zhanghuai's tomb, all the tomb objects, which were in the six niches, were broken in pieces and muddled up.¹⁶⁹ However, figures of polo players can be seen in private collections and museums (Figure 1.7). It is possible that this tomb also had such figures before it was looted.

The niches on both sides of the second hallway in Princess Yongtai's tomb display court ladies, male mounted figures, female mounted figures and foreign-looking mounted figures. The majority of the figures, whether mounted on horseback or

¹⁶⁷ Zhanghuai 章懷太子 (AD 654-AD 684), Crown Prince, was the second son of Emperor Gaozong and Empress Wu Zetian. He was accused of treason and was demoted to the status of a commoner and exiled to Bazhou 巴州, in Sichuan 四川, by his mother Wu Zetian. He died in disgrace and was buried in a commoner's grave in AD 684 in Bazhou. He was reburied in AD 706, in an attendant tomb of the Qianling. His wife was buried there conjointly in AD 711. Zhou Shaoliang ZH706, 1992, 1060-1062; Zhou Shaoliang ZH711, 1992, 1030-1031.

¹⁶⁸ See *WW* 1972, 7, ZH, pp.15-18. The detailed subjects in tomb paintings are not necessarily the same in every tomb, yet each section of the paintings is indeed consistent in terms of the scenes. For more discussion, see Li Mingxing 2005, and Fong 1973. pp. 307-334.

¹⁶⁹ *WW* 1972, 7, ZH, pp. 13-15.

standing, are female.¹⁷⁰

Continuing along the first corridor, we reach a first chamber which simulates the inner courtyard (Drawing 1.5) that usually precedes the entrance to the private quarters of a palace. On both sides of this corridor, the theme of the wall paintings in Princess Yongtai's tomb shifts to the scenery of a garden, with painted flowers, greenery, garden rocks and large coral sprays. Human figures can be seen on this part of the wall painting, although it has been badly damaged. The only well preserved part of the wall painting portrays a group of nine female figures carrying some goods (Figure 1.8).¹⁷¹ This image suggests that this part of the tomb was a storage room and a place where servants worked to prepare all the necessary services for their mistress,¹⁷² such as cooking.

As indicated earlier in this section, according to the archaeological report, in the four niches across the third and fourth hallways, objects were found which had served for daily use by the deceased during their lifetime, such as dishes, bowls, cups, miniature cooking stoves, candle holders and so forth. These objects were abandoned by tomb robbers. Since, as mentioned earlier, a considerable quantity of tomb objects was

¹⁷⁰ The layout of Prince Yide's tomb is similar to that of Princess Yongtai. Both tombs have eight side niches. In contrast, however, according to the report, in Yide's tomb, only male figures were found in the two niches on both sides of the second hallway. It is likely that the gender of the tomb occupant was taken into consideration for the setting of the tomb objects and figures.

¹⁷¹ According to the report, most of the wall paintings in this part were damaged by humidity, and many portions with figures had fallen off. *WW* 1964, 1, p. 17.

¹⁷² Tomb construction could not mimic the exact palaces or courts. However, it was the desire of the living to offer to the deceased as much comfort and luxury as possible. Wall paintings, objects and even tomb structures were made to recreate the world of the living. The number of niches provided was in relation to the status of the tomb, but also to the architectural possibilities to support the size of the tomb. For a detailed discussion, see Li Xingming, 2005.

stolen,¹⁷³ the question arises as to what objects were originally placed in these niches. Considering the narrative conveyed by the paintings and the proposal of a correlation, it is likely that other figures were also placed alongside the few utensils that were found. These could be figures of male and female attendants, some holding household objects, and a kneeling girl holding a jar (Figure 1.9), as seen on the wall paintings.

The argument that the setting of tomb objects echoes the paintings on the tomb walls is supported by the hierarchical system of the Tang dynasty. The regulations on household management in the Tang court are recorded in the *Tang Liu Dian* 唐六典.¹⁷⁴ They state that female court attendants were organized and managed under the Liu Sang Ju 六尚局, the Six Palace Services, namely:

- the Shang Gong Ju 尚宮局, the General Palace Service, responsible for keeping seals and keys, recording incoming and outgoing material, and so forth;
- the Shang Yi Ju 尚儀局, the Ceremonials Service, responsible for preparing brushes and stationary objects, performing ceremonial music, preparing banquets, and so forth;

¹⁷³ In the four niches on both sides of the third and fourth hallways, objects were found which had served for daily use by the deceased, such as dishes, bowls, cups, miniature cooking stoves, candle holders and so forth. Four niches were severely plundered, and what were left were minor objects of small market value. These abandoned objects were mixed. The archaeology report briefly mentioned that these items were found in the four niches. It is doubtful, however, that all the objects found in the four niches are the ones originally placed there and that these four niches contained only this type of objects.

¹⁷⁴ *Tang Liu Dian* 唐六典 was compiled in AD 738, under the order of Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 in AD 722, on regulations and systems of the Tang state and local institutions and their related officials. The work consists of thirty *juan*. *Juan* twelve concerning palace officials, *Tang Liu Dian-Gong Guan* 唐六典·宮官, recorded the court attendants and their responsibilities. *Tang Liu Dian-Gong Guan*, pp. 348-354.

- the Shang Fu Ju 尙服局, the Wardrobe Service, responsible for keeping books on ritual ceremonies, keeping clothes and jewelries, preparing bath and bath related material, organizing the feather fans for the Guard of Honour, and so forth;
- the Shang Shi Ju 尙食局, the Food Service, responsible for preparing food and wine, preparing medicine when necessary, taking care of the heating, and so forth;
- the Shang Qin Ju 尙寢局, the Housekeeping Service, responsible for decorating banquet venues, cleaning, gardening, lighting, and so forth;
- the Shang Gong Ju 尙功居, the Workshop Service, responsible for confectioning new clothes, keeping treasures like gold and jade objects, organizing the supply of material for clothes, food, heating, and so forth.

Each service department had a female head, whose position was between Fifth and Sixth rank. The sophisticated and hierarchically set up services required a total of about three hundred attendants.

If we look at the tomb paintings, we find the same functioning attendants as the figures placed in the rear part of the tomb. This rear part, or private quarters, consists of a first or front chamber, followed by a corridor leading to a rear chamber, where the coffin is laid (Drawing 1.5).

In Princess Yongtai's tomb, the front and rear chambers share the same themes for their wall paintings. In the front chamber, there are eight panels of wall paintings, two on each of its four walls. On the north wall, each of the two panels represents a male attendant, both wearing a round-collared robe and holding a *hu* 笏, plaque, a symbol of official status¹⁷⁵ in their hands.¹⁷⁶ On the east wall, which is in the best condition in the entire tomb, the paintings on one panel portray eight female figures and one male figure, all apparently assigned duties, each holding an article of everyday use, such as a plate, a cosmetic box, a stem cup, a whisk, etc.; the painting on the second panel represents six females and one male, each carrying household items, such as a round fan, a box, a lit candle, etc. (Figure 1.8, Drawing 1.6).¹⁷⁷ The west wall panels have paintings identical to those of the east wall. The paintings on the south wall shows only two female attendants, one holding a box, the other a stem cup. Inside this rear chamber, the panels on the walls present the same paintings as those of the first front chamber, except for the north wall which exhibits a group of six musicians. In these paintings, the figures holding candles, round fans and whisks on the wall of Yongtai's front chamber are possibly attendants of the Housekeeping Service; the ones holding plates or stem cups are probably attendants of the Food Service; those which have cosmetic boxes in their hands are from the Wardrobe Service; the musicians belong to the Ceremonials Service.

¹⁷⁵ Hu 笏 is explained in the *Book of Hou Han* 後漢書 as a plaque 版, 笏也。 *Book of Hou Han* 後漢書 *juan.* 67, p. 2204. In the *Jiu Tang Shu* 舊唐書 is recorded the proper order for using a Hu: Civil and Military officials all hold a Hu [in their hands], [officials who are] above fifth rank, [shall hold] a Hu that is made of ivory, [officials whose rank is] below sixth, [the Hu] is made of bamboo or wood 文武之官皆執笏, 五品以上, 用象牙爲之, 六品以下, 用竹木。 *Jiu Tang Shu* 舊唐書, *juan.* 45, p. 1931.

¹⁷⁶ Fong observed that these male guards most likely are representations of specially appointed private guards of the Princess. Fong, 1973, pp. 307-334.

¹⁷⁷ Similar contents of wall paintings could be seen in the inner parts of the tomb of Prince Yide. Two groups of seven male life-size attendants wearing round-collar long dresses in different colours, like purple, red, green and yellow, are shown standing at attention with the *hu* in their hands, on the two sides of the third hallway, a couple of court ladies with round fans following in tow. See *WW*, 1972, 7, YD, pp. 26-31.

The wall paintings in the two chambers demonstrate themes of everyday life. It is reasonable to assume that objects may have been placed in the chambers correspond to those seen in the wall paintings. There is no evidence to suggest that these types of figures were actually placed in the chambers of Princess Yongtai's tomb, although the chambers in tombs were the subject of the heaviest looting, thieves having found out that in this area the most valuable and important tomb objects were placed. It is likely that the objects and figures, similar to those in the paintings, were made specifically according to the institutional arrangements for the princess, to provide all the necessary services for a comfortable court life and official events in the afterlife. Thus, the two chambers may have accommodated many kinds of figures representing the people usually present in real life, such as attendants, male and female, in different postures, official attendants, female dancers, females holding a mirror, females elegantly holding a flower in a sitting position, surrounded by household objects, such as vessels, boxes, and so forth, which can be seen in private and museum collections (Figure 1.10). Some figures in poses similar to those of the attendants in the wall paintings may also have been placed in the two niches on the passageway nearest to the rear chambers.

Although relatively few *sancai* figures have been excavated from tombs, a large quantity of interesting Tang *sancai* figures in different postures, as well as wares copied from metal works, have been collected and are found with private collectors and in various museums. A lady playing a harp, as shown in Figure 1.11, is a piece collected in the Cleveland Museum of Art. Her pose suggests that she is engrossed

in her mood of playing. Another piece shown in Figure 1.12, owned by T.T. Tsui, a prominent collector of Chinese antiques, represents a playful male holding an eagle, with an expression reflecting a leisurely joyful and extravagant lifestyle. Figure 1.13 shows a sophisticated petal-shaped dish. There are many other different types of Tang *sancai* wares, figures, utensils, toys and miniature furniture (Figure 1.14), which do not survive in many tombs.

To corroborate the argument of correlation between wall paintings and the setting of tomb objects, I shall extend the discussion on tombs in the later period of the Tang to suggest that this process has continued to be applied in burials all through the Tang era.

The Huiling 惠陵 is a joint-burial tomb of Crown Prince Lixian 李憲 (AD 678–AD 741) and his wife Madam Yuan 元氏 (?–AD 740). According to the unearthed epitaph, he and his wife were reburied at the Huiling in AD 742.¹⁷⁸ The tomb occupant, Lixian, was the first son of Emperor Ruizong 睿宗 (AD 684–AD 690, AD 710–AD 712). He was posthumously enfeoffed as Emperor Rang 讓皇帝.¹⁷⁹ His tomb was an attendant tomb of the Qiaoling 橋陵, the tomb of his father, Emperor

¹⁷⁸ SX KGS, 2006, pp. 224–243.

¹⁷⁹ Lixian 李憲 (AD 678–AD 741) was crowned Prince at the age of six when his father, Emperor Ruizong 睿宗, was enthroned the first time in AD 684 as a puppet emperor. But in AD 690 Emperor Ruizong was demoted by Empress Wu Zetian. Lixian was also demoted by Empress Wu Zetian from Crown Prince to the honourable title of Grandson of the Emperor 皇孫. When Lixian's father came back to the throne in AD 710, he became Emperor Ruizong again. The Emperor was vacillating as to which son he should grant the princship. At Lixian's commendation, he decided to bestow it on his third son, Li Longji 李隆基, Lixian's younger brother, who triumphantly settled the case of Empress Wei 韋氏 (?–AD 701) by having her executed thus clearing the way for his father's rule. Emperor Wei was the wife of Emperor Zhongzhong 中宗, who held power over her husband, assembling her own aides. Succeeding to his father, Li Longji became Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 (AD 712–AD 756). And when his elder brother Lixian died in AD 741, he gave him posthumously the title of Emperor Rang 讓皇帝. (Rang 讓 means to give away or give up things with humility.)

Ruizong, and was situated about five and half kilometres away to the south-east. The Huiling was pillaged several times.¹⁸⁰ The tomb was constructed with a passageway, three hallways between three pairs of niches, two gates (a wooden gate and a stone gate), one corridor and one tomb chamber (Drawing 1.7). The total length of the tomb, from the entrance till the tomb chamber, is fifty-nine metres, fully decorated with paintings.

Because Lixian's tomb was much smaller than that of Yide, the painting seems to have been shrunk to fit in the smaller walls. In fact, Prince Lixian's tomb was only 59 metres long compared with that of Prince Yide which had a length of 100.80 metres, expressing fully the extent of its lavishness as an imperial tomb. However, the standardized theme of imperial tomb paintings, such as the guard of honour, the set of halberds and the city towers, all of which point to the status of the tomb occupant, is clear. On the right side wall of the tomb tunnel, the painting shows, at its start, two apsaras, followed by a flying dragon in the middle of clouds. In succession, comes a company of twenty-nine guards of honour, with figures in groups surrounded by banners and a set of halberds. The painting on the opposite side of the wall presents the same subject, but with a tiger in the place of the dragon (Drawing 1.8). About sixteen figures are identified on this side of the wall. Other parts are damaged.

¹⁸⁰ In the beginning of October 1999, thieves bombed the tomb, leaving a nine-metre hole on its south side. The archaeological report states that after the damage was noticed, the site was protected. An official excavation took place from March 2000 till January 2001, during which time it was discovered that the tomb had been looted several times. Moreover, the find has confirmed the record in the Tang text, *Xin Tang Shu*, that the tomb had been looted already twenty years after Lixian was buried. For more details, see SX KGS, 2006, pp. 1-2.

In the passageway right before the hallways and niches (Drawing 1.7), the paintings on both sides of the wall show city towers. At the opening of the niche, a painting portrays, on one side, a standing male figure with a plaque in his hands and, on the other side, another painting shows a male attendant posing with crossed hands in front of his chest. The same type of painting is repeated at the opening of all the niches, one on each side (Figure 1.15, Drawing 1.9). Ladies-in-waiting and male-looking attendants grouped by three or five is the theme on the walls of the hallways (Figure 1.16, Drawing 1.10).

Although most of the niches and chambers of the tomb of Prince Lixian have been severely looted, niche LX(b) and niche LX(c) have fortunately escaped the calamity of the plunder. This gives us possibility to examine the setting of tomb objects. The total number of tomb figures that were unearthed from the tomb is eight hundred and seventy, of which three hundred and twenty two tomb figures come from niche LX(b), and five hundred and sixteen from niche LX(c). The two niches are similar in size. The figures are painted pottery, standing males and females, horses, camels, figures mounted on horseback and foreign-looking figures in different sizes. They are similar to figures found in the front niches of Princess Yongtai's tomb, and correspond to the guard of honour shown on this part of the wall painting. The display in niche LX(b) again confirms indicates that the handsome pieces were placed in the front rows and the smaller sized figures were stored behind. Niche LX(b) is 1.85 metres in depth, 2 metres in width and the height from floor to the dome shaped ceiling is 1.6 metres. Placed at the entrance of niche LX(b), there were twelve large-sized painted male

figures ¹⁸¹, 75 to 76.5 cm high and female figures 73 to 78 cm high, as well as thirteen large-sized horses 61.5 to 78 cm high and four large camels 61.5 to 78 cm high (Figure 1.17). There were also smaller-sized figures 35 to 46 cm high, with wind-protecting hats, standing male figures wearing soft hoods, posing with two hands crossed in front of their chest, male figure mounted on horseback, female figures mounted on horseback, as well as standing officials (Figure 1.18), all piled up in four to five layers making a heap 1.4 to 1.5 metres high.

Prince Lixian's tomb, which illustrates the burial custom in the middle Tang period, has the same indications, such as set of halberds painted at the entrance of the tomb, representing an emblem of the ranking system, and the guard of honour in the wall paintings mimicked by the pottery figures. This fact provides evidence of the continuance of practice of the hierarchical institution which was depicted in the tombs of Prince Lixian's predecessors, Princess Yongtai, Prince Yide and Prince Zhanghui of the earlier Tang.

More of this evidence can be found on the wall paintings in the rear part of Lixian's tomb. In front of the entrance to the tomb chamber, on both sides of the wall, there were paintings exhibiting twenty-eight graceful attendants standing in line, some holding a round fan, a plaque, a whisk, a polo stick, or a simple box (Drawing 1.11).

The east walls of the tomb chamber were decorated with a painting of a scene of

¹⁸¹ Some of the large-sized painted figures in male dress, wearing soft hoods and standing in a graceful posture, were referred to in the archaeological report as "female figures in male dress". This style of pottery figure compares in appearance with the engraved drawing figures on the outer side of the stone coffin of this tomb. It can be suggested that these large painted pottery figures represent the eunuchs who served the Emperor and Empress in the court.

musicians performing in front of a lady surrounded by three attendants. The painting on the north wall represented a group of six court ladies. The south wall was decorated with a phoenix-like creature, Zhuque 朱雀 in Chinese¹⁸² or Red Phoenix. The painting on the west wall was damaged.

As Rawson argues, “The tombs provide functional spaces, in which social interactions could take place, social interactions determined by the ranks and hierarchies of the princes of the Han dynasty. As we shall see, these social and royal institutions were also linked to the government of the regions. But both the physical and the institutional were underpinned by a belief or ideology, namely that life after death resembled life.”¹⁸³

In the case of Princess Yongtai, Prince Yide, Prince Zhanghuai and Prince Lixian, the tombs seem to have been intended to create princely palaces for the deceased. The wall paintings, representing, for instance, the guard of honour and the set of halberds, embody the hierarchical institution of the Tang. The arrangement of the wall paintings and the setting of tomb objects were not made randomly, but were strictly in conformity with the institutional framework. The subjects of each part of the tomb paintings follow the function of the space in the tomb which mimics life in the earthly world. Although the space in the tomb was limited, from the entrance till the rear

¹⁸² Zhuque 朱雀, the Red Phoenix, is one of the four celestial animals, which appears in a shape of phoenix in red colour. It represents the south, the summer season and the element fire. The other three celestial animals are Qinglong 青龍, the Blue Dragon, representing the east, the spring season and the element wood; Baihu 白虎, the White Tiger, representing the west, the autumn season and the element metal; and Xuanwu 玄武, the Black Tortoise, representing the north, the winter season and the element water.

¹⁸³ Rawson, 2005, p. 108.

chamber, through wall paintings and tomb objects, a lavish underground princely mansion was well designed and presented. The tomb objects in their turn contributed to these settings, but now in three-dimensional form. Although the evidence is partial due to the damage to the tombs, it seems very likely that the settings of the objects in tombs were intended to correlate with the themes shown in the paintings. Both were probably determined by the institutional regulations governing palace life at the time.

Extravagant burial customs were not something new to the Tang. All sorts of valuable objects made of gold, silver and bronze,¹⁸⁴ jade carvings, etc., had also been found in pre-Tang tombs. The phenomenon of Tang *sancai*, a new kind of tomb object, in so many shapes and in such abundance, was a fashion in the lavish burials practiced during a period of prosperity in the Tang.

2.2 The agency of, and the agency for, Tang *sancai* tomb objects¹⁸⁵

Tang *sancai* ware examined so far was employed for objects that would serve the deceased in afterlife and was used exclusively by imperial and elite families of the time. To explore further the role of *sancai* in Tang society we need to consider the ways in which Tang *sancai* tomb objects, as agents, provided for the needs of the elite

¹⁸⁴ There is no exact way to establish how many gold and silver objects were buried in the Tang tombs, but from the archeological excavations, we learnt that about 2486 pieces of gold and silver were unearthed. This number includes the pieces that were found in cellars of Buddhist pagodas and in hoards. Since most of the tombs were looted before official excavations, statistical numbers do not give an appreciable reference. However, it is significant that the use of precious metals for burials demonstrates the lavish practices of the Tang. Qi Dongfang, 1999, p. 11.

¹⁸⁵ This title is after Rawson's *The Agency of, and the Agency for, the Wanli Emperor*. Rawson, 2007b.

in the afterlife and thus the ways in which they realized the beliefs and aspirations of peoples of the time.

The terminology of agency is adapted from the work of Alfred Gell, as modified by Rawson in her discussion of the robes worn by the Wanli Emperor 萬曆. Gell considers works that he terms art. This discourse is however strongly influenced by western notions that objects of high aesthetic quality were made as works of art. However, in many societies, objects now regarded as art were made for specific functions. Their high aesthetic qualities may actually have enhanced their ability to perform their functions in the eyes of their patrons and users. Thus the fine coloured surfaces of the *sancai* wares may have made the items especially suited to their functions.

Gell's work employs a number of different formulae to show how an object or a painting acts on a viewer, manipulating their responses. Rawson reformulates this interaction: "Whether it is the enchantment of the technology or the dazzling qualities of the colours, the visual aspects of the work engage the viewers and influence their reactions."¹⁸⁶

In her examination of the formulae developed by Gell in the "The Art Nexus and The Index"¹⁸⁷, Rawson suggests that "while the formulae are rather deadening, they do enable us to 'map' many different forms of effects and efficacy that a work like a

¹⁸⁶ Rawson, 2007b, p. 102.

¹⁸⁷ Gell, 1998, pp. 28-50.

Chinese ritual portrait might achieve”.¹⁸⁸ Incidentally, Tang *sancai* bears similarities with the Chinese ritual portrait that Rawson described in her article ‘*The Agency of, and the Agency for, the Wanli Emperor*’ in that both were a product of large workshops and both were employed for ritual functions.

Rawson has re-worked the theory of agency under a rational and realistic scheme “...the different interpretations of where the agency lies depend intimately on the nature of the viewers’ perception of cause and causality.” Moreover, she constructively suggests that there are three levels of the world, or three worlds: the everyday world, the institutional world, and the conceptual world within which an object was made and which are served by the object or images. Further Rawson indicates that each world has the same three components: a physical presence, a social structure, and a set of beliefs. This theory is helpful in enabling us to examine in detail the ways in which the objects in a tomb may have been thought to work, that is to have agency.¹⁸⁹

To decode the phenomenon of employing Tang *sancai* as a popular tomb object, and to understand the agency of Tang *sancai*, I shall elaborate on the discussion based on the Three Levels of The World¹⁹⁰ proposed by Rawson.

¹⁸⁸ Rawson made her argument on the basis of Chinese ritual painting. More details in Rawson, 2007b, pp. 98-99.

¹⁸⁹ Rawson, 2007b, p. 100.

¹⁹⁰ “Level one is what we might call the everyday world. The everyday life of any individual in any society has a physical side, in which the person lives in a structure and consumes certain food and wears certain clothing. That person inevitably also has a social context, a group of people with whom he spends his time and a set of beliefs current in an everyday context...In any complex society, and possibly in all societies, there is an institutional world, that is, level two. This level, likewise, can be seen as having three broad components. First of all the institution has a physical presence with its organizational roles and people filling those roles – emperors, ministers, magistrates. It also has a social structure by which the roles are related to one another and to the population of the society. In addition, the institution is underpinned by a set of beliefs...The third

Level one is the everyday world. Two aspects of agency are provided by Tang *sancai*: they are employed by and act on the dead; but they also were made by a society who deemed them to have agency for the dead. In Rawson's terms, they are the creation of the social structure of the first level. To the dead, Tang *sancai* wares, either as objects or as figures, provided the tomb owner with a sumptuous life.

As mentioned above, the tomb of Princess Yongtai and of other imperial family members, were designed in the manner of the palaces which the dead occupied during their lifetime. On the wall painting at the entrance of the tomb, we see a city tower; further inside the tomb, on the wall painting, a courtyard is represented by flowers and garden rocks. Before reaching the tomb chambers there is a storage area, which is followed by the reception hall, represented by the front chamber. Finally, the rear chamber simulates the inner palace. Thus the tomb is made to resemble the dwelling of the living. This layout of the tomb suggests that the departed continues to live in the routine of his or her everyday life, as he or she has lived, but in another world – the world of afterlife.

Although these sections of the tomb could be seen by us today as a 'natural' arrangement, as I have mentioned, their organization and contents were determined by the institutions of the Tang court and governed by regulations typical of the court. Thus here we have an example of the institutional level of agency. The objects and

level is the one that has concerned us most here. I would term this level the conceptual world. To this one belong the rituals and the tombs of the Chinese, ancient and more recent." For more details, see Rawson, 2007b, pp.108-109.

the servants would function in the afterlife as determined by the institutional frameworks of the Tang. Finally, of course, as the tombs were palaces located in the afterlife, their structures and their contents had a further level of agency determined by the beliefs of the Tang elite. These tombs were deemed to provide a rich afterlife as the belief system of the time gave them the agency to do so.

We can examine the force of the belief system as providing the rationale for the agency of guardian figures. While the guards of honour were part of the institutional world and had agency as a result of the understanding of the Tang elite of the institutional system in which they lived, the guards in the form of Heavenly Kings belonged not to this institutional system but to a belief system.

2.2.1 T omb Guardians

Heavenly Kings represented a new type of tomb guardians that became popular during the Tang. The figure seen in Figure 1.19 is a type of tomb guardian formed in the shape of a creature with a human-like face and features marking a fierce stare with wide-open cruel eyes outlined by thick frowned eyebrows. The nose is curved upwards with large nostrils giving the feeling of a rough raging breath. Some show a tightly closed thick-lipped mouth, while others, with mouths open, reveal pointed, conical teeth and a large tongue. The combination of all those features was probably made to inspire awe and drive away any bad spirits.¹⁹¹ Their function seems to have

¹⁹¹ One of the discussions is about the origin of the image of tomb guardians in Tang burials. There are various origins of the figures of Heavenly Kings.views on the subject. Albert Dien explained that “the very act of

been to protect the afterlife dwellings of the departed.

Tomb Guardians, called Zhen Mu Shou 鎮墓獸 in Chinese, were another type of tomb guardians which had the same function as like Heavenly Kings. The first type of Tomb Guardian was in the form of a beast with deer horns, the face of an unknown creature, and a body made simply like a pole, decorated from top to bottom with popular motifs of the time, such as geometric patterns, “S” shaped patterns, etc. These figures represented a strong cultural feature of the Chu 楚¹⁹² (Drawing 1.12).

Tomb Guardians and Heavenly Kings were placed in front of the doors in a tomb. For example, in the tomb of Princess Yongtai, after the hallways, in the middle of the first corridor, a pair of wooden doors was mounted, marking the entrance to a passageway leading to the front chamber; in the middle of the second corridor a pair of stone doors was installed (Drawing 1.1).

Four Heavenly Kings and four Tomb Guardians were found in the tomb of Princess Yongtai: one pair of Tomb Guardians was placed on both sides of the wooden doors;

constructing the tomb was filled with potential danger since it constituted a trespass on the underworld realm.... Figures representing such exorcists were placed in the tomb to provide continuing protection.” Berthold Laufer gave several opinions on this type of clay figures. He believed that the tomb guardian statues originated from India, and became widely diffused over Tibet, Turkestan, China, and Japan. His arguments include the idea that the animal-like figures or the so-called Dharmapala, guardian deities, which were adopted by Buddhism as Yama, the God of Death. Laufer’s idea was inspired by Ziegenbalg, who wrote *Genealogy of the South-Indian Gods* in 1713. Ziegenbalg explained that Yama is represented as being quite black, with a horrible face, a crown on his head, and altogether surrounded by fire. C. Hentze argues that it would be a mistake to conclude that the same deity is represented wherever these demons appear. He extended his discussion to assume that the malignant spirits are local genii of the place where the grave was dug and in that case their duty, as tutelary gods of the region, is to protect the tombs. Tan Danjong claimed that the tomb guardian is a beast which the ancient Chinese created by inspiration from their religious beliefs and imagination. R. L. Hobson takes our imagination farther. He suggested that it is highly probable that the genial monster sphinx-like creature is an idea that came from a western Asiatic source.

¹⁹² The earliest Tomb Guardian can be traced to the excavation of the Chu tomb 楚墓 in Yutaishan 雨臺山, Hubei 湖北 province, see *KG*, 1980, 5, pp. 391-402. Tomb Guardian started to be popular in the Han tombs. Different forms and images have been found in different areas.

as well as one pair of Heavenly Kings; one Tomb Guardian was found in front of the stone doors, and one at the entrance of the front chamber. From the archaeological excavation in other Tang tombs, we learnt that normally Heavenly Kings were placed on each side of a gate behind Tomb Guardians. In the case of Princess Yongtai's tomb, it seems that the Tomb Guardian found at the entrance of the front chamber was perhaps displaced by tomb thieves, as it is unlikely that it was positioned there.¹⁹³ The Heavenly Kings and Tomb Guardians found in Princess Yongtai's tomb were large painted pottery figures, respectively 134 cm high and 105.5 cm high.

We have no idea exactly when the Heavenly Kings were introduced into the burial custom in the Tang, but they were certainly the consequence of beliefs in that period. Belief systems were reinforced through shapes and decorative motifs of objects. These figures were modeled on the Buddhist Guardian Kings¹⁹⁴ of the Buddhist

¹⁹³ The archaeology report did not give clear information on how the Heavenly Kings were placed in the tomb of Princess Yongtai, but simply mentioned that they were found at the same places as the Tomb Guardians. The report said that among the four Tomb Guardians and four Heavenly Kings, there was only one of each that was possible to restore; the rest were broken in pieces that were hard to assemble. Thus it could not be determined that Heavenly Kings could be in the same places as Tomb Guardians.

¹⁹⁴ Some scholars suggest that, as a notion of protectors of religion, it comes from India. See Laufer 1914, pp.292-304.; Tan Danjiong, 1980, pp 29-34., Hobson, 1915, p. 36. Indeed, Heavenly Kings as seen in the tombs look quite the same as the Guardian Kings, or protectors, of the four world regions, also called the four Lokapalas (Figure 1.20, Figure 1.21). These protectors of Buddhism can be seen in wall paintings or sculptures at the entrance of Buddhist Temples. They are all represented in warrior guise, heavily armed from head to foot. Both are well represented in the silk banner paintings in Dunhuang 敦煌, as shown in Figure 1.20 and Figure 1.21 portraying the popular Buddha images of the Tang. See Whitfield and Farrer, 1990, pp. 9-21. Dunhuang 敦煌, is one of the largest Buddhist cave-shrines which were carved from the gravel conglomerate of the escarpment in Gansu province 甘肅省. The earliest recorded carving is in AD366. Every dynasty has continued the carving and it lasted down to the Yuan dynasty (AD1279-AD1368) and even to the Qing dynasty 清代 (AD 1644 –AD 1911). During the time of the Tang, Dunhuang was a Buddhist pilgrimage centre. In Figure 1.20, the Regent of the South, with a similar gesture as the Tang *sancai* Heavenly King in Figure 1.22, stands on the demon, while in Figure 1.21, the Regent of the West, with both hands holding a sword pointing towards the ground, has the same posture as the Heavenly King in Figure 1.23. Hasebe did not dare to claim that Heavenly King images were directly influenced by Buddhist sculptures, although he indeed acknowledged that the figures immediately recall Japanese Buddhist images, like the guardian kings or divine warriors, Tenno and Shinsho. The Tempyo period, in particular the Shitsukongoshin of the Hokkedo and the four Guardian Kings in the Kaidanin, both of Todaiji, closely resemble the Tang three-colour glazed ware divine warriors and have no direct relationship with the Buddhas. Such Buddhist motifs as lotus flowers nonetheless often appear in the designs of craft objects. Hasebe, 1982, plate 22.

pantheon.¹⁹⁵ This association probably strengthens the sense that they would protect the tomb occupant. The suggestion is supported by a find in the excavation in the crypt of a Buddhist temple, the Holy Buddha Relics Pagoda in Yong'an temple 永安寺, in Tian Shui 天水, Gan Su province 甘肅省 (Figure 1.24). In this excavation two pottery guardian figures of protectors were unearthed, one stepping with its left foot on the shoulder of a prostrate positioned demon, its right foot on the rump of the beast, the other standing on a face-up positioned demon, one foot on its breast, the other foot trampling on its bended legs. The gesture of these two figures resembles those of the Buddhist Heavenly Kings which is what no doubt they were intended to be. Moreover, these figures in the Gansu crypt are very like those employed in tombs. These two pottery figures, with heights of 55 and 62 cm respectively, are of the same size as those of Heavenly Kings found in tombs and provide evidence that the images of Heavenly Kings are inspired by Buddhist sculptures of that time.

Rawson argues that "... the artifacts in such a tomb cannot alone and without a complex intellectual framework make possible, be agents for, such a complex range of outcomes."¹⁹⁶ Rawson adds: "The third level is the one that has concerned us most here. I would term this level the conceptual world. To this one belong the rituals and the tombs of the Chinese, ancient and more recent... for many centuries and in most corners of the globe, people made artifacts with a high degree of skill

¹⁹⁵ There are Four Guardian Kings, Dhritarāṣṭra, Regent of the East; Virūdhaka, Regent of the South; Virūpākṣa, Regent of the West; Vaiśravaṇa, Regent of the North, on each side of the silver casket which was part of a set that contained Sakyamuni's holy fingerbone relic which was unearthed in Famen temple 法門寺. Famen Temple is located 120 kilometres northwest of Xi'an. The temple was built during the Han dynasty and was named King Asoka Temple. The temple was expanded in size in AD 558. The first emperor of the Tang, Emperor Gaozu, renamed it Famen Temple in AD 615. In 1987, Sakyamuni's fingerbone holy relic was unearthed in the crypt of the stupa in Famen Temple.

¹⁹⁶ Rawson, 2007b, p. 108.

primarily for religious or political functions, many of them with reference to the supernatural. Within this level too are social relationships of those who participate and those who do not. And above all, the paintings and the tombs we have discussed are underpinned by beliefs.”¹⁹⁷

During the end of the 7th century and the first half of the 8th century, the Tang had well established their political power, social structure and administration. Several economic policies have pushed economic growth spectacularly. The population doubled, the Silk Road brought wealth and information to the country, and printing led to a great increase of books and documents that helped the level of literacy to rise and information to spread in a faster and more accurate way. “Buddhism became a fully accepted religion that penetrated deep into ordinary life.”¹⁹⁸ Religions enjoyed their broadest freedom of practice. The upsurge in beliefs reached its climax in the year AD 873,¹⁹⁹ when the Buddha Holy Relics were taken out from the Famen Temple 法門寺 and solemnly moved to a place of worship in the Tang palace. The procession transporting the holy relics was a spectacular event, with myriads of banners and guard of honour in full regalia leading the march. Officials, court family members and the public with all kinds of offerings in hand crowded the road,

¹⁹⁷ Rawson, 2007b, p.109.

¹⁹⁸ Ebrey and Gregory further argue:” New cults and sects appeared and flourished. Chang’an became the dominant force within institutional Buddhism; Celestial Heart and Thunder Rites teachings gained prominence within Taoism; local gods such as Wen Chang came to be worshiped all over the country; and office-holding gods, such as the gods of city walls, became a common feature of the popular pantheon. Even Neo-Confucianism, often thought of simply as an intellectual movement, was in many ways a new sect, in which followers were asked to alter fundamentally their patterns of daily life and even worship at shrines to Confucian heroes.” More discussion see Ebrey and Gregory, 1993, p.ix.

¹⁹⁹ In the fourteenth year of Emperor Yizong's 懿宗 reign, corresponding to the year AD 873, the Tang court held the seventh worshipping ceremony of Buddha Relics, and this was the last time that the Tang had such a ceremony. The other six worshipping events are: the first in AD 631 during the reign of Emperor Taizong; the second in AD 659 during the reign of Emperor Gaozong; the third in AD 704 under the rule of Empress Wu Zetai; the fourth in AD 778 during the reign of Emperor Suzong; the fifth in AD 790 under Emperor Dezong; and the sixth in AD 819 under Emperor Xianzong.

which was about 300 *li* 里 long from the temple to the Palace (Note 1.4) as recorded in the *Jizhi Tongjian* 資治通鑒.²⁰⁰ The remarkably respectful attitude of the Emperor towards the Buddha had a great impact on his people and on the social ideology of the time. The Buddhist belief adopted and promoted by the Emperor influenced the mainstream of the society. The use of the guardian and Heavenly King was thus underpinned by the beliefs of the Tang era. Within the framework of the Tang belief, the Heavenly Kings were brought to the underground palaces as an image of the Buddhist protectors.

2.2.2 Lavish Burials

The Tang imperial burial ceremonies were made in a very grand manner. For a hundred and eighty-seven years,²⁰¹ large numbers of *sancai* wares were deployed as part of the Imperial burial system. The nearest we can get to thinking about the cost of *sancai* wares is to consider the costs of a whole. A popular novel of the Tang, the Tale of Li Wa 李娃傳,²⁰² written by Bai Xingjian 白行簡²⁰³ in the beginning of the eighth century when Tang *sancai* production was at its peak, provides us with some knowledge about funeral economy of that time. It describes in extreme detail the performance of a burial ceremony in a noble family.

²⁰⁰ *Jizhi Tongjian* 資治通鑒 (Comprehensive Mirror to Aid in Government) was compiled by Sima Guang 司馬光 (AD 1019-AD 1086), who was a famous politician, historian and prose writer of the Song dynasty. *Jizhi tongjian* recorded, in 294 volumes, a history of China from 403 BC till AD 959. The compilation time lasted nineteen years.

²⁰¹ See Introduction of this thesis, p. 2.

²⁰² It is a story about a young talented scholar who, on his way to take his examination, fell in love with a woman of little virtue. He followed her, was cheated, missed his exams, gave up a bright future, and then became a funeral performer. For details, see Dudbridge, 1983.

²⁰³ Bai Xingjian 白行簡 (AD776-AD826).

In one part of the Tale of Li Wa, as narrated in Note 1.5, the author describes the lavish funeral staging that was performed during the high Tang period for a noble family member:

“Men and women flocked together in a huge assembly, with numbers reaching tens of thousands - upon which the ward officers notified the police service, which reported the matter to the Metropolitan Prefect. People from all parts went rushing to the scene. ‘There were no dwellers left in the lanes.’”

This illustrates how much an important funeral ceremony attracted people. The staging of the funeral was organized and conducted by professionals who ensured a dramatic and grandiose spectacle. The story as recounted in the said novel reveals that the crucial part of the burial ritual was the moment when the coffin was to be carried towards the burial place. Huge sums of money were spent on the event by the family of the deceased in the customary expression of filial duty and affection.

“Now there were two firms firing out funeral equipment in keen competition with one another. At the firm on the east side the carriages and hearses were all fine and splendid, hardly to be watched, but the dirge-singers were weaker. When the head of this east-side firm learned that the young scholar was an excellent performer he raised 20,000 cash and made a bid to engage him.”²⁰⁴

Although there is no explicit mention of the cost that such an event involved, two figures in The Tale of Li Wa give a clue. In the first instance, we read that

“When the head of this east-side firm learned that the young scholar was an excellent performer, he raised 20,000 cash and made a bid to engage him”.

The second figure appears in the text when two funeral firms wanted to compete:

“Let us both hold a display in Gate-of-Heaven Street of the equipment we have for hire, to show which is better. And shall we agree that the loser forfeits a sum of 50,000 cash to pay for the food and drink?”

²⁰⁴ Translation after Dudbridge 1983.

What do 20,000 or 50,000 represent in value at that time? In the year AD 801, one case of rice cost 150. Therefore 50,000 would buy 333 cases of rice, a quantity that could nourish several families for a whole year. One can then imagine that the cost of organizing an entire funeral event would be extremely high and affordable only to the wealthy and nobles.

A protest by a Minister of the City Bureau in AD 712 recorded in a Tang text gives a picture of the wealth squandered on ostentatious burials:

“Recently nobilities and officials compete [with each other] for ostentatious burials. Figures of men and horses were carved and decorated as if alive, just for showing off to the people in the streets. [They] do not perform ritual offerings from the heart. Moreover, [they] compete with each other [for very sumptuous burial performances], ruining all their assets and pouring out all their money. This popular custom is followed even by ordinary people.”
近者王公百官竟爲厚葬，偶人像馬雕飾如生，徒以炫耀路人，本不因心致禮，更相煽動，破產傾資。風俗流行，遂下兼士庶。²⁰⁵

Despite several regulations banning lavish burials for ordinary people, there was a policy of encouraging imperial members and officials to join the attendant tombs of the emperors. The number of burial objects to be used was even officially given:

“Every burial was awarded a number of Mingqi 明器: ninety Mingqi objects to officials above the Third Rank, sixty Mingqi objects to those above the Fifth Rank, Forty Mingqi objects to those above the Ninth Rank. Dangkuang 當壙,²⁰⁶ Dangye 當野,²⁰⁷ Zuming 祖明,²⁰⁸ Dizhou 地軸,²⁰⁹ Danma

²⁰⁵ *Tang Huiyao: Zang* 唐會要·葬. *Tang Huiyao: Funeral. juan.* 45, p. 1958.

²⁰⁶ Dangkuang 當壙 is the name of a Taoist protecting spirit. Dangkuang appears in the form of a human.

²⁰⁷ Dangye 當野 is the name of a Taoist protecting spirit. Dangye appears in the form of a human.

²⁰⁸ Zuming 祖明, is the name of the ritual road spirit. Daoism Dictionary, 1995, p. 528. Zuming appears in the

誕馬,²¹⁰ Ouren 偶人,²¹¹ each height of one *chi* 尺; other musicians and attendant type, official gowns or leisure dresses were bestowed according to the numbers received while alive. Those Mingqi are made of pottery or wood, the heights are all of seven *cun* 寸: “凡喪葬, 則供其明器之屬……三品以上九十事, 五品以上六十事, 九品以上四十事。當壙, 當野、祖明。地軸、誕馬。偶人其高各一尺。其餘音聲隊與童僕之屬, 威儀玩服, 各視生之品秩所有, 以瓦木爲之, 其長率七寸。”²¹²

It seems, therefore, that there was a conflict between the needs of official funeral pomp and that of preventing the squandering of wealth in the society. Archaeological excavations suggest that none of the elite tombs had followed the recommendations of frugal burials. Numerous burial objects were unearthed: in the tomb of Princess Yongtai, as mentioned earlier, despite the looting, some 1250 objects were found; from the tomb of Prince Lixian (Emperor Rang), although it had been looted already twenty years after the burial and again several times afterwards, when the official excavation took place, over 900 items still remained. In their strong belief in afterlife at that time, the Chinese could not yield to the implementation of rules or recommendations of an economical burial. On the contrary, agency was given to the camels and foreign-looking figures to continue the supply of exotic goods to the deceased in the same way they were provided to them during their lifetime by the Silk Road merchants.

form of a beast.

²⁰⁹ Dizhou 地軸, is the name of a spirit in the form of a snake that lies under the seat of the God Zhenwu 真武 who is the deity that rules the north. Daoism Dictionary, 1993, p. 433. Dizhou appears in the form of a beast.

²¹⁰ Danma 誕馬 is a term which refers to a horse without a saddle. Cheng Dachang 程大昌 (AD 1123-AD 1195) explained in his work *Yan Fan Lu Danma* 演繁露·誕馬, that Danma, appearing in the Lubo painting of Xuanhe (AD 1119-AD 1129), was decorated with a piece of square coloured silk on its bare back 宣和 鹵簿圖有誕馬。其制用色帛周裹一方氈蓋覆馬脊, 更不施鞍。

²¹¹ Ouren 偶人 is a term that addresses the kind of figures used for burial.

²¹² Tang Liu Dian, *Zhen Guan Shu*, 唐六典·甄官署, *juan.* 23, pp. 597-598.

2.2.3 Camels and foreign-looking figures²¹³

The large number of foreign elements that can be observed in Tang *sancai* figures is striking. The influence of these elements had its source in the caravans heading towards China with their loads of gold and other precious metals, ivory, precious stones, glass, flowers, plants, fur, feather, birds, animals and even special talented people to offer to the Chinese emperors. “Camels came as presents to the throne, as a tribute, as commodities, and as war booty.camels were enumerated among things of the greatest worth, like gold, silver, virgins, and slaves, and they appeared in omen lore and poetry as beneficent and noble animals.”²¹⁴ Grooms of these camels²¹⁵ were mainly Central Asians who travelled the Silk Road. During the Tang era, the Sogdians²¹⁶ became the main traders with a well-established network along the Silk Road. Extensive research has been carried out by scholars on the life of the Sogdians in China, prior to and during the Tang dynasty, and their involvement in the Silk Road.²¹⁷

By the 6th century, the Sogdians community was already well established in northern

²¹³ Most of the foreign-looking figures, in the appearance of merchants or grooms, were placed with camels or horses together in the tomb. More details in Sui Tang Mu 1980. For the purpose of my discussion in this section on the original setting of tomb objects, foreign-looking figures have been grouped within the category of camels and horses. Other types of figures will be discussed separately further on in this chapter.

²¹⁴ Schafer has made a significant research on the treasures that have been brought into China through the Silk Road. See Schafer, 1963.

²¹⁵ An early camel image used as a tomb object is a pottery tomb bas-relief of drummers on a camel from the Han dynasty (AD25 - AD220), which is in the collection of the Xindu County 新都縣, Sichuan 四川, Xindu County Cultural Bureau 四川省文物局. See Knauffer 1998. Not much information has been given on this excavation. The Silk Road trade started in the Han dynasty. Although camels had a significant role in this trade, they were not used as a popular image for decoration at that time.

²¹⁶ A group of people came from Mount Zeravshan, in today's Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. They are well-known in the inland Silk Road trade. The biggest emigration into China took place between the fifth and sixth centuries.

²¹⁷ Luo Feng has made a significant research on recent archaeological excavations of foreign featured finds in Chinese and non-Chinese tombs in China. His research exposes that the Sogdian community was one of the largest and most successful in the Tang, in terms of social position, commerce and close contact with the court. A large number of Sogdians lived in Chang'an. For details see Luo Feng 2004; For more discussion on Sogdians, see Dien, 2007, p. 284; Hansen 1998, pp. 1-11; Hansen, 2005.

China.²¹⁸ The two Sogdian tombs (the tomb of An Qie 安伽,²¹⁹ who died in AD 579 and was buried 3.5 kilometres east of Chang'an, and the tomb of Yu Hong 虞弘,²²⁰ who was buried in AD 592 in Jinyuan 晉源 area, Taiyuan, Shanxi province, are evidence that Sogdians have held official posts²²¹ in the courts of the North Qi dynasty 北齊 (AD 550-AD 577) and of the Sui dynasty (AD 581-AD 618AD). Of all the foreigners who came to China and lived there for trade, or on diplomatic or religious missions, Sogdians were those who established the closest relationships with the Tang court, where some of them held official posts.²²² It is likely that some of the foreign-looking figures and their camels probably represented the Sogdians.²²³

Many types of Tang *sancai* and unglazed pottery camels and foreign-looking figures were unearthed. Some camels carry heavy goods on their back; some have grooms sitting on their back or standing next to them. In Du Fu's poem, "*Western boys have power over camels* 胡兒制駱駝,"²²⁴ hints at the reason why the majority of grooms seem to be foreign. Being fast and dependable, camels were also used as transportation means in addition to horses. They were assigned, especially the white ones, to officials named "Emissaries of the Bright Camels 明駱使" for emergencies on state business, and in particular to carry important news from the frontiers.²²⁵

²¹⁸ In the areas of Wuwei 武威, Pingliang 平涼, Gansu province 甘肅省.

²¹⁹ *WW* 2001, 1, AQ, pp. 4-26.

²²⁰ *WW* 2001, 1, YH, pp. 27-52.

²²¹ An Qie was the Sabao 薩保 at the court of the North Qi dynasty. Yu Hong was the Sabao at the court of the North Zhou dynasty 北周 (AD 557-581). Yu Hong also held different official posts in the courts of the North Qi and the Sui dynasties. Sabao are officials who were responsible for foreigners living in China. The title of Sabao corresponded to a rank between the fifth and the ninth in the hierarchy of court officials.

²²² The Sogdians held positions of Sabao.

²²³ Mahler has made a great study on the westerners among the figurines of the T'ang dynasty of China. See Mahler, 1959.

²²⁴ From the poem, *Yu Mu* 寓目, of Du Fu 杜甫 (AD 712 - AD 770).

²²⁵ Schafter, 1963, p. 71.

Therefore, camel figures, large or small, with glaze or without, carrying goods or ready for a ride, all convey the same meaning, which is the continuance of duties in their service to nobles, the means of bringing to their owners wealth, exotic goods, and in general the perpetuation, after death, of the same kind of living enjoyed during the lifetime of the deceased. Foreign-looking individuals, because of the foreigners' connection to the camel, whether it was for trade or for domestication of the animal, were popular tomb figures. Considering Chinese beliefs of afterlife, it is an evident conclusion, therefore, that both the camel and the foreign-looking figure were of an understandable presence in the tombs of Chinese imperial family members and elite of the Chinese society.

2.2.4 Utensil -shaped Tang *sancai* wares

In the last decades, a great number of sophisticated and skillfully produced Tang *sancai* utensils were unearthed. They are decorated with the usual bright lead glaze in different colours, mainly in yellow, white and brown. Tang *sancai* in utensil shapes, like dishes, bowls, pots, tea sets, etc., as household objects, like candle holders, treasure boxes and so forth, as well as horses, camels, grooms, tomb guardians, male and female attendants and even figures of officials – all these were models or replicas, taken from the real living world.

Here I shall concentrate on the large number of Tang *sancai* wares that imitated metal works. Figure 1.25 shows the ways in which Tang *sancai* was used to replicate

vessels of precious metals, like gold and silver, and also copper.

The following text perhaps could provide one of the possible reasons to the popularity of producing *sancai* in the form of metal works. *Jiu Tang Shu* 舊唐書 recorded that Yu Shinan 虞世南 (AD 558-AD 638) Director of the Palace Library 秘書監, and Hongwenguan Xueshi 宏文館學士, Academician, assigned to give special counsel and assist in drafting imperial pronouncements, discussed with Emperor Taizong the location of the Emperor's tomb:

“When the day comes, engrave on a stela on the side of the Ling (imperial tomb) the named mountains, big or small, high or low; write down in the ritual text that tomb objects needed [for burial] are all made of pottery or wood; prohibit the use of gold, silver, bronze and iron; this is to be obeyed by ten thousands of generations of descendants.” 事竟之日刻石於陵側明丘封大小高下之式明器所須皆以瓦木合於禮文一不得用金銀銅鐵使萬代子孫並皆遵奉。²²⁶

The idea may have taken its roots with a concern about possible tomb looting.

How did a ceramic object take the aspect of one made from metal works? Apart from its shaping, Tang *sancai* allows different choices of colour combinations giving the ceramic a glitter similar to that of precious metal works. The combination of Tang *sancai* colours gives a dimension to an object that allows the imitated work to look more real and more appealing compared to a monochrome ceramic. What was the purpose for Tang *sancai* to imitate a metal work? *Sancai* as a less valuable material replaced the finer metal perhaps to comply with the requirements to restrict the burial of gold and silver.

²²⁶ *Jiu Tang Shu* 舊唐書, Shibu 史部, *juan.72*. p.2569.

For some utensil-shaped items, like dishes, cups, pots, there is a confusion about their classification: some scholars view them as objects of everyday use that were buried with the deceased, while others hold the opinion that these utensil-shaped Tang *sancai* wares were produced to serve only as tomb objects. My hypothesis is that the utensil-shaped Tang *sancai* wares were produced for the accompaniment of the deceased and also as containers for ritual offerings.²²⁷ They were not produced as daily wares for drinking and eating for the living.

Scholars working on archaeological reports have generally relied on a simple division between ritual objects and items of everyday use. In the first category they place ancient bronze vessels of the Shang and Zhou and certain types of jade items. Traditionally, archaeologists do not consider in detail the functions of the many different categories of ceramics they excavate. These are generally all lumped together as everyday items. Hence the *sancai* utensils are generally so classified. But there are many pieces where it does not seem to be correct to regard them as simply everyday pieces. For example, the group of ewers in Figure 1.26, which were excavated in the Tang *sancai* kiln of Gongyi, have three-coloured glazes running down at half or two-thirds of their body and all have one handle with a petal-shaped mouth. Most importantly, their height is of only 5.2 cm to 9.7 cm. Their obvious small size does not, therefore, support the statement that they were for everyday use.

²²⁷ Tang *sancai* utensil-shaped wares were in fact excavated at the ruins of palaces and temple sites, but this is not evidence that they have been used in every day life. Their purpose seems likely to have been for ritual offerings. I will examine and discuss this subject in detail in Chapter Two: Tang *sancai* found in China other than tombs. I shall develop my argument on the function of Tang *sancai* utensil-shaped wares by looking at the finds in the ruins of the palaces and temples.

They cannot be considered either as water-pots²²⁸ for a scholar's desk, nor as toys.²²⁹

Furthermore, the clay used for Tang *sancai* objects is a kind of biscuit body which does not hold water.²³⁰ In fact, the clay is porcelain type clay. But it is not fired at a sufficiently high temperature to be able to hold water.

To support my argument further, I shall look at another set of Tang *sancai* objects.

Figure 1.27 shows a set of tea or perhaps wine cups consisting of three different components.²³¹ This *sancai* glazed set has an overall height of 11.5 cm. The first layer is a round tray, 24.5 cm in diameter with a three-coloured glaze on the outer side only; the second layer consists of a stem cup, also glazed on the outside only, and is placed in the centre of the tray, together with six small rimmed bowls, the inner side of which is fully glazed; the third layer is a single-handled cup placed on top of the stem cup, glazed all over, with the exception of its foot-ring. Next to the cup a small kneeling figurine, fully decorated in *sancai*, is holding an animal-shaped water container bag in its hands. (Similar figures exist in larger sizes, with a height of 37.2 cm as in Figure 1.28). The whole set shows that a tea ceremony or wine drinking party is taking place; the little figurine is ready to fill the big cup which will be used for pouring into the six small bowls. The size and the composition of this set of

²²⁸ The water pot is a small water container which was used by scholars to pour water on the ink-stone to dilute it. The ewers are so rough that scholars would not give them any attention, not to mention that their biscuit body is porous and cannot hold water, unlike other everyday use ceramic wares that have a solid and fired body with a full and smooth glaze impermeable to liquids.

²²⁹ Their outer side was too rough.

²³⁰ There are two types of clays that have been used for producing Tang *sancai*: white clay and yellowish loessic clay. The body of this group of ewers was made of loessic clay, which bears a low firing temperature, and was used for tomb objects and tiles. In fact, the clay is porcelain type clay, as Kerr and Wood conclude in their significant research on Chinese ceramic and technology. For more details, see Kerr and Wood, 2004, pp. 148-183.

²³¹ In 1976, a set of cups was excavated in Zhouzhai village 周寨村, Mengjin Chaoyang county 孟津朝陽鄉, Luoyang, Henan province, and is currently collected in the Luoyang Museum. There is no archaeological report published on this find, other than the exhibition catalogue illustrations. See Tokyo National Museum 1998, Plate 62, p. 112.

containers imply that they are miniature utensils and not a set of tea or wine cups for use in everyday life.

From such examples, I argue that the Tang *sancai* utensil-shaped objects found in tombs were meant, in fact, to mimic the everyday household materials and that they were made expressly to accompany the dead in their tomb. They were not the utensils used daily by the living and which were then interred along with the deceased. It would seem that the coloured surface that reflected the light on *sancai* pieces imitating precious metal work were to provide the deceased with an afterlife of luxury.

3. Conclusion

I shall sum up here the observations and arguments on three main issues which are the object of this chapter: first, the people who used Tang *sancai*; second, the use of Tang *sancai*; third, the agency of Tang *sancai* and the purpose that led to its use.

On the first issue, the examination of the location and status of the tombs that contained Tang *sancai* ware in China, in seven provinces (Shaanxi, Henan, Shanxi, Hebei, Jilin, Huan, Hubei) and in the city of Beijing, demonstrate that Tang *sancai* tomb objects were found only in the tombs of imperial family members, members of the elite and noble families and, in general, high-ranking officials. Tombs that contained Tang *sancai* ware in Shaanxi province are located mainly in the burial land

allotted by the Tang court. The location of these tombs complied with the rules of two imperial decrees, which laid down the hierarchical burial system of the Tang and prescribed the rules on the usage of burial land for emperors' tombs and attendants' tombs. In tombs which were not in the imperial burial land in Shaanxi province or in other provinces, epitaphs or tomb features indicated that the tomb occupant belonged to the elite of the Tang. In Hebei province, the fact that only one tomb was found containing *sancai* ware in the place where one of the Tang *sancai* kilns, the Neiqiu kiln 内丘窯, is located demonstrates significantly that ordinary people were not allowed to use Tang *sancai* objects for burials. Indeed, up to now, we have no archaeological evidence to suggest that Tang *sancai* ware was also used by ordinary people. Considering all the above, it is almost certain that Tang *sancai* ware was used exclusively by imperial family members and the Tang elite.

On the second issue, Tang *sancai* objects were produced to meet the demand of lavish burials and were not intended for everyday life. Due to their brilliant appearance as a result of different lead-glaze colour combinations and to their potential to imitate precious metal works which were banned for burials, as well as to the agency given by certain figures like camels and foreign-looking figures, Tang *sancai* has become widely and diligently used as tomb objects. The findings of shards in places other than tombs, like at the ruins of imperial Tang palaces and temples, shall be used to support my hypothesis that utensil-shaped Tang *sancai* objects served also for rituals and religious offerings, but not for food and drink in everyday life.

On the third issue, the large number and different types of Tang *sancai* objects that were unearthed in tombs could be considered to reflect the customs and belief systems that have evolved during the Tang. The choice of these objects as well as their setting in the tombs reveal that Tang *sancai*, which has served for burial practices during the last 186 years out of the three centuries of the Tang's reign, had a level of agency determined by the beliefs of the Tang elite. Thus Tang *sancai* burial items were produced to accompany the deceased of noble families and provide for them a rich afterlife in their underground palaces – a doubtless substantiation of the force of the belief system as a basis for the practice.

Chapter Two

Tang *sancai* found in China at sites other than tombs

In this chapter, I shall look at the Tang *sancai* wares that have been found in sites other than tombs and examine the archaeological evidence that exists for the use of *sancai* outside the context of tombs. I shall study the *sancai* ware and architectural fragments discovered in the ruins of temple and imperial court sites, including shards of cups and pots, as well as architectural material, to show that Tang *sancai* wares were employed for purposes other than tomb objects.

In this respect, I shall survey the areas where these shards have been found to determine whether they were locations for shrines or for more domestic areas in palaces. Because these finds are rather restricted, and very few identifiable objects have ever been found, I shall use evidence of the functions of *sancai* in Japan in the Nara period (AD 710-AD 794) and under the Liao (AD 907-AD 1125) and Song (AD 960-AD 1127) dynasties to strengthen my argument that *sancai* was especially connected with Imperial palaces and with temple sites. This will lead me to appraise whether Tang *sancai* wares may have also served as utensils for daily use.

Tang *sancai* as architectural material has been little discussed. Recent excavations show that Tang *sancai* as architectural material was widely employed for

imperial buildings, such as palaces and temples. Similar *sancai* architectural material was also excavated at the palace of Bohai State 渤海國 in Heilongjiang province 黑龍江. However, this type of lead-glazed architectural material is similar in decorative style but different in appearance for the architectural items that were produced in central China.

During the last decade, Tang *sancai* objects were also found in the ruins of the Tang cities of Chang'an 長安 (at the Taipingfang site 太平坊) and in Yangzhou 揚州 (Map 2.1)²³². Yangzhou 揚州 was one of the flourishing cities during the Tang as well as one of the ports for imports and exports. I shall examine the reasons for the export of Tang *sancai* ware.²³³

1. Shards found in the ruins of imperial buildings

Table 1.2 shows the finds of shards of Tang *sancai* ware at Tang imperial buildings including palaces and temples, such as:

- the Jiucheng Palace or Jiuchenggong 九成宮, which was constructed over the period from AD 593 to AD 595 in the Sui dynasty and located outside Chang'an, the capital of the Sui, in Shaanxi province;

²³² Yangzhou 揚州 was one of the important commercial and cultural centres during the Tang era. It was also one of the ports during the Tang for the import and export trade.

²³³ This thesis will not go further into the usage of exported Tang *sancai* wares in the Middle East countries, but will be limited to the discussion on the function of utensil-shaped Tang *sancai* wares in China.

- the Daming Palace 大明宮²³⁴ at Taiyechi 太液池 in Xi'an, Shan'xi Province, which was located in the northeast of Chang'an city, the capital, and represented one of the three main palace architectural complexes of the Tang;²³⁵
- the Shangyang Palace 上陽宮 in Luoyang 洛陽, Henan province, where Emperor Gaozong and Empress Wu Zetian lived and ruled China in the later years of Emperor Gaozong's reign,²³⁶ and where Empress Wu Zetian ended her life;
- the imperial Buddhist Jianfu Temple 薦福寺 in Xi'an, Shan'xi province, which was one of the three most important temples where the translation of Buddhist scriptures took place during the Tang.²³⁷

²³⁴ The initial idea of building the Daming Palace came from Emperor Taizong 太宗. Emperor Taizong wanted to build a summer palace for his father, Emperor Gaozu 高祖, who abdicated in his favour. The construction work started in AD 634 but stopped in the following year, AD 635. The site remained unfinished till AD 662 when the third emperor of the Tang, Emperor Gaozong 高宗, gave the order to rebuild the Daming Palace. Emperor Gaozong moved in the Daming Palace to govern China the same year that the construction was completed, in AD 663. From then on, the successive emperors of the Tang all governed China from the Daming Palace. When it was built, the Daming Palace was named Yong'an Palace 永安宮. It was renamed Daming Palace in the first month of AD 635. But over the years, this name has been changed several times. When Emperor Gaozong moved into the palace, he gave it the name of Penglai Palace 蓬萊宮. In AD 670, it was named Hanyuan Palace 含元殿. In AD 705, it was named Daming Palace again, and the main hall became Hanyuan Hall 含元殿. For more details see *Nittō Guhō Junrei Kōki*, 円仁 1970-1985, *The Record of a Pilgrimage to China in Search of the Law*, 入唐求法巡礼行記, written by the Japanese monk Ennin 圓仁 (AD 794-AD 864), known by his posthumous name Jikaku Daishi 慈覺大師. Ennin came to China to study Buddhism between AD 838 and AD 847. *Nittō Guhō Junrei Kōki* is a diary that recorded his daily activity while in China.

²³⁵ Two other palaces where no excavation has taken place are the Taiji Palace 太極宮, situated in the north of Chang'an, and the Xingqing Palace 興慶宮 in the east of Chang'an. These two palaces were built during the Sui dynasty.

²³⁶ *Tang Hui Yao* 唐會要 recorded that in AD 679, after the construction of Shangyang Palace was completed, Emperor Gaozong traveled to Luoyang and moved in immediately. "...till the fourth year of Yifeng, chariot headed into Luoyang, Emperor moved in there [the Shangyang Palace]." ...至儀鳳四年，車駕入洛，乃移禦之...。 *Tang Hui Yao* 唐會要, *juan.* 30.

²³⁷ The other two translation centres were the Daci'en Temple 大慈恩寺 and the Daxingshan Temple 大興善寺. The Daci'en Temple was built in AD 589 in the Sui dynasty. In AD 648, the Tang Emperor Gaozong enlarged the scale of the temple in memory of his mother Empress Wende 文德皇后 (AD 601-AD 636). The well known monk Xuanzang 玄奘 (AD 602-AD 664) was invited by Emperor Gaozong to be in charge of the translation of Buddhist scriptures in the Daci'en Temple. The Daxingshan Temple was already active as the centre of translation of Buddhist scripture in the Sui dynasty. The famous Indian monk, Narendrayasas 那連提黎耶舍 (AD 490-AD 589) came to China, translated fifty-nine Buddhist scriptures, about two hundred and seventy-eight volumes in the Daxingshan Temple. During the Tang period, the Daxingshan Temple was more active in teaching and translation.

1.1 Tang *sancai* shards of utensil-shaped wares

The Jiuchenggong 九成宮 was located about sixteen kilometres northwest of Xi'an, at an altitude of about 1100 metres, in an area covered with dense vegetation and surrounded by hills and rivers. Embedded in the mountains, the complex of palaces was linked together by corridors and pavilions. Built in AD 595 as a summer palace by Wendi 隋文帝 (AD 541-AD 604), emperor of the Sui dynasty, it was first named Renshou Palace 仁壽宮. Later, when the Tang took power, Emperor Taizong ordered the renovation of Renshou Palace in AD 631 and renamed it Jiucheng Palace. He stayed there five times. The Palace was designed so as to encompass the natural scenery, making it part of the whole complex. The mountains appeared as a background for buildings, and rivers flowed around the palaces. The splendour of these buildings became a theme for poets²³⁸ and painters of the Tang and Song dynasties. The painting, *Jiuchenggong wanshan tu* 九成宮紈扇圖, Round Fan Painting of Jiucheng Palace, by an anonymous painter of the Song dynasty, provides an imaginary reconstruction of the palace (Figure 2.1, Figure 2.2). Emperor Gaozong also wrote an essay on Jiucheng Palace, titled *Wanniangong ming* 萬年宮銘, Reminiscence of Wannian Palace.²³⁹ Wannian was the name he has given to the

²³⁸ *Yong jiuchenggong bicheng* 詠九成宮碧城 The Chant of the Green Fortress of Jiucheng Palace, by the famous Tang poet Li Shangyin 李商隱 (about AD 813-AD 858); *Chijie qi wang Jiuchenggong bishu yingjiao* 敕借岐王九成宮避暑應教, Impressions of Jiucheng Palace where Prince Qi prevents Summer Heat for the Emperor, by poet Wang Wei's 王維 (AD 701-AD 761).

²³⁹ *Wanniangong ming* 萬年宮銘, is a poem composed by Emperor Gaozong in AD 654 inspired by the landscape and architecture of the Jiucheng Palace. He described the landscape as: "Looking at Jianhua 剪華 in the east, thousands trees link their shades together; looking at Longban 隴阪 in the west, rivers flow in various directions; looking at Tuyuan 荼原 in the south, winds associate with clouds; looking at Shizhu 石柱 in the north, plain and mountains encompass each other. Outstanding high peaks follow the rosy clouds; sharp turning roads swerve nine curves in the heart of the clouds; folded gully and calm shades sweep away heat wind and turn it to chill; ranges of mountains set summer down. They conceal summer scenes and reveal winter cold, as if stones and mountains have never been touched; flying roofs are constructed on wonderful nature, fly over emptiness, ride on the universe and raise the purple palace far into the air; red buildings are hundred *ren* 仞 high; the moon waxes and wanes in the blue hall; searching for the green pavilion over a thousand [miles]; clouds unfold and curl in the palace stairs; peaks are dressed in red brocade; clouds spread

Jiucheng Palace in AD 651. In AD 667, however, the palace recovered its old name of Jiucheng. Emperor Gaozong stayed there eight times to escape the summer heat. In AD 671, he built in the palace a new section, Taizi xingong 太子新宮, the New Prince Mansion.

From 1990 to 1994, an excavation took place at the ruins of the palace, which was referred to by archaeologists as Palace No. 37 (Figure 2.3).²⁴⁰ Two Tang *sancai* shards were excavated at the site; one is the rim of a bowl or dish, the other is the foot base of a dish (Figure 2.4).²⁴¹ The archaeological report claims that these two pieces of *sancai* shards are bright in colour. The finds included a larger number of utensil-shaped items, mainly white-glazed bowls, as well as some black-glazed bowls (Figure 2.5). Unearthed at the same site were three bronze Bodhisattva statues, in a standing posture with an A-shaped backdrop, all 8 cm high, of which one of was gilt, and the other a broken lotus-shaped bronze statue (Figure 2.6) .

The archaeological report did not give any specific information on the proximity of the shards and the Bodhisattva statues, which might have provided further evidence on the relationship between *sancai* ware and religious practices. However, the limited finds of only two pieces of *sancai* shards might suggest that *sancai* wares

out of the painted rainbow beams; spring flies over cliffs and falls on the rocks, splashing pearls around..." 東望剪華，千林結影；西瞻隴阪，派水分流；南俯茶原，風雲交映；北臨石柱，川嶽相縈。迴迴孤岑，秀三襲於霞表；斜斜危路，環九折於雲心；複澗澄陰，扇炎風而變冷；重巒潛署，韜夏景而翻寒。....未若剪石裁宮，構飛簷於迴漢；騰虛架宇，聳紫殿於遙空；百仞朱樓，月盈虧於青瑣；千尋翠閣，雲舒卷於丹墀；岫綴霞衣，點虹梁而散錦；岩飛溜帶，灑石砌而飛珠。..." The poem was carved on a stele and was placed at the site of the Palace. Jiuchenggong, 2008, pp. 94-95.

²⁴⁰ According to the report, nothing was found at the site that could provide information on the name of the palace or the exact date of the construction of this building.

²⁴¹ KG 1995, 12, p.1099, and Jiuchenggong 2008, plate 99, 8 (79, 80).

were probably not supplied as utensils for drinking and eating. Had they been provided for such a purpose, a larger quantity of *sancai* wares would have been possibly found, similar to the quantity of white-glazed wares which were used for everyday life at that time.²⁴²

There is no record in Tang texts as to whether Empress Wu Zetian, wife of Emperor Gaozong, accompanied her husband when he travelled to Jiucheng Palace. Empress Wu was a fervent believer in Buddhism and as her influence over her husband grew,²⁴³ we can assume that wherever she lived or stayed, religious shrines and altars were set up, with all fitting rituals and offerings. However, another piece of information which can be taken into account is the affection in which Emperor Gaozong held the Jiucheng Palace. Such affection is evident from the Emperor's visits to this palace, where he extended the complex by adding the New Prince Mansion, described in his essay, *Wanniangong ming*.²⁴⁴ It is probable that Emperor Gaozong, by his attachment to the Jiucheng Palace, had set up also in this summer residence all the arrangements for functions of office, dining, religious ceremonials, etc. We have no information as to whether Palace No. 37 was used as the main place

²⁴² The report mentioned that a large quantity of white-glazed shards was excavated at the site. The report did not give information as to which kiln the white-glazed wares belonged. However, during the Tang period, the white-glazed ceramics that were used by the Tang court were mainly from the *xing* kiln 邢窯.

²⁴³ Empress Wu Zetian had progressively gained more and more power and influence over her husband, Emperor Gaozong's, in whose later years, she started making decisions by herself. She became Empress after the death of her husband. Empress Wu Zetian was a strong Buddhist believer. She built Buddhist temples and had many Buddhist sculptures carved, among which are the Longmen Grottoes 龍門石窟, located in Luoyang, Henan province. Chinese Buddhism attained its highest development in the Tang era under the reign of Wu Zetian.

²⁴⁴ Emperor Gaozong's essay, *Wanniangong ming* describes the beauty of nature and the man-made sceneries that look like the place where immortals live. However, in the history of Chinese literature, a place set in beautiful natural scenery is often described, by writers and poets, with Chinese Daoist imagery. In this respect, there does not seem to be a clear difference to allow the distinction between a Daoist and a Buddhist vision of a landscape. Despite the emperor's strong belief in Buddhism, many places in a Tang imperial palace were given Taoist names, such as Penglai 蓬萊 and Taiye 太液. On the other hand, Buddhist names were used for land, such as West Pure Land 西方淨土 which is often quoted in Buddhist literature.

for religious functions; there may have been many shrines set up in different places in the palace complex.

Lake Taiyechi was located on the central line of the complex of the Daming Palace 大明宮, slightly to the north. During the reigns of Emperor Taizong (AD 626-AD 649) and Emperor Gaozong (AD 649-AD 683),²⁴⁵ the natural contours of the lake were modified and the lake reshaped into two ponds: the east pond, circular-shaped, occupying about thirty-three thousands square metres, and the west pond, in the form of an oval, covered about one hundred and forty thousand square metres. There were two small islands in the west pond: Penglai Island 蓬萊島, and another one recently discovered, so far without a name (Map 2.2).²⁴⁶

During six archaeological excavations undertaken at the site of Lake Taiyechi, between the years 2000 and 2005, shards of Tang *sancai* wares were found at four places (Map 2.2):

- at the ruins of a group of buildings that linked the north shore of Lake Taiyechi and the newly discovered island,²⁴⁷
- at the west shore of Lake Taiyechi,²⁴⁸
- at the ruins of one of the courtyards that was located between the rear main

²⁴⁵ *KG* 2005, 7, pp. 29-34.

²⁴⁶ Reports on archaeological excavations at the site of Daming Palace in 1998 announced that another island besides Penglai Island was found, which was not mentioned in Tang texts. *KG* 2003, 11, pp. 7-26. It is a tradition, from the time of Daoism, that islands in the lake of an imperial garden are named by the emperor. Penglai Island was considered the place where Daoist deities live.

²⁴⁷ *KG* 2003, 11a, pp.3-6.

²⁴⁸ *KG* 2003, 11b, pp.7-26

building of Daming Palace, Zichen Hall 紫宸殿,²⁴⁹ and the north shore of Lake Taiyechi,²⁵⁰

- at the southeast shore of Lake Taiyechi.²⁵¹

The archaeological reports do not give detailed information on the exact location where the *sancai* shards have been unearthed in the above mentioned first two locations. With respect to the first one, the report simply mentioned that the deposits, which were excavated at the gully between the northern shore of the Lake Taiyechi and the newly discovered island, consisted of randomly dispersed architectural fragments, such as stone rails, patterned bricks, tile-ends, shards of white-glazed ceramic, shards of *sancai* ware, bronze ornaments and iron nails. No information was given about the shapes of those shards. On the second location, namely at the west shore of Lake Taiyechi, the report likewise did not provide any information about the specific spot where the *sancai* shards were found. In this case, however, the report listed the shapes of the shards of *sancai* ware – ewers, bowls, pillows²⁵² and lids – without giving any illustration or information on the quantity of shards.

Important evidence about the possible relationship between Tang *sancai* ware and ritual practice was revealed in the archaeological excavations at the third and fourth locations mentioned above. In fact, a significant discovery was made at the ruins of

²⁴⁹ There were three halls situated in the central axis of the Daming Palace: the Hanyuan Hall 含元殿, which was the first in line, then the Xuanzheng Hall 宣政殿 and the Zichen Hall 紫宸殿. The Hanyuan Hall was the main building of the architectural complex of the Daming Palace.

²⁵⁰ There were a few courtyards formed by a set of corridors. The report did not give specific information as in which courtyard the *sancai* shards were excavated. *KG*, 2004, 9, pp. 3-6; *KG* 2005, 7, pp. 29-34.

²⁵¹ *KG* 2005, 12, pp. 3-6.

²⁵² More discussion on pillows will be found in the section “Pillows” in this Chapter.

one of the courtyards located between the rear main building of Daming Palace, the Zichen Hall 紫宸殿, and the north shore of Lake Taiyechi. The discovery consisted of a damaged stone elephant statue, 44 cm high and 68 cm wide, which we can argue was a Buddhist feature (Figure 2.7). A pattern of lotus flowers is finely carved on the saddle of the elephant, on the back of which a flat circular lotus seat is also carved. In the centre of this lotus seat, there is a hole which probably served as a junction for an upper statue, suggesting that the stone elephant functioned as a support or stand. The archaeological report claims that this support is the lower part of a complete Samantabhadra 普賢菩薩 statue. Together with the elephant statue, a broken part of a stone lamp-stick was excavated (Figure 2.8). These two items were found in a small courtyard of thirty square metres.

The report stated that there were five courtyards in the area between the Zichen Hall 紫宸殿 and the north shore of Lake Taiyechi, all linked by corridors. The courtyards have different sizes, the largest one being of about seventy square metres, and the smallest of about thirty square metres. At the ruins of the courtyards, a few shards of Tang *sancai* were found. The finds consist in majority of remains white-glazed ceramic bowls, dishes, pillows, boxes and ewers, with some other black-glazed and celadon-glazed wares. The report did not give any information on the shapes of the *sancai* shards to explain the objects to which they belonged. It mentioned that the courtyards located in the area between the palace and the court garden were the place where Buddhist ritual practices happened.²⁵³ Although we have no detailed

²⁵³ *KG*, 2004, 9, pp.3-6.

information about the shape of the *sancai* ware that might tell us that this ware represented containers for ritual offerings, the limited finds of *sancai* shards, as compared to the white-glazed ware used in everyday life for food and drink, suggests that Tang *sancai* was perhaps rare and highly prized. By contrast, that shards of *sancai* ware were found in places where the Tang court performed religious functions is significant evidence to suggest that a link may have existed between Tang *sancai* ware and religious practice.

The sixth and last archaeological excavation at Lake Taiyechi took place in 2005. The excavation's target was to link the previous excavation spots together in order to provide a full figure of the architectural constructions that were located at the southeast of Lake Taiyechi. The report declares that this excavation was more significant than the previous ones. Large quantities of Tang remains were unearthed. Among the major finds at the southeast shore of Lake Taiyechi were a double-headed Bodhisattva and a damaged baluster with the carving of a lion sitting on a lotus flower (Figure 2.9, Figure 2.10). Tang *sancai* shards, mainly of utensil-shaped objects and pillows,²⁵⁴ were also excavated in relatively big quantities in the same area. Unfortunately, the report was not clear about the exact spot where the *sancai* shards or the Buddhist statue were unearthed, but merely mentioned that they were found at the edge of the southeast shore of Lake Taiyechi. However, this supplementary excavation confirmed that Buddhist shrines were set up in the Tang Court, probably not merely in one place, but perhaps in different buildings and courtyards. This

²⁵⁴ The report provides neither any illustration on those Tang *sancai* shards nor any details about their shape. *KG*, 2005, 12, pp. 3-6.

proposition will only be determined through further archaeological excavations carried out at other sites of Daming Palace.

A few Tang *sancai* shards were also found at the ruins of Shangyang Palace 上陽宮 in Luoyang, Henan province, the Eastern Capital of the Tang. Not much information can be obtained from the archaeological report on the finds of *sancai* shards other than they included shards of green-glazed pillows.²⁵⁵ However, the unearthing of *sancai* architectural material at Shangyang Palace is vital in providing significant information, because Shangyang Palace was built in AD 675²⁵⁶ when production of Tang *sancai* was at its peak. Empress Wu Zetian may have contributed considerably in the directives for the construction of Shangyang Palace, having been for several years already involved in governmental decisions. Another palace close to Shangyang Palace in Luoyang, Wanxiangshengong 萬象神宮,²⁵⁷ a site where glazed tiles were found, was built entirely according to her design²⁵⁸. I shall discuss this subject in detail in the section on *sancai* architectural material further on in this Chapter.

²⁵⁵ This report describes mainly the architectural foundations of the palace buildings. The information about the finds of the ceramics and other remains is relatively poor.

²⁵⁶ It is a vital date that could be taken as a reference for the beginning of the use of Tang *sancai* architectural material for buildings. More shall be discussed in the section on architectural material in this Chapter.

²⁵⁷ Wanxiangshengong 萬象神宮 was a palace built for the worship of heaven and earth.

²⁵⁸ *Jiu Tang Shu* indicates that Empress Wu Zetian started to manage governmental affairs after the years of the Xianqing 顯慶 period. Xianqing is the name of the ruling span of Emperor Gaozong, from AD 656 to AD 661. "...In the sixth year of Yonghui 永徽, [the position] of Empress Wang 王皇后 was abolished and that of Consort Wuchen 武宸妃 was elevated to [the position of] the Empress. Gaozong was addressed as Tianhuang 天皇; Wuhou 武后 (Empress Wu) was also addressed as Tianhou 天后. The Empress has always been very intelligent and [having more] ideas; she was also well learnt in literature and history. After the Xianqing period, the emperor suffered greatly from sickness; a hundred official departments presented proposals all agreeing to allow Tianhou decide solely. Since then [Empress Wu Zetian] assisted in state affairs for several decades. Her solemn manner had no difference with that of the Emperor. [She] was called the Er'sheng 二聖 (the Second Emperor)." ...永徽六年，廢王皇后而立武宸妃為皇后，高宗稱天皇，武后亦稱天后，後素多智計，兼涉文史，帝自顯慶已後，多苦風疾，百司表奏，皆委天后詳決，自此內輔國政數十年，威勢與帝無異，當時稱為「二聖」。 *Jiu Tang Shu* 舊唐書, Ben Ji 本記, *juan*. 6. p. 115.

The finds of Tang *sancai* shards at the ruins of different Tang palaces illustrate a widespread association of this type of ware with court life. Yet whether or not Tang *sancai* wares were employed in the Tang court as utensils for eating and drinking for the living is the subject of an interesting debate. Scholars who hold the opinion that utensil-shaped Tang *sancai* objects were used for everyday life value particularly the finds at the ruins of imperial palaces, considering that those finds provide vital evidence for their argument.²⁵⁹ For these scholars, the finds of Tang *sancai* shards at imperial living areas was taken as a simple phenomenon to explain that such ceramic objects were meant for everyday use. A real answer, however, cannot always be obtained from facts as they simply appear. Here I would like to suggest that these finds cannot be taken as evidence that *sancai* ware served as everyday utensils.

In her article "*Chinese Silver and Its Influence on Porcelain Development*", Rawson states that "...in virtually all societies there are hierarchies of materials; expensive materials were often copied in cheaper ones." Rawson further argues that silver vessels were employed by the elite of the Tang for eating and drinking: "if the silverware was suitable for the tables of the rich and powerful, the very best white ceramics, faithfully reproducing silver shapes and decoration, can have been only slightly less highly regarded..."²⁶⁰ Under this light, I would make the following observations:

²⁵⁹ He Suili 何歲利 and Lei Yong 雷勇 suggest that the finds of Tang *sancai* at the ruins of the Tang court provided noticeable and important evidence for the argument that Tang *sancai* was used as utensils in everyday life. See He Suili and Lei Yong, 2007, pp. 283-294.

²⁶⁰ For more details, see Rawson, 1989, pp. 275-299, and Rawson 1984, pp. 18-23.

Firstly, the quantity of Tang *sancai* shards unearthed at the ruins of imperial palaces is relatively small by comparison with the large numbers of white, green and black wares unearthed at the same sites. This suggests vessels in *sancai* were rather rare. Such rarity contrasts with the numerous utensil-shaped objects found in tombs, many of which, as discussed above, mimicked the metal vessel shapes. These tomb wares actually suggest that the most highly prized wares for imperial everyday use were made of gold and silver. Examples of such fine metal vessels were excavated in the major hoard discussed at Hejiacun 何家村.²⁶¹ Other numerous metalwork of the same standard was excavated from the relic deposit at Famen Temple 法門寺.²⁶² As the main fine eating vessels were of gold, silver, fine white and green wares, it seems unlikely that *sancai* wares belonged in this hierarchy.

Secondly, if *sancai* wares have served in the court as everyday utensils, they would certainly have been mentioned in Tang literature, like other ceramic wares, such as *xing* ware and *yue* ware, which were employed by the Tang court for everyday use. Tang *sancai* wares do not seem to be mentioned in literary sources – a fact suggesting that despite the close association Tang *sancai* had with Tang imperial life,²⁶³ it was not given as much importance as an everyday ceramic ware used at the court.

Thirdly, scholars argue that because Tang *sancai* wares contained lead, a poisonous

²⁶¹ About two hundred and seventy gold and silver objects were excavated at Hejiacun 何家村, south suburb of Xi'an. The finds of gold and silver objects include dishes, bowls, cups, jars, boxes and sycee. *WW*, 1972, 1, pp. 30-42.

²⁶² In 1987, when the Holy Relic of Buddha Sakyamuni was unearthed, one hundred and twenty-one gold and silver wares that were offered by emperors and elites were also found together with the Relic at Famen Temple. Famensi, 1994.

²⁶³ I have argued in Chapter One of this thesis that Tang *sancai* objects were employed as tomb objects restricted to imperial families and the elite of the Tang.

substance, they were not fit for containing food.²⁶⁴ Generally, in the history of Chinese ceramics, lead-glazed wares do not seem to have been used for everyday life.²⁶⁵

In the light of the above observations, and on the basis of the finds of Tang *sancai* in the ruins of Tang palaces, there is little support for the view that Tang *sancai* containers were intended for everyday eating and drinking. The people at the time could not have known of the poisonous effects of lead, but for some reason they seem to have avoided using such wares for drinks and food.

Tang *sancai* shards of utensil-shaped objects were also found in temple sites. In 2003, a short excavation at the ruins of Jianfu Temple took place.²⁶⁶ Jianfu Temple was built in AD 684 by Emperor Ruizhong 睿宗²⁶⁷ (AD 662-AD 712) as a memorial for the late Emperor Gaozong. It was named Daxianfu Temple 大獻福寺 by the Emperor when it was built, but re-named as the Jianfu Temple by the Empress Wu Zetian in AD 690. The Jianfu Temple,²⁶⁸ one of the important imperial temples during the Tang, was located in Xi'an, where the famous monk Yi Jing 義淨 (?AD

²⁶⁴ Narasaki 2000, pp.60-65.

²⁶⁵ An article, "An examination of some Han dynasty lead-glazed wares", written by Wood, Watt, Kerr, Brodrick and Darrah, emphasized strongly the poisonous effect caused by food placed on lead-glazed ware. The article mentions that "there is no evidence at the moment that these high-lead glazes were used in Han China on everyday ceramics". Wood, Watt and Kerr, 1992, pp.129-142.

²⁶⁶ The excavation took place from the 13th July to the 21st August 2003 before the start of the construction work of a building, the Historical Cultural Park 歷史文化公園. KG, 2006, 1, p. 48. I recall the conversation I had with Professor Zhuo Zhenxi 樵振西 during my field work in 2006, when she informed that there is a considerable quantity of Tang *sancai* tiles that were unearthed during the excavation, but that these tiles were not documented because the archaeologists did not believe at that time that Tang *sancai* was employed as architecture material.

²⁶⁷ Emperor Ruizong 睿宗 was the eighth son of Emperor Gaozong and the youngest of his four sons with Empress Wu Zetian.

²⁶⁸ It was built by Emperor Ruizong 睿宗 in AD 684 after the death of his father, Emperor Gaozong, and was named Xianfusi,. Empress Wu Zetian renamed it Jianfu Temple in AD 690.

oversaw the translation work of the four hundred volumes of Buddhist scriptures that he brought back to China from India. Many other famous monks had lived and taught in the temple, such as Monk Fa Zang 法藏 (AD 643-AD 712), who was one of the masters of Huayan Zong school 華嚴宗 of Buddhism, and Vajrabodhi (AD 669-AD 741), an Indian monk, founder of Chinese Tantric Buddhism and well known by his Chinese name Jigangzhi 金剛智. The Jianfu Temple was constructed when Tang *sancai* production was at its peak.

The finds of Tang *sancai* shards at the ruins of Jianfu Temple were among other different kinds of fragments discovered in an ash-pit about 111 metres northeast of the Xiaoyan Pagoda 小雁塔²⁶⁹, which was built on the temple site in AD 707. Unfortunately, the excavation report does not give detailed information on the Tang *sancai* shards, apart from mentioning that they were fragments of utensil-shaped objects.

To support my suggestion of a relationship between Tang *sancai* ware and ritual practices, I shall examine in the following section the finds of Tang *sancai* shards at the ruins of other Tang temples.

1.2 Shards of a Tang *sancai* Buddhist statue

In the last two decades, archaeological excavations at the ruins of Tang temples has

²⁶⁹ Xiaoyan Pagoda 小雁塔 (Little Goose Pagoda) has 15 tiers with a total height of 43.3 metres.

revealed helpful information on a specific function of Tang *sancai*, namely the fashioning of Buddhist statues. This find provides a clue to the close connection which Tang *sancai* had with the performance of religious rituals. Fragments of a Tang *sancai* Buddhist statue were unearthed at the site of Qianglong Temple.

The Qinglong Temple was at first named Linggan Temple 靈感寺 when it was built in AD 582 by Emperor Sui Wendi. It was abandoned in AD 621. It was repaired in AD 662 and named Guanyin Temple 觀音寺. The name of Qinglong Temple was given in AD 711. Qinglong Temple was destroyed in AD 845 during the Great Anti-Buddhist Persecution,²⁷⁰ but was reconstructed the following year, AD 846, and named Huguo Temple 護國寺.²⁷¹ The temple was located in Tielumiao 鐵爐廟 village, about three kilometers south of the suburb of Xi'an. It had become prominent as a Tantric Buddhism temple and received many foreign Buddhist students, among whom the majority was Japanese. Monk Kūkai (AD 774-AD 835), famous founder of Japanese Tantric Buddhism, and known to the Chinese as Konghai 空海, followed his studies in Qinglong Temple.²⁷²

After two surveys,²⁷³ archaeological excavations were carried out three times²⁷⁴,

²⁷⁰ Buddhism was suppressed by Emperor Wuzong 武宗 (AD 814-AD 846) and the persecution reached its height in AD 845; monasteries were converted for other uses; Buddhist sculptures were destroyed and buried; monks and nuns were forced to return to lay life. The event, called the Huichang Great Anti-Buddhist Persecution 會昌滅佛 in Chinese history, took place in the fifth year of Huichang 會昌五年. Qinglong Temple did not survive this suppression and was destroyed. Emperor Wuzong died the following year, AD 846, when also the persecution was ended.

²⁷¹ See *Chang'an Zhi* 長安志 *juan*. 9. *Chang'an Zhi* is a text on the layout of the Tang capital Chang'an and its affiliated cities and districts. It consists of twenty *juan*. It was compiled by Song Minqiu 宋敏求 (AD 1019-AD 1079).

²⁷² Monk Kūkai (AD 774-AD 835), came to China in AD 804, returned to Japan in AD 805. In AD 921, he was bestowed a posthumous title as Hongfa Dashi 弘法大師, Master Hongfa, by Emperor Daigo 醍醐天皇 (AD 885-AD 930). 司馬遼太郎, 鷲尾隆輝, 1976, pp. 68-80.

²⁷³ The first survey at Qinglong Temple was in 1963, the second in 1973. *KGXB*, 1989, 2, p. 231.

between 1973 and 1980, at the ruins of Qinglong Temple. Two fragments of Tang *sancai* of a Buddha statue were excavated in 1973 at the site of a palace referred to as No. 4 by the archaeologists (Figure 2.11). These two pieces could be joined together to show the right shoulder and belly of a sitting Buddha figure (Figure 2.12). The colour of the *sancai* fragments is a combination of black, green and blue. No information was given on the size of the shards, but the report states that the colour of the *sancai* shards is quite bright. The discovery of *sancai* shards of an object in the form of a Buddha received no scholarly attention. Yet, this first find of its kind is remarkable, because it represents a significant evidence of the direct connection between lead-glazed *sancai* and the display of valued objects for religious purposes.

Thus far, we can argue that it is unlikely, given the specific use of precious metal and white and black wares, that *sancai* was employed for high-ranking eating utensils. On the other hand, given the recurrent finds of shards at palace and temple sites suggest that it is likely that the utensils and Buddhist figures in *sancai* were closely linked with the architectural decoration to be discussed later. The *sancai* wares were, in some way, connected to temple activity. This can be observed through the functions of *sancai* decorated pieces in Japan during the Nara period (AD 672-AD 780), a span in Japanese history during which the adoption of a Chinese governmental system was followed.²⁷⁵

²⁷⁴ The first excavation took place in 1973; the second time was in 1979 and the third time in 1980. *KGXB*, 1989, 2, p. 231.

²⁷⁵ Much has been studied by scholars about the influence of architecture, culture and administrative methods of the Tang dynasty in Japan in the Nara period. "In the seventh and eight centuries the consolidation of institutions of a centralized, bureaucratic and imperial state on the Chinese model prompted the formal redefinition of the rituals of the Ise shrines in terms of the imperial institution, as well as simulating efforts to give it a more substantial architectural presence. Chinese concepts of monumental construction and planning, order and hierarchy, were superimposed on the Ise and Isumo sites and formally differentiated compounds

1.3 Japanese Nara *sancai* and its relationship with Chinese Tang *sancai*²⁷⁶

Before investigating documented texts and *sancai* ware that survived in either China or Japan which was handed down and collected in the Shōsō-in repository at the South Section of the Tōdai-ji temple in Nara,²⁷⁷ I shall look briefly at the practice of Buddhism in Japan at that time.

Buddhism was officially presented to the court of Yamato²⁷⁸ in AD 552²⁷⁹ by a delegation sent by the Prince of Kudara (?AD), a principality in the south of Korea, as an homage and a token of friendship to Japan. However, the actual form of Japanese Buddhism was being developed when Japanese monks visited China to study this religion and when Chinese monks went to Japan to proselytise.²⁸⁰ It was Emperor Shomu-tenno's (AD 701-AD 756) strong belief in Buddhism that prompted the

were adopted to signify the inner sanctuaries instead of simple straw ropes and white pebbles. The orientation of the Ise sites was shifted from east-west, the trajectory of the sun and an axis appropriate in direction to worship of the Sun-Goddess, to a north-south orientation, in conformity with Chinese practice. The official histories compiled at the Nara imperial court, the *Kojiki* completed in 712, and the *Nihon shoki* in 720, consolidated into written form the imperial mythology concerning the origins of the imperial family with Amaterasu and Sun-Goddess. At the same time, in a sustained campaign to discredit myth logically based claims to authority emanating from Izumo, they poured scorn on Susano-o, father of Okuminushi enshrined at Isumo.” See Coaldrake 1996, p. 19. Tsunodo, Bary and Keene studied in detail the imitating of the institutional system of the Tang in Japan at the time. For more details, see Tsunodo, Bary and Keene 1965, pp. 54-92, and Sansom 1964, pp. 67-128.

²⁷⁶ Up to now, little has been found in Tang texts that record the use of Tang *sancai* wares in the Tang courts, or a tangible evidence to demonstrate their function. However, the collection of Japanese Nara *sancai* could probably be a clue to suggest the use of Tang *sancai* during the Tang era. This is based on the fact that Japan copied Tang *sancai* while imitating at the same time the governmental system and the layout of Chang’an during the time of the Tang. In the section, “Exports of Tang *sancai*” in this chapter, I shall study the use of Japanese Nara *sancai* focusing on the finds of Chinese Tang *sancai* in different areas in Japan.

²⁷⁷ Tōdai-ji temple 東大寺, constructed in AD 752 on the order of Emperor Shōmu, contains a fifteen-metre high bronze Buddha, the largest in Japan. The statue is known as the “Great Buddha of Nara”. Many attempts to cast it had failed before one was successfully made for its dedication in AD 752.

²⁷⁸ “Yamato is now a province in central Japan; it meant central Japan in those days. The Imperial residence and the seat of government were always in that part of Japan until 1869, when the capital was moved to Tokyo.” Anesaki 1963, p. 53.

²⁷⁹ Scholars hold different opinions on the exact year when the presentation took place. Anesaki suggests that it was in AD 538, whereas Eliot says it was in AD 552. Tsunodo, Bary and Keene agree with latter. Anesaki 1963, pp. 52-53; Eliot 1935, p. 197; Tsunodo, Bary and Keene 1965, p. 93;

²⁸⁰ Monk Emmin 圓仁 (AD 794-864) went to China in AD 838 for a stay of nine years to study the Tiantai School 天台宗 of Buddhism. His diary *Nitto-kyūho-junrei-gyōki* 入唐求法巡禮行記 is one of the most important reference sources for learning alone Buddhist activities in China at that time. Chinese Monk Jianzhen 鑑真 (AD 688-AD 763) went Japan in AD 754 and was received with great honour by Emperor Shōmu, to whom he gave an ordination together with Empress Kōken. Monk Jianzhen's introduction of *vinaya*, a discipline for Buddhist monastic community, was his significant contribution to Japanese Buddhism.

dissemination of this religion all over Japan. “In AD 747 he gave a decree that every province throughout Japan should establish a monastery with a pagoda and a nunnery, dedicated to a standardized form of worship. The greatest incentive toward the advance of Buddhist building, however, doubtless came from the progress of the religion itself.”²⁸¹

The emergence of Japanese *sancai* happened in the above mentioned social and religious contexts. In the last decades, considerable quantities of *sancai* wares were excavated in Japan, mainly in Nara. The actual outer appearance of these *sancai* wares is different from that of Chinese *sancai*; for instance, the colours look dull. Colour combinations are limited to three, namely green, yellow and white, unlike Chinese *sancai* which includes more colours, such as blue and amber, with a number of variations for each one.

To date, Chinese Tang *sancai* objects and shards were unearthed in forty-eight ruins in Nara and Kyoto in Japan. Those objects and shards were well examined by Chinese and Japanese scholars, and confirmed that they are Chinese Tang *sancai*. About three hundred shards were found, of which some were from the same broken object. If assembled, those pieces would make up some one hundred and fifty objects. Seventy percent of these shards came from pillows, the rest being shared by different utensil-shaped objects, like bowls, dishes, cups, jars, ewers, vases, ink stones, one

²⁸¹ Soper discussed about the Japanese Buddhist architecture and the economic and ritual aspects of it. Soper, 1942, pp. 42-43.

broken part of an animal-shaped paw²⁸² 6.5 cm in length, and a shard of a broken figure, 10 cm x 6.8 cm.²⁸³ Narasaki Shōichi argues that the limited quantity of Tang *sancai* found in Japan suggests Tang *sancai* objects were not goods for trade. About seventy percent of objects and shards of Tang *sancai* have come from the ruins of temples and cities: nine temple ruins and eight city ruins. Further, Narasaki Shōichi claims that these Tang *sancai* were brought back by Japanese monks who studied in China during the Tang.

It has also been argued that the Nara *sancai* wares were produced in Japan in imitation of Tang *sancai* ware. But if they were made in Japan, it is likely that they were produced for purposes that Japanese monks had witnessed in China. Fifty-seven Japanese Nara *sancai* wares with special features handed down and collected over the ages were deposited in the Shōsō-in repository. Of these *sancai* wares, five objects are glazed with three colours: one stupa, one drum, one bowl and two "monk" bowls. Decorated with two colours, are fifty-two objects, of which one vase, nine large dishes, three large-sized "monk" bowls with flat bases, six normal-sized monk bowls with flat bottom, twelve "monk" bowls, four bowls, twelve monochrome green bowls (of which eleven are "monk" bowls), two monochrome white bowls (of which one is a large-sized dish), and three monochrome yellow bowls. Except for the stupa, all the above mentioned fifty-six wares were documented in a text that was written in AD 1117 and referred to as *Index of existing documented*

²⁸² The author believes that this piece belongs to the Bohai type of *sancai*, the colours of which are rather dull. Another object, a jar, which was unearthed at the site of the temple of Sakadadera 阪田寺, also belongs to the Bohai *sancai*. Narasaki, 1999, p. 51.

²⁸³ Narasaki, 1999, p. 52.

donated objects, 綱封藏見在納物勘檢注文.²⁸⁴ Another twenty damaged Nara *sancai* objects exist, but are not listed in the text perhaps because of their condition. According to a text record named *Statement of object accounts of production*, 造物所作物帳, and issued in AD 733 on items from Daianji Temple 大安寺, these *sancai* were made at the request of the court workshop, 官衛工房.²⁸⁵

Monk Doji 道慈 (?AD-AD 744), who went to China to study Buddhism in AD 702, lived in the Ximing Temple 西明寺²⁸⁶ in Xi'an. He returned to Japan in AD 718. In AD 729, he was assigned to be responsible for the construction work of Daianji Temple 大安寺 in Nara,²⁸⁷ where Japanese *sancai* architectural materials, such as *sancai* tile-ends and *sancai* tiles, were unearthed.²⁸⁸ Having lived in Chang'an for sixteen years, Monk Doji has certainly contributed knowledge acquired during his studies in China not only to interpret Buddhism, but also to design appropriate buildings and utensils. Doji had indeed brought back with him to Japan the plan of the temples employed in the layout of the Ximing Temple of Chang'an, and had contributed to the layout and construction of the Daianji Temple.²⁸⁹ A significant number of Tang *sancai* pillow shards, about two hundreds pieces of them,

²⁸⁴ 綱封藏見在納物勘檢注文 *Index of existing documented donated objects record*: [辛櫃式合, 入青子鉢四十口, 黃袋一, 皮袋一, 六丈練絹一段..... 辛櫃壹合, 入青子大鉢四口, 小十口, 合子廿枚.....] two chests, containing forty Qingzi 青子 bowls (*sancai* bowls), one yellow bag, one leather bag, one roll of six zhang 丈 [long]silk (kimono).....one chest, containing four large Qingzi bowls smaller one ten bowls, twenty boxes.....東京大學史料編纂所報, 2004, vol. 39.

²⁸⁵ 官衛工房 has the same meaning as 官宮工房, which is the term for a workshop operated by the court.

²⁸⁶ Ximing Temple 西明寺 was built in AD 658 by Emperor Gaozong.

²⁸⁷ 大岡 實 studied the seven important temples, which were built during the Japanese Nara period (AD 710-AD794), Kohfukuji Temple 興福寺, Yahushiji Temple 藥師寺, 元興寺 Gangoji Temple, 大安寺 Daianji Temple, 唐招提寺 Toshodaiji Temple, 西大寺 Saidaiji, and 東大寺 Todaiji Temple. Saidaije, Todaiji, Daianji 大岡 實 1974, pp.143-169.

²⁸⁸ The use of *sancai* architectural material in the construction work of the Daianji Temple in Japan, at the same period of the Tang era, is another important point I shall examine in the section "Tang *sancai* architectural material" in this Chapter.

²⁸⁹ Narasaki, 1999, p.69-72.

corresponding to about thirty pillows, were unearthed in the Daianji Temple.²⁹⁰ Narasaki Shōichi agrees with the suggestion of Fujioka Ryoichi that all the Tang *sancai* pillow shards were most probably brought back by Monk Doji from China and were used as specimen for producing *sancai* in Japan.²⁹¹

Two Nara *sancai* ware among the treasures in the Shōsō-in repository at the South Section of the Tōdai-ji temple in Nara, where Buddhist articles are stored,²⁹² carry records of their use. A Nara *sancai* deep dish, with a diameter of 20.5 cm and a height of 7 cm, decorated with green and white stripes from the mouth of the dish down to the bottom, bears on its unglazed back a brush inscription (Figure 2.13) mentioning:

Jietangyuan Buddhist monks' offering dish, the [] day of the
7th month of the 7th year of Tempyo Shoho,²⁹³ Tōdai-ji. 戒堂院聖僧供養
盤 天平勝寶七歲七月十 [] 日 東大寺 .

The date is the first anniversary of the death of the Emperor Shomu's mother. The missing word is possibly the character 九, 9, which, together with the character preceding it forms the figure 19, the date of the anniversary.

There is another dish with a diameter of 20.5 cm and a height of 7 cm in the same collection, with a similar decoration as the above mentioned one, and with an unglazed bottom and back. A faded brush inscription on its back yields the

²⁹⁰ Narasaki, 1999, p.69-72.

²⁹¹ Narasaki, 1999, p.66.

²⁹² The Shōsō-in repository consists of three sections: the North Section, the Middle Section and the South Section. The Sections are in the form of log-cabin style buildings. The North Section collects artifacts that Empress Komyo (AD 701-AD 760) donated to the Tōdai-ji Temple to express her grief for her lost husband, Emperor Shomu (AD 701-AD 756). The Middle Section collects furniture, stationery and accessories. The South Section contains Buddhist articles. Treasure of the Shōsō-in, 1961, p. 14.

²⁹³ The year of Tempyo Shoho corresponds to AD 755.

following legible words (Figure 2.14):

□ tang yuan Buddhist monks' offering dish, □ Tōdai-ji

□ 堂院聖僧供養盤 □ 東大寺

The original brush handwriting on the Nara *sancai* dishes clearly explains the use of the *sancai* ware as an offering dish.

Further, it is to be noted that all the Nara *sancai*, fifty-seven objects in total, were stored in the Kensakuin store of Tōdai-ji Temple together with items such as incense burners and holy water vases that were particularly used for ritual performance. In July AD 950, as a consequence of a rainstorm that caused the damage of the storage premises, they were transferred to the South Section of Shōsō-in repository. According to the records, these Nara *sancai* wares have been used ten times for rituals.²⁹⁴ The first time they were used was at the ceremony of installation of the Great Buddha statue in Tōdai-ji Temple on the ninth of April AD 752.

It is also important to note that these Nara *sancai* wares were categorized as Buddhist articles stored in the South Section of Shōsō-in repository.²⁹⁵ This confirms that *sancai* ware was formally attributed to ritual performance in the Nara period, when Nara *sancai* was being produced. The inscription on the Nara *sancai* dishes recorded the fact that Tōdai-ji Temple reserved these *sancai* wares for the function of ritual offerings. Moreover, they were indeed recorded as ritual wares that had served for ritual performance. It is probable that those Nara *sancai* wares were

²⁹⁴ Narasaki, 2000, p. 62.

²⁹⁵ *Index of existing documented donated objects* 網封藏見在納物勘檢注文 records each of the Nara *sancai* ware in the list, of which "... Qingzi 青子 bowl (*sancai* bowl) forty pieces... ...入青子鉢四十口...".

produced for the monasteries to serve in religious ceremonies, possibly under the influence of monks who studied in China and who brought back with them the customs they have witnessed.

Nara *sancai* represented not only copies of dishes and vases, but also other Buddhist articles.²⁹⁶ A Nara *sancai* stupa (Figure 2.15), part of the Nara *sancai* objects that are collected in the South Section of Shōsō-in repository, also demonstrates that the production of Nara *sancai* was not limited to the containers and objects for rituals, but endeavoured to replicate the full range of Tang *sancai* objects, with the exception of burial objects, like camels, horses and tomb figures. In this context, incense burners, pillows and mountain-shaped articles²⁹⁷ were also produced in Nara *sancai*.²⁹⁸ The stupa, 17.2 cm in height, has a hexagonal shape and is composed of seven tiers. Each tier is decorated alternately in green and yellow. The bottom is vaulted and the center of the ceiling is pierced with a hole. A gilded copper plate with a long copper pillar is put in the vault. The copper pillar goes up through the successive roofs and reaches the top roof. It is seems evident that this stupa is not a decorative object, but

²⁹⁶ Narasaki argues that in terms of shape, Nara *sancai* mainly copied the bronze work from the Kingdom of Silla 신라 (AD 668-AD 935), one of the Three Kingdoms of Korea which had a close relationship with China in the Tang era. Many Korean monks went to China to study Buddhism and established their Won school. Japanese Buddhism was influenced mainly by Korean Buddhism in the beginning, and then the Japanese sent monks to China to study Buddhism.

²⁹⁷ The mountain-shaped *sancai* objects were also found in Chinese Tang *sancai*. Scholars did not give any information or suggestion on the function of *sancai* items with this kind of shape. The actual object is an oval- or round-shaped dish at the base of which is designed a range of mountains, which covers half of the edge of the base. In some cases, the mountains are decorated with birds on their top. This shape leads one to imagine landscapes of mountains and lakes, scenery which the design was supposed to represent. The size of the article, about 10 to 15 cm high by 15 to 20 cm wide, suggests that it is an item that can be handled for some use, rather than a decorative object which would normally be in a size suitable for display. The object seems to be an ink stone, which is usually of the same size, and the dish-shaped base, in the manner of a lake, is well formed to hold ink. The mountain is purely decorative, and would be reflected on the base when filled with a liquid. However, there is no Tang ink stone to be found that resembles the design of the *sancai* mountain-shaped object, and further research needs to be done to define its use. If the finds of small-sized pillows, considered as wrist-rests for calligraphy writing, could be connected with the mountain-shaped object, this could lead us to think that the two articles could possibly have a common function, namely as scholars' articles. There is too little evidence to encourage further investigation for the time being.

²⁹⁸ Narasaki, 2000, p. 62.

an object intended for religious purposes.

It is not a coincidence that Buddhist objects were made of Nara *sancai*. The fragments of the Tang *sancai* Buddha statue unearthed at the ruins of Qinglong Temple suggest that in China Tang *sancai* was most probably already employed for making Buddhist objects for temples in the Tang era. This could have been the model for the production of Nara *sancai* Buddhist objects. Because the finds of fragments of Tang *sancai* Buddhist objects are rather scarce, it can be supposed that during the Tang the making of *sancai* Buddha statues or stupas was experimental. If we look at the Liao *sancai* and Song *sancai*, we will find no lack of samples of Buddha statues and stupas made of *sancai*,²⁹⁹ some of which are in large sizes, such as a Liao *sancai* Luohan 羅漢 statue 130 cm high in the British Museum collection (Figure 2.16).

Although we find no textual records in China about how *sancai* wares were employed for ritual performances, the function of Japanese Nara *sancai* in the Nara period provides a significant clue for my argument that Tang *sancai* wares were employed in religious contexts. Chinese Tang *sancai* objects that were brought to Japan by Japanese monks have played an important role in the production in that country of lead-glazed ware, which are now treasured in its monasteries.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁹ In the section “The cessation and revival of Tang *sancai*” further on in this chapter, I shall discuss in detail the Liao *sancai* and Song *sancai*.

³⁰⁰ For more information, see Narasaki, 2000, pp. 60-65.

1.4 Tang *sancai* pillows

Back to China, it is interesting to note that no archaeological reports to date has mentioned that Tang *sancai* pillow shards were found at the sites of Tang temples, but they did state that such shards were unearthed at the palace sites, namely:

- at two sites in the Daming Palace,³⁰¹ one on the west bank of Lake Taiyechi and another on the southeast bank,³⁰²
- at the site of the Shangyang Palace, Luoyang, Henan province.

The archaeological reports on the finds provide no information about quantity, size and the style of decoration of the *sancai* pillow shards. However, the finds suggest that the Tang court had used *sancai* pillows in their daily life, although we cannot determine the exact function of these "pillows".

In addition to *sancai* pillows shards, fragments of ceramic pillows from the *xing* kiln were also found in the ruins of the Daming Palace.³⁰³ We have no clue as to when ceramic pillows started to be popular. We know, however, from archaeological excavation reports that a considerable number of pillow shards were unearthed at the sites of Tang dynasty kilns producing Tang *sancai*, namely the *yue* kiln,³⁰⁴ the *xing* kiln³⁰⁵ and the *changsha* kiln 長沙窯,³⁰⁶ where pillows were also manufactured.

³⁰¹ *KG* 2003, 11b, pp.7-26.

³⁰² *KG* 2004, 9, pp. 3-6; *KG* 2005, 7, pp. 29-34.

³⁰³ *KG* 2005, 7, pp.29-34.

³⁰⁴ Xie Chunlong studied about the new excavation at the kiln site of the *yue* ware. Xie Chunlong, 2002, Plate 12,5. Wang Qingzheng studied about the relationship between the *yue* ware and the *mise* ware. Wang Qingzheng, 1996, Plate 57.

³⁰⁵ Zhao Qinggang studied and edited the main articles that have talked about the *xing* ware. Zhao Qinggang, 2007, pp. 8-24.

³⁰⁶ Li Xiaowei studied the important *changsha* wares that were newly found. Li Xiaowei, 1999, pp. 93-99. Li Enwei edited all the archaeological reports that have been published. Li Enwei, 2007, pp. 87-129. Timothy See-yiu Lam introduced and illustrated some of the finds of the *changsha* ware. Timothy See-yie Lam, 1990, pp. 58-61.

Before the 1950s, some scholars argued that ceramic pillows were used only for burials. However, in his book *Taozhen 陶枕 (Ceramic Pillows)*, Chen Wanli 陳萬里 asserted that ceramic pillows were also made for the living. To evidence his argument, Chen Wanli cites a ceramic pillow from the Song Dynasty excavated in Julu 鉅鹿,³⁰⁷ which bears two Chinese characters: “程三”, Chengsan, at the back of the pillow, meaning the third offspring of the Cheng 程 family, and “程小”, Chengxiao, next to the character Chengsan, meaning the youngest offspring of the Cheng family. This suggests that the pillow had been shared by the third and the youngest of the Cheng family, as two dead people could not share a pillow, and that it could, therefore, not have been used for burials.³⁰⁸

That ceramic pillows are meant for daily use is a suggestion that has now been acknowledged by scholars. Ceramic pillows were mass produced during the Song Dynasty in various kilns in China and became one of the popular ceramic items. A significant quantity of pillow shards was found at the site of the *cizhou* kiln 磁州窯,³⁰⁹ which was known in northern China at the beginning of the Song dynasty for its production of vividly decorated objects made from hard grey clay. The subject of decoration of the *cizhou* kiln provides a clue to determine that ceramic pillows were meant for daily use. A *cizhou* pillow in the collection of the British Museum bears four Chinese characters in the centre of its top part: 家國永安, Jia Guo Yong An, which translates as ‘everlasting peace in family and state’ (Figure 2.17) – a wish,

³⁰⁷ Julu 鉅鹿 is in present day Hebei province. No information is given in Chen Wanli’s book about either the kiln from which the pillow originated, or the excavation site, or any other related excavation details.

³⁰⁸ Chen Wanli made pioneer study about ceramic pillow in the publication. Chen Wanli, 1954, p.1.

³⁰⁹ Feng Xianming introduced all the Chinese ceramic kilns in his book *Chinese Ceramic*. Feng Xianming, 2000, pp.379-382.

almost a catchphrase, which expresses the concern and will of the person who has come into possession of this pillow. Had this pillow been destined for tombs, the inscription would naturally not have referred to state affairs.³¹⁰

Another example is the large *cizhou* pillow, as shown in Figure 2.18. It consists of two parts – a brick-shaped base supporting a concave petal-shape top. The top is decorated with six levels of differently incised patterns. It is 28.3 cm wide, 30.3 cm deep and 17.3 cm high, a size and shape that indicates its obvious function of a comfortable headrest. Most of the ceramic pillows from Song, Liao and Jin Dynasties were made in sizes to provide comfort – with widths of 18-33 cm, depths of 12-30 cm depth and heights of 9-12 cm.³¹¹

Compared with Song ceramic pillows, Tang ceramic pillows were rather smaller in size. A green-glazed ceramic pillow from the Changsha kiln, which is collected in the Hunan Province Museum 湖南省博物館, is only 8 cm high, 14.8 wide and 9.5 cm deep (Figure 2.19).³¹² Chinese scholars have different views about the function of the smaller sized ceramic pillows. They believe such pillows were used as a support for the wrist of patients when their pulse was being taken by doctors.³¹³ Another

³¹⁰ It was up to family members or institutions to choose the objects that were to be buried with the deceased. For a more detailed discussion, see Rawson 2007. However, it is more likely that the pillow was used by the deceased when he or she was alive and was buried after his or her death. In most parts of China, particularly in the north, the custom of “sending the pillow” to the departed is still in practice in nowadays. Our modern pillows are made of soft material; the way of “sending the pillow” is to burn it the same day the corpse is cremated.

³¹¹ For Song ceramic pillows, see Li Huibing, 2000b, p.256-269, p.271, p.278, p.284, and Li Huibing, 1999, p.302, p.307; For Liao ceramic pillows, see Feng Yongqian, 2000, p.256, p.266; For Jin ceramic pillows, see Feng Yongqian, 2000, pp.296-301, 312-316.

³¹² In his book on the history of Chinese ceramics, Li Huibing introduced different ceramic kilns with illustrations. Li Huibing, 2000a, p.222, plate 59.

³¹³ Jiang Mingming 蔣明明 suggests that the smaller-sized ceramic pillows are part of the appliances used in traditional Chinese medicine. Li Huibing 2000, p.250.

suggestion is that of the Japanese scholar Mikami who supposes that these small pillows were used as armrests when writing documents for long periods or when monks copied sutras.³¹⁴

Mikami further argues that the thirty Tang *sancai* pillow shards which were unearthed at the site of Daianji temple in Nara, Japan, were not likely designed for tombs; otherwise they would have been neither exported to Japan nor found at the temple site.³¹⁵ Interestingly, all the thirty Tang *sancai* pillows have the same size: 11.6-12.5 cm long, 8.5-10.3 cm wide, 5-5.6 cm high.³¹⁶ The small size of the pillows seems obviously unsuitable for a headrest, but probably, as Mikami suggested, these Tang *sancai* rather served as an arm support for Buddhist scribes.

2. Tang *sancai* architectural material

It is less than a decade since scholars started to acknowledge that *sancai* architectural material existed during the Tang dynasty. Yet, monochrome architectural material had been already in use in the sixth century, during the Northern Wei Dynasty (AD 544).³¹⁷ This thesis, however, will focus on Tang *sancai* architectural material as an item with particular quality and features, carrying just one glazed colour or a combination of two, three or more colours, and used for imperial edifices by the Tang. So far, Tang *sancai* architectural material was found at five palace and temple sites,

³¹⁴ For more discussion, see Mikami, 1984, p. 17 and 弓場紀知, 1995, pp.88-89.

³¹⁵ Zhongguo Taozhen is a catalogue on the ceramic pillow collection of Yeung Wing Tak. This collection covers mainly Tang, Song, Liao and Jin pillows from different kilns. Zhongguo Taozhen, 1984, p. 16-18.

³¹⁶ Narasaki, 1999, p. 70.

³¹⁷ Kerr and Wood, 2004, p. 499

namely:

- the Daming Palace 大明宮³¹⁸, Xi'an, Shanxi province, in three of its Halls: the Hanyuan Hall 含元殿, the Linde Hall 麟德殿 and the Sanqing Hall 三清殿;
- the Huaqing Palace 華清宮³¹⁹, Xi'an, Shaanxi province;
- the Shangyang Palace 上陽宮, Luoyang, Henan province;
- the Wanxiangshengong 萬象神宮, a palace, Luoyang, Henan province;
- the Longquan Palace 龍泉府, Bohai State, Helongjiang province.

The Hanyuan Hall 含元殿, as shown in Map 2.2, was situated in the central axis of the architectural complex of the Daming Palace and the first in line of three halls, the other two being the Xuanzheng Hall 宣政殿 and the Zichen Hall 紫宸殿. This Hall, 67.03 metres wide by 28.22 metres deep (Figure 2.20),³²⁰ represented the largest part of the Daming Palace and was the place where grand ceremonies were held. It was built on the foundation of the old building of Guande Hall 觀德殿, a construction of the Sui dynasty, where the Emperor of the Sui used to watch the shooting practice. For this reason, Guande Hall was also called She Hall 射殿, the Shooting Hall. In AD 634, construction of the Daming Palace started. However, it was stopped the following year. Twenty-eight years later, the construction work of Hanyuan Hall started again in AD 662 on the order of Emperor Gaozong and was completed in the

³¹⁸ See footnote 232, p. 100.

³¹⁹ Huaqingchi 華清池 was a hot spring. The Tang expanded the construction based on the architecture of the Sui dynasty and named the complex of buildings Tangquan Palace 湯泉宮. It was later named Wenquan Palace 溫泉宮. When Emperor Xuanzong (AD 685-AD 762) started a larger scale of constructions at the site, the complex was renamed Huaqing Palace 華清宮.

³²⁰ Yang Hongxun made significant research on the palace sites of each dynasty that have been archaeologically excavated through the years. Yang Hongxun, 2001, p. 426.

fourth month of AD 663.³²¹

The archaeological report mentions that three short tiles³²² and three long tiles, 12 cm long by 10.5 cm wide and 2.5 cm thick, were unearthed there. The short tiles are half-glazed in light bright green on the convex side and fully glazed on the concave side.³²³

The Linde Hall 麟德殿 was situated in the northwest of the complex of the Daming Palace. It had a width of 58.30 metres and a depth of 18.50 metres (Figure 2.21),³²⁴ and was used mainly as the venue for entertainment. According to the text recorded in the book of *Nan Bu Xin Shu* 南部新書,³²⁵ the building was also used for Buddhist and Taoist ritual practices:

In the ninth month of the year of Shangyuan 上元 [corresponding to AD 675] ...emperor set up the place of [religious] practice in the Sandian 三殿,³²⁶ people from the court impersonated Buddha and Bodhisattva statues, decorated with dignity; guards at the north gate impersonated guardian kings, colourfully decorated, armed with weapons, solemnly guarding the place. 上元二年九月...上於三殿置道場，以內人爲佛、菩薩像，寶裝飾之；北門武士爲金剛、神王，結彩，被堅執銳，嚴侍於座隅...。³²⁷

There is no record as to when the Linde Hall was built. The earliest recorded date

³²¹ *Jiu Tang Shu* 舊唐書, *juan.* 4, pp. 84-85.

³²² The report does not give the size of the *sancal* short tiles, but it gives the size of the unglazed short tiles that were found in the same place and which were about 10-13 cm long and 3-3.7 cm wide. Daminggong 2007, p. 134.

³²³ Daminggong, 2007, pp. 112-113. "Daminggong" is a compilation of several reports on the Daming Palace site.

³²⁴ Yang Hongxun, 2001, pp. 445-446.

³²⁵ *Nan Bu Xin Shu* 南部新書, written by Qianyi 錢易 (?AD) of Song dynasty. The work consists of ten volumes. It is about stories that happened during the Tang and some during the Five-dynasties 五代 (AD 907-AD 960).

³²⁶ Sandian 三殿 is the popular name of the Linde Palace. Yang Hongxun, 2001, p. 448.

³²⁷ *Nan Bu Xin Shu* 南部新書, *juan.* *Ren*·*壬*. p. 148.

relating to this venue³²⁸ is found in the text of *Ce Fu Yuan Gui* 冊府元龜,³²⁹ recounting Emperor Gaozong's entertainment in the Linde Hall of his officials after returning from Mount Tai 泰山, in the fourth month of AD 666. It follows therefore that Linde Hall was built not later than that year.

Green-glazed long tiles were found at the site. The report gives no further information on quantity, size and quality.³³⁰

The Sanqing Hall 三清殿 is the third hall in the complex of Daming Palace, in the ruins of which Tang *sancai* architectural material was found. This Hall, with a plan of 73.25 metres wide and 47.65 metres deep (Figure 2.22),³³¹ is located in the northwest of the Daming complex (Map 2.2) and served as a place of worship of Laozi 老子³³² as a saint. The name Sanqing literally means “three pure”, referring to Laozi as “One of the Three Pure Ones”.³³³ Daoism has long been the traditional belief to which the Chinese people adhered. Nevertheless, Buddhism was already well-established in China from the fourth-fifth century AD and was also accepted by the successive emperors. As a consequence, Daoism and Buddhism were practiced

³²⁸ “In the year of Qianfeng 乾封 (corresponding to AD 666)...the Emperor arrived in the capital, first [the Emperor] paid respect to the Taimiao 太廟 (Kongfuzi Temple), the same day [the Emperor] entertained all the officials in the Jingyunge 景雲閣 (one of the room of Linde Hall)...” 乾封元年...帝至京師，先謁太廟，是日景雲閣宴群臣...*Ce Fu Yuan Gui*, vol, 110.

³²⁹ *Ce Fu Yuan Gui* 冊府元龜 was compiled by Wang Qinruo 王欽若 (AD 965-AD 1025) on the order of Emperor Zhenzong 宋真宗 (AD 968-AD 1022) of the Song dynasty. It is a book about each emperor in the history of China and the politics in the reign of each emperor. The editing work started in AD 1005 and completed in AD 1013.

³³⁰ *KG* 2006,7, pp. 45

³³¹ Yang Hongxun, 2001, p. 461.

³³² Laozi 老子 is regarded as the founder of Daoism or Taoism.

³³³ According to Taoist narratives, Laozi's one breath can be transformed into three pures 老子一氣化三清, alluding to three persons, Zhiqing 至清, Shangqing 上清 and Taiqing 太清 who are three Taoist deities. *Taoism Dictionary*, 1994, p. 74.

at the same time, though emperors have always favoured Daoism. In the Tang era, only from the reign of Empress Wu Zetian, did Buddhism overcome Daoism and become the religion of state. The following texts record the way in which the emperors of the Tang promoted or directed religions:

- In AD 625, Emperor Gaozu issued a decree named "Laozi in Front, Buddhism at Rear":

Laoism, Confucianism are the ancestor religions of the land (country); Buddhism prevailing later, appropriately obeys the custom of courtesy; [I] order Laoism in priority, then Confucianism, last is Buddhism. 老教孔教，此土先宗，釋教後興，宜崇客禮，令老先、次孔、末後釋宗。³³⁴

- In AD 637, when Emperor Taizong succeeded to the throne, he also issued a decree on the order of priorities of religions:

From today onwards, [when] offering dinner [or] position in a row, in respect of order, Daoist and Nüguan 女冠 (female Daoist) can be in front of monk and nun. 自今已後，齋供行立，至於稱謂，道士女冠可在僧尼之前。³³⁵

- In AD 674, Emperor Gaozong relaxed the rules that the preceding emperors had made and issued a decree stating that:

When dining and attending gatherings in public or in private, Daoist and Nüguan 女冠 (female Daoist) are at the east side, monks and nuns are at the west side, no need [bothering about] front or rear. 公私齋會及參集之處，道士女冠在東，僧尼在西，不須更爲先後。³³⁶

³³⁴ *Xu Gaoseng Zhuan* 續高僧傳, Biography of Shi Hicheng 釋慧乘傳.

³³⁵ *Guanghongmingji* 廣弘明集, *juan.* 28.

³³⁶ *Tang Huiyao* 唐會要, *juan.* 49.

- After Empress Wu Zetian took power, she reformed the order completely and decreed that:

Buddhism is above Daoism, monks and nuns are in front of daoist and Nüguan

女冠 (female Taoist). 釋教在道法這上，僧尼處道士女冠之前。³³⁷

From the above imperial decrees and orders, despite the imposition of orders or the reversal of priorities, it is clear that the two religions – the native Daoism and the imported Buddhism – were respected and practiced at the same time, albeit to different degrees.

No Tang texts that record when the Sanqing Hall was built. The finds of Tang *sancai* architectural material at the ruins of the Sanqing Hall consist of glazed tiles. These tiles are of particular interest because of their very lively combinations of colours – dark purple, turquoise blue, yellow and green –, a combination discovered so far only in this site (Figure 2.23). The archaeological report does not provide further information. However, during the middle of the Tang era, the skill of working with *sancai* colours had reached a level high enough to make possible fine quality imitations of many objects, with good shaping of the clay and the application of different colour combinations. It could be imagined that the particular combination of colours (white for gold, green for wood, black for water, red for fire, yellow for earth) and the way they were applied to *sancai* ware used in the Sanqing Hall referred to the Five Elements 五行,³³⁸ which are part of the essential thought of Daoism.

³³⁷ *Jiu Tang Shu* 舊唐書, *juan*. 6.

³³⁸ The Five Elements 五行, one of the Chinese traditional universal system theories, are metal 金, wood 木, water 水, fire 火 and earth 土. Each element is represented by a different colour and stands for a different system, such as seasons, directions and climate. Metal is represented by white and stands for Autumn, East and drought. Wood is represented by green and stands for Spring, West and wind. Water is represented by black, and stands for Winter, North and cold. Fire is represented by red and stands for Summer, South and heat.

As mentioned earlier, the three Halls detailed in the preceding pages are all located within the complex of the Daming Palace. Although we have no way to establish the year in which each hall of the palace was built, we know that construction of the Daming Palace began under Emperor Taizong in AD 634 and was interrupted the following year. Construction restarted under Emperor Gaozong in AD 662 and the whole complex was completed in AD 663. We also know from text records that the entire complex was destroyed by fire in AD 895, towards the end of the Tang dynasty during the reign of the second last Tang emperor, Emperor Zhaozong 昭宗 (AD 867-AD 904). From then, the Daming complex was abandoned.

If these dates suggest that *sancai* architectural material was being already utilized during the Tang period, we should consider that the earliest possible time of their use on Tang imperial buildings to be around AD 663, the year when work on the Daming Palace was carried out under the rule of Emperor Gaozong. Yet we also know that by that time, Tang *sancai* objects were already used for burials.³³⁹ The factor determining the later use of *sancai* as architectural material is the difference in quality between the objects excavated in tombs and the finer glazing and the brighter colour of the tiles. Tomb objects, such as those excavated from the tomb of Zheng Rentai 鄭仁泰 (buried in AD 664), and considered to be the earliest dated items, appear to be experimental products compared with the finds of architectural material from the

Earth is represented by yellow and stands for the Long Summer, the centre and humidity. The Five Elements theory extends into many different categories of things. It is supposed to describe the relationship and interactions between different phenomena. Taoism, Dictionary, 1994, pp. 220.

³³⁹ For more details, see Chapter One of this thesis, p. 38.

above mentioned Halls with their skillfully controlled glaze and absence of dropping. This difference leads to the assumption that *sancai* architectural material was produced in the middle of the Tang, when *sancai* was at its height. This assumption can be supported by the fact that objects excavated from the tomb of Princess Yongtai 永泰公主 (buried in AD 706), present a finer quality than those unearthed in earlier tombs as a result of being a product of the mid-Tang period.

Moreover, because the halls and buildings of the complex of the Daming Palace had undergone restoration years after the buildings were completed, there is reason to assume that only then, namely in the middle of the Tang period, was this fine *sancai* architectural material utilized.

We move now to the second site in Xi'an, Shaanxi province, namely the Huaqing Palace, which consists of a complex of buildings located in an area of hot springs in Lintong county 臨潼縣, thirty kilometers east of Xi'an. The area, with an altitude of 429-450 metres, is surrounded by a range of mountains centered on Mount Li 驪山 which, with its peak at 1302 metres,³⁴⁰ lies at the south of the county. In different parts of the complex, each one of the five Tang emperors who were involved in the construction of the Huaqing Palace (Emperor Taizong, 太宗, AD 624-AD 649, Emperor Gaozong 高宗, AD 649-AD 683, Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗, AD 712-AD 756, and Emperor Daizong 代宗, AD 762-AD 779) had in turn erected buildings or added extensions. In an archeological excavation undertaken at the ruins of this complex

³⁴⁰ Tang Huaqinggong is a combined archaeological reports on Huaqinggong palace site. Tang Huaqinggong, 1998, pp. 1-7.

of buildings, a most important find of *sancai* architectural material was unearthed, more specifically at the location of the Lianhua Bath 蓮花湯 (lotus bath), one of the baths in the Huaqing Palace. The find is a gutter spout in the shape of a dragon head decorated with two colours of glaze, green and yellow (Figure 2.24). The head is mainly in green, whereas part of the eyes and the two horns are in bright yellow. The two colours do not overlap, nor is there any glaze dropping, which suggests that it was skillfully made by experienced hands. The piece is 32.8-36.9 cm long, 20 cm wide and 21.5cm high. We have no Tang texts that give any indication of the year of construction of the Lianhua Bath. Archaeologists presume it was in AD 723³⁴¹ which, if proved correct, could lead us to confirm that the use of large *sancai* architectural material started not later than that date.

Now let us look at the finds of *sancai* architectural material in the sites of the two palaces in Luoyang, Henan province, cited in the beginning of this section: Shangyang Palace and Wanxiangshengong provide significant evidence for determining the time when *sancai* was employed for buildings. We have already referred in section 1.1. of this chapter to the Shangyang Palace as having been built in AD 675. The archaeological report mentions that a large quantity of glazed tiles was found in the ruins of a pavilion in that palace. There were green tiles and yellow tiles. The report gives no information either on the size or the quality or on the exact

³⁴¹ Archaeologists examined the large quantity of unglazed tiles and bricks that were found together with the dragon-head pipe link. From hand marks of labourers and strip patterns noticed on tiles and bricks, they believe that these objects have the character of architectural material used in the period between AD 650 and AD 741. Further, archaeologists argued that a text recorded that in AD 723 Emperor Xuanzong stopped a construction site in the Huaqing Palace in order to support the construction of the Lianhua Bath. For more detail see Tang Huaqinggong, 1998, pp. 245-247.

number of glazed tiles found. Yet it says that in the area of the pavilion, the finds consisted only of glazed tiles, without any unglazed ones. The report suggests that the roof of the pavilion was covered with the *sancai* tiles only.³⁴² This reveals that the year when *sancai* as architectural material started to be used was as early as AD 675, forty-eight years before the date of construction of the Lianhua Bath at the Huaqing Palace, namely AD 723. The Shangyang palace must have been an outstanding edifice that became an inspiration for many Tang poets.³⁴³ In his poem, *Dongdu Fu* 東都賦, the poet Li Geng 李庚 describes the beauty of the glazed tile roof as ... reflecting a green luminescence...:

Shangyang Palace has many different colours;
Sets of tiles reflecting a green luminescence, beams like overlapping rainbows
Hundred blocks long horizontally, ten zhang in height;
Above ground buildings are landmarks, rivers flow between the blocks.
Surrounded by clouds linked with red clouds, words [can not be stopped to] describe the
magnificent [view].

上陽別宮，丹粉多狀；
鴛瓦磷翠，虹梁疊狀。
橫延百堵，高量十丈；
出地標圖，臨流寫障。
霄倚霞連，屹屹言言。

Wanxiangshengong, the second site in Luoyang, Henan province, was completed in AD 668. It was a building serving for the worship of heaven and earth. The construction was designed according to the ritual text, *Zhou Yi* 周易,³⁴⁴ in a way that

³⁴² *KG* 1998, pp. 70-71.

³⁴³ Many poets wrote poems about the Shangyang Palace, including Li Bai 李白 (AD 701-AD 762).

³⁴⁴ *Zhou Yi* 周易, *Changes of the Zhou*, is said to be composed by King Wen of Zhou 周文王 (about 1152BC –

it could act as intermediary between heaven and earth. However, Empress Wu Zetian ordered another building, next to the Wanxiangshengong, where a Buddha figure was installed. This new building, named Tiantang 天堂, caught fire in AD 695 and was destroyed together with the Wanxiangshengong. Nevertheless, in the following year, AD 696, Empress Wu Zetian ordered the reconstruction of both buildings. Unfortunately, the archaeological excavation carried out at the site of the Wanxiangshengong did not produce much result in view of the fact that many modern buildings have been erected there. The report simply mentions that *sancai* architectural material was found at the site.

Taking the above dates as reference, we note that Wanxiangshengong was built seven years before the Shangyang Palace, but it was also rebuilt, together with the Tiantang, twenty one years after the Shangyang Palace was completed. The discovery of *sancai* material on the sites of these palaces does not provide evidence that *sancai* material had been used in the original constructions, namely between AD 668 and AD 675. It would more likely have been used during the reconstructions in later periods.

However, from the observations on the architectural material unearthed in the different sites mentioned above, it is suggested that the use of Tang *sancai* for construction started in the later period of the Emperor Gaozong's reign. As already demonstrated, when Emperor Gaozong died in AD 683 and Empress Wu Zetian

1056BC). It is a work about changes. The theory of change is based on the *yin* 陰 and *yang* 陽, the two essential elements of the universe, from which future can be predicted. Chinese ancestors used the theory and the method of reading it to forecast state changes, war, weather, health and so forth.

succeeded to the throne, production of Tang *sancai* was at its highest in quality and quantity. Reference can be made here to the finds in the tombs of Yongtai, Zhanghuai and Yide.³⁴⁵

The discovery of a large quantity of glazed tiles in one area at the site of Shangyang Palace points to the possibility that there were, in that particular place, some small buildings which were covered entirely with *sancai* tiles. At other places at the palace site, very few tiles were found, which suggests that large buildings were probably not decorated fully with *sancai* material. However, the *sancai* dragon-head spout discovered may imply that many other features of the constructions may have been glazed. After all, the large tomb objects, such as Heavenly Kings, horses and camels, measured sometimes about one metre, which means that *sancai* glaze could be used with larger scale architectural material. However, the cost of *sancai* tiles and large architectural material was probably much higher than that of unglazed tiles, which probably explains why *sancai* was not widely used for buildings.

The observation also suggests that *sancai* was used only for imperial buildings during the Tang. Yellow and green were the main colours for most of the buildings, except for the Sanqing Hall, a Taoist edifice, where other colours were used. If we take a look at the Forbidden City, a construction of the Ming period (AD 1368-AD 1644), the main buildings for the emperor are covered with yellow tiles, while those of the section where princes lived are in green. Roofs of the library as well as the building

³⁴⁵ See Table 1.1.1.

for worshipping the Water God, the God of Xuantian 玄天上帝,³⁴⁶ a Daoist deity, are covered with dark purple, almost black, tiles. The whole construction of the Forbidden City was based on Daoist concepts, in terms of layout and the application of colours.³⁴⁷

Another support of the suggestion that *sancai* was effectively employed as architectural material is the find at the site of the Huangbao kiln 黄堡窑 in Shaanxi province, one of the Tang *sancai* kilns. A dragon-headed spout and green tiles are similar to those found at the Daminggong excavated at the kiln site. A yellow glazed tile-end was also found. Although it is surprising that no tile-ends were found at the sites of palaces and temples, it is possible that *sancai* tile-ends were also used for Tang buildings. The Nara *sancai* tile and tile-ends unearthed at the Daijiji Temple support the view they were installed there under the influence of the Japanese monks who, during the time they spent studying in Chang'an, must have encountered decoration of buildings in China.³⁴⁸

At the last site mentioned in the beginning of this section, the Longquan Palace, Bohai State, Heilongjiang province, another section of dragon-head, 39 cm long – not a pipe link, but a decorative architectural object – was unearthed. This piece is decorated with a dull yellow glaze (Figure 2.25). The workmanship is rather poor; the dragon head is not properly shaped and has a totally different appearance when compared

³⁴⁶ God of Xuantian 玄天上帝 is also called God of Zhenwu 真武帝, the God of North, and has the form of a snake combined with a tortoise. It is also regarded as Water God. Daoism Dictionary, 1994, p. 413.

³⁴⁷ Green refers to wood, pointing to growth – a reason for covering the roofs for buildings of princes with green tiles. Dark purple is for black, which refers to water – the element that would protect the library against fire.

³⁴⁸ See Chapter 2 of this thesis, 1.3, pp.118-119.

with the dragon head found in the Huaqing Palace site in Xi'an, Shaan'xi province, in central China (Figure 2.24). Together with the dragon-head architectural object, another large piece was found (Figure 2.26), the tail of *chiwei* 鷓尾,³⁴⁹ 97 cm high, decorated with yellow glaze. Scholars argue that these particular pieces were made locally, as no *sancai* kilns in central China produced material with such features. Furthermore, it is unlikely that architectural material was brought from Shaan'xi province to Heilongjiang province, because of the large distance between them. Therefore, it seems likely that a local kiln producing *sancai* ware existed in Heilongjiang province.

We do not know the exact year when *sancai* was applied in the building of Longquan Palace 龍泉府, but from the changes of the location of the capital of Bohai State, we know the Palace was re-built again between AD794 and AD795. When the Bohai State was established, the capital was in Xiande Palace 顯德府³⁵⁰. In AD755, the power base was moved to the Longquan Palace, but after three decades it was moved again to the Longyuan Palace 龍原府³⁵¹ so as to have a greater control on the east part of the country, after the extension of the territory further to the north and the east. In AD 794-AD 795 the capital was moved back to the Longquan Palace. Therefore the *sancai* architectural elements were almost certainly made in the eighth century.

In summary, few interesting dates are so far revealed concerning the use of Tang

³⁴⁹ Chiwei 鷓尾 is a part of the decorative elements of the roof of palace.

³⁵⁰ Xiande Palace 顯德府 is the west of present Helong county 和龍縣, Jilin 吉林.

³⁵¹ Longyuan Palace 龍原府 is present Balian city 八連城, Huichun 琿春, Jilin.

sancai architectural material, which remains a subject that is quite new to scholars. Archaeological excavations in the last decades at the sites of imperial buildings and temples brought important data, on which scholars do not seem to have focused yet. The little we know derives from the cases mentioned above, which demonstrate: (a) that half-glazed tiles were found at the site of the Hanyuan Hall, which was built between AD 662 and AD 663; (b) that fully glazed tiles were found at the site of the Linde Hall, for which we do not have an exact date of construction, but that the building was already in use in AD 666, (c) that the roof of a pavilion covered entirely with *sancai* glazed tiles was built not later than AD 675; and (d) that the finds at the site of the Sanqing Hall suggest that it was during the Tang that combinations of lead-glaze colours had been initiated for use in architectural material for imperial edifices.

With regard to the larger decorative *sancai* architectural material, although we have no evidence to determine the date when they started to serve for buildings, we can easily assume that their use began not later than AD 723, when construction of the Lianhua Bath at the Huaqing Palace took place.

3. Exports of Tang *sancai*

This thesis focuses on the research of Tang *sancai* in China. However, in this section, Exports of Tang *sancai*, I shall briefly look at the research made by scholars on fragments of *sancai* excavated outside China. I shall also develop in this section

the study of Tang *sancai* at Yangzhou 揚州, a principal port for imports and exports during the Tang dynasty.

China did not take an important role in seafaring during the Tang era;³⁵² it was the Arabs who dominated the trade by sea and set up commercial routes between China and the Middle East.³⁵³ Hourani wrote: “The sea route, from the Persian Gulf to Canton, was the longest in regular use by mankind before the European expansion in the sixteenth century, and it merits attention as a remarkable achievement. The occurrence of sea trade between the Persian Gulf and China at this period of history was made possible by the simultaneous existence of large prosperous states at both ends of the route.”³⁵⁴ In order to administer the sea trade in AD 714, the Tang court established an office for managing seagoing junks, and appointed Shiboshi 市舶使 as Maritime Trade Commissioner in Guangzhou 廣州.³⁵⁵ There were six active ports along the east coast of China at that time, namely Guangzhou 廣州, Quanzhou 泉州, Mingzhou 明州,³⁵⁶ Yangzhou 揚州, Hangzhou 杭州 and Jiaozhou 交州.³⁵⁷

Among the six ports, up to now, excavations have taken places in all the above places

³⁵² Many Chinese scholars referred to the Tang text recorded in the *Jiu Tang Shu* 舊唐書 to suggest that China held the largest maritime power during the Tang: “...all harbours in the world receive ships and through tributaries they connect *ba* 巴, *han* 漢, leading to *min* 閩, *yue* 越, [they link] seven waters and ten tarns, three rivers and five lakes. Administrations control and conduct the [traffic] on rivers up to the sea. Big barges and huge ships, thousands of boats, trading come and go...”...天下諸津，舟航所聚，旁通巴、漢，前指閩、越，七澤十藪，三江五湖，控引河洛，兼包淮海。弘舸巨艦，千軸萬艘，交貿往還...*Jiu Tang Shu* 舊唐書, *june*. 94, p.2997. Cui Rong 崔融 (AD653-AD706), an Academician 崇文館學士, describes in the text the flourishing water traffic and the prosperous trade during the reign of Emperor Zhongzhong. In his role as a special counsel and in assisting to draft imperial pronouncements, Cui Rong proposed to the Emperor to collect a tax on the water trade. I argue that this part of the text, which only gives a description of the sea trade, is not appropriate to be used as evidence that China was a maritime power.

³⁵³ For more discussion, see Lopez and Raymond, 1967 and Hourani, 1995.

³⁵⁴ Hourani, 1995, p.61.

³⁵⁵ *Jiu Tang Shu* 舊唐書, *june*. 8, p.174.

³⁵⁶ Mingzhou 明州 is present-day Ningbo 寧波, in Zhejiang province 浙江省.

³⁵⁷ Jiaozhou 交州 is present-day Hanoi, Vietnam, which was a part of China during the Tang era.

over the years. No archaeological reports reported the finds of Tang *sancai* wares in those places up to date have been reported, except at the port of Yangzhou.

3.1 T ang *sancai* in Yangzhou

During the time of the Sui and the Tang, the city of Yangzhou, was located in the north side of the present-day Yangzhou city. A partial excavation and survey in the ancient city began in the 1970s. In 1987, a full excavation work was undertaken which lasted more than ten years.³⁵⁸ According to the archaeological report, the city of ancient Yangzhou lies over 4200 metres from north to south and 3120 meters from east to west. The locations of about twenty-four bridges were discovered and annotated. These finds confirm that Yangzhou city was surrounded by water. Two sunken ships were also found during the excavation.³⁵⁹

During the archaeological excavation in 1973 and 1974 at the ruins of the Tang city of Yangzhou, 598 Tang *sancai* shards and some other *sancai* objects were found among a quantity of over 15000 pieces of different types of ceramic shards. Green glaze ceramic shards constitute 49% of the find and white glaze ceramic shards 15%. The

³⁵⁸ Li Yuquan discussed the business environment of the city of Yangzhou during the Sui and Tang dynasties. Li Yuquan, 2003, pp. 69-70.

³⁵⁹ No detail about the two sunken ships is given in the report. Li Yuquan, 2003, p. 72. Other Tang sunken ships were also found in China. In 1974, one sunken ship was salvaged at Jiangtangdai 江唐代 port, Yuyao 余姚 county, Ningbo 寧波 city, Zhejiang 浙江 Province. One stone brick with a carving of the date of the fifth year of Qianning 乾寧, corresponding to AD 898, was found in the wreckage, in which some *changsha* kiln 長沙窑 wares, as well as some green-and-black glazed wares were also discovered. The ship was lying at the bottom of the waters at the port that served international trade, which presupposes that it had sunk before its departure overseas. In 1999, eight other vessels were found in the Grand Canal 大運河 in the part in Anhui 安徽 province China. It is believed that these eight ships were being used for domestic trade.

shards consisted mainly of fragments of utensils.³⁶⁰ A skillfully molded double-fish green glazed jar, 23 cm high, mimicking metal work, was one of the highlights (Figure 2.27).

Archaeologists claim that the white shards are probably from *xing* kiln. Except for the green-glaze ceramics, which are probably from the *yue* kiln in Zhejiang province 浙江省, the white ceramics and *sancai* were produced in north China. They were most probably transported to Yangzhou, one of the ports for trade, through the Grand Canal 大運河, together with the green-glaze ware for export. “The greatness of Yangzhou and the Grand Canal alike were the work of the emperors of Sui, but their true flowering came in the eight century,”³⁶¹ wrote Schafer. The Grand Canal 大運河, a waterway about 1770 kilometres long linking inner China to the port of Yangzhou, was the main conduit for the export of ceramics by sea. Little evidence was found to suggest that ceramic trade was conducted also via the Silk Road during the Tang. The reasons are obvious: ceramics were too heavy and could be easily broken; a camel could carry a very limited load; when camels were to rest or be fed, the goods had to be unloaded, which would cause considerable labour for the traders and an increase in the risk of damage to the fragile material. Lopez and

³⁶⁰ *WW*, 1977, 9, pp. 16-30.

³⁶¹ Schafer, 1985, p. 18. Schafer further suggests: “With the phenomenal increase in population and material wealth in that era, the farmlands of the Yellow River watershed could no longer provide for the two capitals and the other northern cities, so that cereals had to be imported from the Yangze region. These new demands put an unforeseen strain on the old canal system. A remedy was found in 734: granaries were built along the route from Yang-chou (Yangzhou) to Chang’an at critical points where grain might be properly stored whenever the system could not provide for its transfer beyond such a point. This prevented delays and stoppages, and rot and pilfering, and permitted the transshipment of rice and millet at leisure to vessels of appropriate size. In this way, a steady flow northward was assured. Unanticipated, or at least not openly advocated, were the burdens imposed on the boats and waterways of the new relay system by the transfer of increasing quantities of luxury goods from the far South: ivory, tortoise shell, and sandalwood were heaped into lighters originally designed to receive bags of grain.” Schafer, 1985, pp. 18-19.

Raymond suggest that “Throughout the Middle Ages transportation by water was far important than transportation and travel by land, especially in long-distance trade. It was cheaper, usually faster, and often safer.”³⁶²

This assumption is supported by the find of the Belitung cargo, a remarkable Tang cargo which sank on the western coast of Indonesia, in the western Java Sea. The vessel was heading for the Middle East and was laden with some 60,000 trade goods. It was salvaged in 1998/1999. In his study of this discovery, John Guy wrote: “Of the 60,000 artifacts recovered from the wreck site, ceramics made up 98%. Of these, the vast bulk is the iron-decorated stoneware from the Changsha kilns of Hunan province (56,500 pieces). Relatively small quantities of ceramics from other regions make up the balance: green glazed Yue wares from Hunan and possibly Zhejiang (200 pieces), white glazed stoneware (350 pieces) possibly Ding ware from Hebei, and white-green stoneware (200 pieces), together with an assortment of coarse green stoneware identified as being the product of the kilns of Guangdong province.”³⁶³

Guy added that the cargo contained the richest and largest consignment of early ninth-century Chinese trade ceramics ever found, together with the most significant hoard of gold and silver vessels to be recovered from a single site outside China.

One *changsha* bowl from the cargo bore a date, thus giving an important information on the time the wreck. Guy wrote: “One of the Changsha calligraphic bowls has engraved on the base its date of manufacture: ‘the 16th day of the 7th month in the

³⁶² Lopez and Raymond studied medieval trade in the Mediterranean world. Lopez and Raymond, 1967, p. 239.

³⁶³ Guy, 2001-2001, p. 17.

2nd year of Baoli era', corresponding to AD 826."³⁶⁴ It can therefore be said that the Tang *sancai* wares carried by the Belitung were produced in the late Tang, hence after the An Lushan rebellion which took place in AD 755 when quality started to decline. Surprisingly, however, the Tang *sancai* wares from the Belitung cargo have been found to be of a high-quality. Considering that the latest dated tomb where Tang *sancai* was unearthed was from AD 850, namely only twenty four years after the production of the Belitung ware, it can be argued that there has been a short period of revival of Tang *sancai* manufacture, probably due to the trade.

Amongst the two hundred *sancai* pieces, which Guy called white-green stone wares, there were fine *sancai* objects, such as cups, dishes, and pots (Figure 2.28). According to Scott, most of the pieces have heavily molded decorations (Figure 2.29).³⁶⁵ It is likely that these utensil-shaped objects, quite decorative as they appear, may have been designed for display, or as containers for presentation. An example is the presence among these *sancai* ware of one unusual large cylindrical green-splashed box and cover with an incised non-Chinese geometric design. The box has a diameter of 38.8 cm. The geometric design was a popular feature of the Middle East,³⁶⁶ and it responded to the taste and demand of that area probably. This hypothesis is supported by "the most remarkable vessel in this group", as Scott calls it,

³⁶⁴ Guy, 2001-2002, p. 25.

³⁶⁵ Scott writes: "There are a number of splashed bowls with applied relief decoration on the interior. The dragon form seen in the centre of some of these bowls relates closely to dragons seen on Han dynasty tiles, and on Tang bronze mirrors, such as that in the Shannxi Historical Museum. Dragons in this form can also be seen on silver gilt vessels, for example on the base of a bowl excavated in 1970 at Hejiacun. Some of the cargo's green splashed, high-footed goblets have the same dragon appliqué on their interiors. Others have spouts and small modeled creatures, such as fish, tortoises, or ducks, in the bottom of the vessel. There is a variety of large dishes, basins and covered jars among the splashed wares, a number of which have incised decoration. A well spotted splashed ewer, which relates closely in shape to white ewers from the Xing kiln, and cups with small ring handles surmounted by molded thumb rests were also recovered." Scott, 2003, p.17.

³⁶⁶ Lane made significant research on Islamic ceramic from Persia, Syria, Egypt and Turkey. Lane, 1971.

a massive dragon-headed, splashed green ewer, 105.8 cm high (Figure 2.30), with an elevated base and a long slender neck, a shape was widely copied in ceramic, but its origin is metal work from the Middle East.³⁶⁷ This elegant object imitated the smooth curves of metal work. Its height and slender shape made this ewer indeed look fragile and noticeably not suitable for use as a container to carry liquids; yet it represented a remarkable decorative object well fitted for display. Although the shape conforms to a Middle Eastern style, the Chinese dragon head and the ceramic body conferred on it an exotic character. It is not implausible that elite Middle Eastern customers were eager to acquire special decorative ceramics coming from faraway China, in the same manner as their contemporaries in the Chinese court were interested in exotic objects.

3.2 Tang *sancai* and blue-and-white ceramic

The discovery in 1975, during an excavation in the ruins of the Tang city of Yangzhou, of a broken piece of a stoneware pillow has become the subject of many debates. It was the first Tang period shard decorated with cobalt blue. It measured 8.4 cm long, 7.6 cm wide and 0.6 cm thick, and carried leaf-shaped dots placed within geometric lines (Figure 2.31).³⁶⁸ Again in 1983, a hoard of about thirty pieces of shards decorated with cobalt blue was unearthed in the same area.³⁶⁹

There is much discussion about whether these shards can be considered as the earliest

³⁶⁷ For more discussion, see Rawson, 1982, pp.20-22.

³⁶⁸ *WW*, 1977, 9, p. 29.

³⁶⁹ *WW*, 1985, 10, a, pp. 67-71.

appearance of blue-and-white porcelain. Some scholars support this idea, taking the above mentioned shards as evidence. Others argue that there is no link between these cobalt blue-decorated wares and the blue-and-white ceramics of the Yuan dynasty 元代 (AD 1271-1368). The lasting debate is about whether these shards can be considered as the original of Chinese blue-and-white. Without taking into account this discussion, my thesis will deal only with the relationship between these Tang blue-and-white wares and Tang *sancai*.

Feng Xianmeng 馮先銘 suggests that the designs of Tang blue-and-white ware have been influenced by Tang *sancai* decoration. He speculates that these shards were fired in the Gongxian kiln.³⁷⁰ Zhu Boqian 朱伯謙 believes it is logical that the under-glazed blue appeared in the Tang era considering, firstly, the skill of the Changsha kiln potters in performing the technique of under-glazing and, secondly, the fact that the blue colour used for Tang *sancai* ware was the same cobalt blue that was used for the Tang blue-and-white ware.³⁷¹ Li Zaihua 李再華, on the other hand, argues that it would be a narrow way of thinking if the link was to be searched with the Changsha kiln. Li supports the idea of Feng Xianming that Tang *sancai* has influenced the decoration style of Tang blue-and-white ware and assumed that the firing was made at the Gongxian kiln. Moreover, Li suggests that the cobalt blue used by Tang blue-and-white ware was imported from Persia.³⁷²

³⁷⁰ Feng Xianming discussed the importance of studying the finds of the early blue-and-white ceramic. He holds the view that the shards of cobalt blue decorated ware found in Yangzhou should be considered as the earliest Chinese blue-and-white ware. Feng Xianming, 1990, 2.

³⁷¹ Zhu Boqian, 1980, 4, p.

³⁷² Li Zaihua, 1990, 2.

Perfect dishes of Tang blue-and-white together with Tang *sancai* ware were also salvaged from the Belitung shipwreck. Recent research made by Scott³⁷³ on the blue-decorated wares (Figure 2.32) found in this Belitung cargo provides significant information. Scott claims that they are strikingly similar to the blue-and-white wares excavated in Yangzhou 揚州 (Figure 2.33), and that "these fine white wares decorated in brilliant cobalt blue are the only complete Tang high-fired vessels with painted cobalt blue decoration so far discovered. The first reported Tang high-fired blue and white shards, together with some monochrome blue pieces, were found at the Xiaohuangye kiln at the Gongxian kiln complex in 1957 and appeared to come from a bowl, brush washer, or globular tripod."³⁷⁴ (Figure 2.34)

Scott believes that Gongxian appears to be the only kiln area in China where high-fired, cobalt blue-decorated ceramics dating to the Tang dynasty have so far been found. She also suggests that these wares were decorated using imported cobalt, probably from the Near East. Scott argues that "the cobalt used at Gongxian and that used on the Yangzhou sherds has been analyzed and was found to be similar to that used for blue lead-fluxed glazes on *sancai* wares made at Gongxian in the Tang period. This was imported, rather pure, cobalt containing only traces of copper and nickel, and quite different from the imported high-iron cobalt of the Yuan dynasty, or the high-manganese cobalt found in China itself. The body of Tang Yangzhou blue and white wares was found to be similar to Gongxian white wares".³⁷⁵

³⁷³ Scott, 2003, pp. 13-25.

³⁷⁴ Scott, 2003, pp. 13-15.

³⁷⁵ Scott, 2003, pp.13-15.

Although there is no debate about the influence of Chinese wares on the development of ceramic production in the countries along the Persian Gulf,³⁷⁶ the question should be raised as to whether there was a stimulus from the Islamic world on the development of Tang *sancai* and to what extent. There is no research that seems to have been made on this particular issue. However, scholars generally recognise in the combination of splashed green, buff and the most popular orange pattern of Tang *sancai* ware replicated elements of Islamic designs. They also note that some of the wares copied foreign metal works.

Foreign merchants not only brought exotic things to China; their ships or camels also carried a large amount of Chinese objects back to their countries of origin. These goods consisted mainly of Chinese textiles and ceramics which in turn influenced and stimulated production of similar items in the places to which they were dispatched.³⁷⁷

3.3 T ang *sancai* outside of China

Fragments of Tang *sancai* ware were found not only in Nara (Japan) as described above, but also at Mantai (Sri Lanka), in Fustat (Egypt), and in Samarra (Iraq).

The discovery of Tang *sancai* wares in Japan has been well studied by Japanese scholars. About 290 shards were excavated at 57 sites in that country (Table 1.3).³⁷⁸

³⁷⁶ Visibly the shape of the wares from Xing and Ding kilns were examples for Islamic potters.

³⁷⁷ A detailed discussion about replicas of textile patterns as decorations of some *sancai* objects shall be found in the next Chapter, under Technology and Source of Innovation.

³⁷⁸ Narasaki studied about the development of lead-glazed ware and Japanese *sancai*, Nara *sancai*, in Japan. Narasaki, 2000, pp. 60-65

About 70% of the Tang *sancai* wares were found at the ruins of cities and temples; ruins of villages and tombs share the rest. The excavated *sancai* shards indicate the use of pillows, bowls, cups, jars, vases, ewers, lids, ink-stones and figures.³⁷⁹ No *sancai* figures of horses, camels or Heavenly Kings were found in Japan. There are 30 pieces of Chinese Tang *sancai* stoneware pillows and 27 bowls and dishes that have been handed down and can be found among the treasures of the Shōsō-in the repository at Todai-ji temple in Nara, Japan.³⁸⁰

On the finds of *sancai* fragments in Mantai, Sri Lanka, not much information can be obtained.

At Fustat, Gyllensvärd claims that some four thousands shards were excavated there between 1964 and 1972,³⁸¹ among which some *sancai* shards were included. He claims, however, that these *sancai* shards are from the Liao dynasty.³⁸² Gyllensvärd's assumption is indeed corroborated by the patterns and colours of these *sancai* shards.

In his contribution to the study on the link between China and the Middle East, Friedrich Sarre made important research on the finds of Tang *sancai* in Samarra. He

³⁷⁹ There are no details as to which *sancai* shards belonged to what type of figure.

³⁸⁰ For more discussion, see section 1.3, "Japanese Nara *sancai* and its relationship with Chinese Tang *sancai*", in Chapter Two.

³⁸¹ "During the 1930s, excavations were conducted at Fostat - old Cairo - by Baghat and quantities of Chinese ceramic sherds were picked up, but without any stratigraphical correlation....During the excavations conducted by the American Archeological Research Centre of Egypt at Fostat between 1964 and 1972, under the leadership of George Scanlon, the Figure changed. For the first time, a careful stratigraphical method was used which gave the possibility of more certain dates for many of the sherds found. Especially during the digging in 1969-72, a new type of porcelain was found in sanitarian pits which showed obvious similarities with that from Samarra ... Already after a short examination of some 4000 sherds from the latest excavations, it was easy to identify the various wares represented and which of them predominated. As before, Sung and Yuan celadon are by far the most numerous....The porcelain already referred to as Tang type, is also well represented ... three-coloured glaze, which could be Liao." Gyllensvärd, 1973, pp. 91-92.

³⁸² Gyllensvärd, 1973, p. 92.

successfully grouped the shards that were excavated at Samarra in Iraq into two distinct categories: 'Mesopotamische Keramik' and 'Ostasiatisches Steinzeug'. He believed that the latter group, which consisted of brightly coloured ware, was Chinese.³⁸³

The finds of *sancai* in Yangzhou were significant because they have the same features as those excavated in Samarra. The analysis made by Tite and Rawson confirms that the *sancai* shards from Samarra were in fact exported from China. Based on the results of neutron activation performed on these shards, this analysis has been established as a significant reference standard for the study of any comparison between the different productions and origins. The analysis contains detailed data of firing temperatures, composition of bodies and glazes – elements which are crucial for further research.³⁸⁴

4. Tang *sancai* and exotic lifestyle

One of the notable features of Tang *sancai* is its exotic character. Some of the utensil-shaped *sancai* wares copy metal work,³⁸⁵ with shapes and glazing unusual in China. An example, as shown in Figure 2.35, is a 35.5 cm-high phoenix-headed Tang *sancai* ewer from the collection of the Hakusturu Fine Art Museum in Japan, 白鶴美術館. Its body is smoothly rounded and is decorated with five levels of

³⁸³ Sarre, 1925.

³⁸⁴ Rawson, Tite and Hughes, 1987-88, pp. 39-61.

³⁸⁵ Tang *sancai* ware copied different kinds of materials: metal and lacquer work for shape; textile, metal and lacquer patterns for motives. More discussion will be found in Chapter Three of this thesis, "Technology and sources of innovation."

high-relief patterns; the slender neck stands upwards in a graceful curve decorated with circular lines. The shape of the ewer bears a resemblance to that of a Middle Eastern or Indian metal work.³⁸⁶ In contrast with the foreign appearance of this ewer, it is interesting to see that the five levels of decorations are a combination of popular Chinese motives and details borrowed from metal work ornamentations. The main pattern taking up the central level of the body is decorated with phoenixes, a typical Chinese motif, while the upper and lower levels of the central decoration are scrolling flowers, a kind of popular adornment often seen on metal works from Persia and Mediterranean areas.³⁸⁷ The decorations on the outer levels are heart-shaped petals of lotus flowers, a motif featured on Buddhist objects. The glazing of the ewer is made in green, yellow and white splashes, which gives an effect of metallic glitter. Such features respond to the two principal characteristics of Tang *sancai*: shapes based on metal work and brilliant glazes.

Rawson suggests that “Silver vessels seem to have been a new fashion, introduced in the late seventh and early eighth century as a result of a taste for luxuries from the west. A new range of vessel shapes, worked in a material hitherto little exploited in China, seems to have allowed craftsmen to range widely in their choice of ornament.”³⁸⁸

Ceramic copies of metal work did not start with the production of Tang *sancai* in the

³⁸⁶ 弓場紀知 studied Chinese Tang *sancai* on their forms and decoration. 弓場紀知, 1995, plate, 19.

³⁸⁷ Rawson’s significant research on motives in their full detail on metal works and ceramics in her paper, *The Ornament on Chinese Silver of the Tang Dynasty*, throws light on the influence of metal work on ceramics. For more details on flower motifs, see Rawson, 1982, p. 20.

³⁸⁸ Rawson, 1982, p. 23.

Tang dynasty, but centuries earlier.³⁸⁹ But Tang *sancai*, with its vivid lead-glaze colour combinations, allowed an accurate imitation with greater success.

From the sixth and seventh century already, the strong influence of foreign culture could be seen on ceramics. During that time, north China was ruled by a group of nomadic people, the Xianbei 鮮卑,³⁹⁰ who had already introduced metal vessels from Central Asia into China. The seventh emperor of the Northern Wei 北魏 (AD 386-AD 534) was Emperor Xiaowen 孝文帝 (AD 471-AD 499),³⁹¹ whose significant reform was the order he issued in AD 494, the same year he moved the capital to Luoyang 洛陽, on the policy of sinicization. This policy included the obligation to adopt Chinese surnames, to speak Chinese language, to wear Chinese clothes and to encourage intermarriages between Han Chinese and the Xianbei.

The new hybrid culture was now evident in ceramics. A green-glazed phoenix-headed ewer, 41.2 cm high, with a high-relief decoration around the body is shown in Figure 2.36. This ewer, unearthed in Jixian 薊縣, Hebei province 河北, shares the same general profile with a silver ewer (Figure 2.37), 37cm high, which was excavated in

³⁸⁹ Rawson suggests that “Under the early Chinese dynasties of the Shang, Zhou and Han (c.1700BC-AD220), bronze casting dominated high-quality vessel production. Bronze was used especially for the food, wine and water vessels in which sacrifices were offered to ancestors. This august function established bronze vessels at the top of the hierarchy. They were widely copied in ceramics, mainly for burial.” Rawson, 1989, p. 276.

³⁹⁰ The Xianbei 鮮卑 people were residing in the area of present day Daxing’an Mountain, in the northeast of China. They were non-Han people. The Xianbei had their first encounter with Chinese culture during the Han dynasty (206BC -AD 220), when they occupied the steppes in Mongolia, Hebei 河北 and Liaodong 遼東. In AD 386, the Xianbei occupied the northern part of China and established the dynasty of Northern Wei 北魏 (AD 386-AD 534). Pingcheng 平城, present day Datong 大同, in Shanxi province 山西省, was set up as their capital till AD 439 when it was moved to Luoyang 洛陽, Henan province 河南.

³⁹¹ Emperor Xiaowen 孝文帝 was born in AD 467. He was placed on the throne when he was five years old in AD471. He was brought up by his grandmother, Empress Wenchengwenming 文成文明皇后 (AD441-AD490) who also assisted him to rule the country in the beginning of his effective reign. Empress Wenchengwenming, being a Han Chinese, had a great influence over the Emperor for adopting the Han culture.

the tomb of Li Xian 李賢(AD? -AD569)in Guyuan 固原 Ningxia 寧夏.³⁹² Rawson has made a detailed comparison between the two ewers, and suggests that the large globular beads seen on the ceramic ewer were developed on Mediterranean metalwork and seem to have travelled east to Persia, Central Asia and China.³⁹³

During the Tang dynasty, China was one of the most powerful nations in the world. Foreign diplomatic policy provided a platform of culture and economic exchanges that brought exotic luxury and wealth to China. Empress Wu Zetian showed great generosity toward foreign ambassadors. *Tang Hui Yao* 唐會要 records in AD 700 an order issued by the Empress:

To the East till Korea, to the south as far as Zhenla State 真臘國,³⁹⁴ to the west as far as Persia and Tibet, as well as to the representative office of Jiankun 堅昆,³⁹⁵ to the north as far as Qidan, Turki[stan], Mohe 靺鞨³⁹⁶ and to the area of Tibet, or any other - all their ambassadors should be attended with care. Act accordingly. “東至高麗國，南至真臘國，西至波斯吐蕃，乃堅昆都督府，北至契丹、突厥、靺鞨、並爲入蕃，以外爲絕域，其使應給料，各依式。”³⁹⁷

Under this policy of rapprochement, many countries sent official delegations to China. Silla³⁹⁸ sent 89 delegations; Persia sent 39 delegations; Japan sent 20 delegations,

³⁹² Li Xian 李賢(AD?- AD 569) was a General of the Northern Zhou dynasty 北周 (AD 556-AD 581). *WW*, 1985, 11, pp. 1-20.

³⁹³ Rawson, 1991, p. 146.

³⁹⁴ Zhenla State 真臘國 was a state in the area of present Cambodia.

³⁹⁵ Jiankun 堅昆 was an area from the upstream of River Yenisei, presently in Russia, till Altay 阿勒泰 in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region 新疆維吾爾自治區, China.

³⁹⁶ Mohe 靺鞨 was an area north-east of China, presently in Helongjiang province.

³⁹⁷ *Tang Huiyao* 唐會要, *juan.* 100, p. 2136.

³⁹⁸ Silla (57BC – AD 935) was one of the Three Kingdoms which ruled the Korean Peninsula. Silla annihilated Baekje (18BC – AD 666) in AD 660 and Goguryeo (37BC –AD 668) in AD 668, and unified the Korean Peninsula, which became Silla. By the ninth century, Silla was again divided into three kingdoms when the Goryeo (AD 918- AD 1392) took over and reunified the peninsula in AD 936.

and so forth.³⁹⁹ Many foreigners arrived in China. These delegations and foreigners brought many kinds of unusual objects to present to the Chinese emperors.⁴⁰⁰ Objects unearthed at the Famen Temple site, are recognized as precious offerings by the Chinese emperor to the Holy Buddha Relic, included 20 glass wares from present-day Iraq, some decorated in gold.⁴⁰¹ These were part of the collection of exotic luxury goods the emperors had received as gifts.

Among foreigners, during the Tang dynasty, a large community of Sogdians lived in Chang'an. This group had a considerable impact on court life through the introduction of foreign customs and culture. Relations between Sogdians and China, recorded in texts since the Han period (BC 206-220AD), were mainly for trade.⁴⁰² The Sogdians were the most prominent merchants who established good relationships with the Tang court, where a number of them held official posts.⁴⁰³ They may have brought precious and curious things as presents to the emperors.⁴⁰⁴ It is quite possible, therefore, that their contribution has been significant in supporting an exotic life style and culture in the Tang court. Schafer states that "The capital's foreign population was proportionally large. This international element had a rather different cast form that of the southern port. It was chiefly made up of men from the North

³⁹⁹ Ge Chengyong, 2006, p. 14.

⁴⁰⁰ For more details, see Schafer, 1985; Ge Chengyong, 2006.

⁴⁰¹ For more details, see Famensi 2007. pp. 211-220; p. 244.

⁴⁰² Luo Feng, 2004, p. 30.

⁴⁰³ Some Sogdians held positions of Sabao 薩保, i.e. officials who were responsible for foreigners living in China during the Tang. The title of Sabao corresponded to a rank between the fifth and the ninth in the hierarchy of court officials. The official post of Sabao was already established in the North Qi (AD 550-AD 557). In recent archaeological excavations, tombs of Sabao were found, such as the tomb of Shi Jun 史君, a Sabao of the Northern Zhou dynasty 北周 (AD 557-AD 581), see *WW*. 2005, 3, pp. 4-33, and that of An Qi 安迺 who died in AD 579, see *WW*. 2001, 1, pp 4-26. The situation of the Sogdians at the Tang court deteriorated after the rebellion of An Lushan (AD 703-AD757), a general of Sogdian origin.

⁴⁰⁴ Schafer 1985.

and West: Turks, Uighurs, Tocharians, and Sogdians, in contrast to the Chams, Khmers, Javanese, and Singhalese who crowded into Canton. In both places, however, there were many Arabs, Persians, and Hindus. The Iranian population must have been most important. The Tang government even had an office ‘of the SāithavāK’ (literally, ‘of the Caravan Leader’) to watch over their interests.”⁴⁰⁵

The importance of Sogdian music and a Sogdian dance, known as the Sogdian whirl, *huxuan* 胡旋 in Chinese, should not be underestimated. Luo Feng studies how much the Tang emperors were fascinated by the Sogdian whirl.⁴⁰⁶ The Tang texts recorded the offering of Sogdian whirl dancers, as a kind of rare tributes, to the emperors. *Ce Fu Yuan Gui* 冊府元龜 records that in AD 719 “...Jumi State 俱密國⁴⁰⁷ sent ambassadors who offered *huxuan* girls and local items...俱密國遣使獻胡旋女子及方物”.⁴⁰⁸ In AD 727, “...Kang State 康國⁴⁰⁹ offered *huxuan* girls and panther...康國獻胡旋女子及豹”.⁴¹⁰ In AD 727, “...in the fifth month, Shi State 史國⁴¹¹ offered *huxuan* girls and red wine; in the seventh month, the King of the Shi State sent an ambassador and offered *huxuan* girls and panther...五月, 史國獻胡旋女子及葡萄酒, 七月, 史國王阿忽必多遣使獻胡旋女子及豹”.⁴¹² Luo Feng argues that Jumi State was not the place that provided the whirl dancing girls. He believes that the girls must have been

⁴⁰⁵ Schafer, 1985, p. 20

⁴⁰⁶ Luo Feng, 2004, pp. 280-298.

⁴⁰⁷ Jumi State 俱密國 was a small state that was located in the mountain range of the Pamirs. *Xin Tang Shu* 新唐書, *juan.* 221, p. 6255.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ce Fu Yuan Gui* 冊府元龜, *juan.* 971, p. 11406.

⁴⁰⁹ Kang State 康國 was a nomadic state situated between the Syrdar’ya River and the Amu-Dar’ya River during the Tang.

⁴¹⁰ *Ce Fu Yuan Gui* 冊府元龜, *juan.* 971, p. 11408.

⁴¹¹ Shi State 史國 is the Kesh, a nomadic state located in the same area as the Kang State.

⁴¹² *Ce Fu Yuan Gui* 冊府元龜, *juan.* 971, p. 11408.

bought from the Sogdians locally and offered to the Chinese emperor.⁴¹³ What could be the reason for a small state like Jumi to be involved in such an activity? As the Tang poet Bai Juyi 白居易 (AD 772-AD 846) describes: "...[the Sogdian whirl dancer] thanks again the Tianzi (the emperor) at the end of the melody; the Tianzi [smiles] slightly opens his teeth for her ...曲終再拜謝天子, 天子爲之微啓齒..."⁴¹⁴ What the poem of Bai Juyi conveys is that, firstly, the Sogdian whirl dancers were the emperor's personal possession, which allowed them to be very close to the emperor; and secondly, that the Tang emperor was attracted by exotic entertainment. Scenes in Dunhuang cave paintings show Sogdian girls whirl-dancing.⁴¹⁵ It can be argued, therefore, that offering such enjoyments and distractions to the emperor represented a positive means to be in a closer relationship with Tang power.

At all periods, foreign goods have always represented something special or attractive; they have always tempted the wealthy. The Tang court culture had spread out of the palace walls to become a fashion copied and followed by those with adequate resources. Ephemeral as their form or appearance could be, these exotic things have left a long-standing cultural impact, mostly in literature and in art. Wang Jian 王建 (abt. AD767- abt. AD831), a Tang poet, wrote in his poem *Liangzhou Xing* 涼州行 (Travelling in Liangzhou) about the vogue of learning foreign music, a popular fashion which made a lasting contribution to the Chinese musical repertory., nevertheless, took a lasting place through other forms in Chinese culture:

⁴¹³ For more details, see Luo Feng 2004, p. 284.

⁴¹⁴ *Quan Tang Shi* 全唐詩, *juan.* 426, p. 4692.

⁴¹⁵ Dunhuang caves nos. 197, 215, 335, 341 and so forth. For more discussion, see Rawson, 2001, pp. 130-131, and Luo Feng, 2004, 291-298.

...Rooster singing at the end of the city,
every family of Luoyang learning Hu 胡⁴¹⁶ music

...城頭山雞鳴角角，洛陽家家學胡樂。

It follows from the above elements that the Tang court was actually open to the new and exotic influences. At the same time, the Tang also impressed foreign delegations.

Jinglong Wenguan Ji 景龍文館記⁴¹⁷ records:

In the time of Emperor Zhongzong, a banquet was hosted for the Tibetans in the palace, and a performance by curvetting horses presented. These horses were all fitted and caparisoned with silk thread, pigmented in five colors, with gold garnishing. Unicorn heads and phoenix wings have been applied to their saddles. When the music played, each of the horses followed it, with graceful responsive steps, and at the middle stanza, the musicians gave the horses wine to drink, at which stage the horses lifted the cups with their mouths, lied down, and got up again. The Tibetans were greatly amazed. 中宗時，殿中（宴吐蕃碟馬之戲，皆五色彩絲，金具裝於鞍上，加磷首鳳翅。樂作，馬皆隨音碟足）遇作“飲酒樂”者，以口銜杯，臥而復起。吐蕃大驚。⁴¹⁸

I argued in Chapter One, "Tang *sancai* ware in tombs", that the lavish burials undertaken by the Tang imperial families and the elite are meant to reproduce the real life at the court. A luxurious tomb was to provide the dead with the best aspects of life as experienced in the world of the living. This has led to the manufacture of

⁴¹⁶ Hu 胡 is a word used to address foreign entities.

⁴¹⁷ *Jinglong Wenguan Ji* 景龍文館記 is a book which recorded articles from different scholars of the time on court banquets and lifestyle during the reign of Emperor Zhongzong 中宗(AD 684,705 - AD 710). The book was compiled by Wu Pingyi 武平一 of the Tang dynasty.

⁴¹⁸ *Jinglong Wenguan Ji* 景龍文館記, 1930, *juan*. 99.

pottery figures of horses and other participants by artisans who skillfully produced them in proportionately reduced sizes. The source of inspiration of the dancing horses has evidently come from court life as recorded in Tang texts. A typical example is a dancing horse excavated from the tomb of Zhang Shigui 張士貴. As shown in Figure 2.38, it reveals a gracefully sculpted mount in white clay, representing probably a pure snow white original, standing in a dignified dancing posture.⁴¹⁹ Tang *sancai* horses in dancing postures can be seen in museum collections, such as the one in the Shaan'xi Province Museum.

5. Display value of Tang *sancai*

It is possible that at the initial motivation for the making and use of Tang *sancai* arose as an aspect of the taste for foreign customs at the Tang court. The use of Tang *sancai* seems in part to have been the result of an endeavour by the Tang court, monks and religious figures to supplement the costly gold and silver. From the use of *sancai* for architectural fittings, it seems likely that the dramatic colours of *sancai* wares were their principal attraction.

Finds of Tang *sancai* shards at the ruins of the Tang palaces suggest that Tang *sancai* wares were involved in the daily life of the Tang court. Tang *sancai* pillows were intended for everyday life. There may have been Tang *sancai* shards among the finds that could have provided some interesting clue, but the reports are incredibly

⁴¹⁹ Much has been discussed about the original horses and their postures. For details, see Watson, 1984, pp.196-201; pp. Juliano, 1988, pp.63-64; Prodan, 1960, pp.69-70; Laufer, 1914, pp.292-304; Hentze, 1928.

simple in their description of the shards, with no details about shape, size and design, leaving us without information.

Nevertheless, the two Tang *sancai* objects I have discussed in section 3.1. of this chapter, "Tang *sancai* in Yangzhou", suggest that a certain part of Tang *sancai* wares were produced for the particular purpose of display. The two objects, salvaged from the Belitung cargo, were the unusually large cylindrical green-splashed box and cover with an incised non-Chinese geometric design, and the massive dragon-headed splashed-green ewer. Both objects made for overseas markets are obviously intended in part for display.

If such a proposal is correct, we might suggest that the Middle Eastern customers acquired special Tang *sancai* decorative articles, such as the wares salvaged from the Belitung cargo for their cultural and social associations. It is not improbable that the Tang court, in their supposed desire for ostentation and their pursuit of exoticism in its lifestyle, may have also employed *sancai* for its brilliant colours, that is, for display.⁴²⁰ The *sancai* objects reflected the representation of a reality: their stunning colours made them "as if" they were gold and silver wares, and the successfully mimicked metal shapes made them "as if" they have come from an exotic land.⁴²¹

⁴²⁰ For more discussion on material hierarchy in the Tang court, see Rawson, 1997, pp. 36-43 and Rawson, 1986, pp. 31-56.

⁴²¹ Freedberg argues in his book *The Power of Images, Studies in the History and Theory of Response* that "Such are the reasons for giving all images their full weight as reality and not merely (simply, old-fashionably) as representation. We have been fortified by generations of theorists in the view that the wonder and illusion of representation is different from the wonder and illusions of reality. In this respect, representation is exactly the opposite of what it has always been supposed to be. Representation is miraculous because it deceives us into thinking it is realistic, but it is only miraculous because it is something other than what it represents. The great deceptiveness of the central theories of representation to which I have alluded in this section has been this: it has made us measure response (and success of making) in terms of the absolute distinction between representation and reality. But everything about the Figure and the sculpture demands that we see both it and

Tang *sancai* was then the ideal ceramic to mimic gold and silver work. Indeed, we have examples of Tang *sancai* ware representing perfect copies of functional ritual metal works, as shown in the figures referred to here:

- An incense burner (Figure 2.39) which was placed in front of a Holy Relic shrine under the sanctum of the Famen Temple (Figure 2.40). This object, with a height of 21 cm and a diameter of 43 cm, is considered as being quite large.
- An incense burner (Figure 2.41) made of *sancai* ceramic, measuring 22 cm in height and a Tang silver incense burner, 33.3 cm high (Figure 2.42). The object shows how precisely and successfully *sancai* copied precious metal works; every curve, every detail of the pattern is replicated by skillfully shaping the clay and applying to it the right tone of *sancai* colour glaze.
- An eight-petaled oval-shaped container (Figure 2.43), 18.4 cm high, collected at the Atkins Gallery Kansas City, Missouri (Nelson Fund),⁴²² replicating another metal work which was unearthed at the Famen temple site and consisted of a four-petaled oval-shaped cage with four legs, 15 cm high, and a base of 14.5 cm by 10.5 cm, as well as a cover and a handle, all woven from a metal strip (Figure 2.44).

The above mentioned *sancai* container is molded with repoussé small geometric work

what it represents as a piece of reality: it is on this basis that we respond. To respond to a Figure or sculpture “as if” it were real is little different from responding to reality as real.” Freedberg 1989, p. 438.

⁴²² Zhang Wanli studied and illustrated Tang *sancai* ware in his book. Zhang Wanli, 1977, p. 15.

that gives the effect of woven metal strip. The joint between the molded top part and the three-legged base is decorated with a pattern of nails in the manner used for metal joints. The outer side of the molded part is decorated with green and blue, each colour alternating on each petal from the mouth till the foot of the container. The inner side is decorated with yellow glaze. The base is mainly green with a touch of yellow at the gibbous parts of each leg, giving the effect of shining metal. This *sancai* copy is a striking example of the resemblance to metal work.

As Rawson, in connection with white wares, suggests, “Indeed the effort to advance the manufacture of porcelain in both north and south China may have been directed towards producing a material that matched the hard thin body, and glistening surface of silver. The petalled shape of the porcelain bowls mimicked not only the superficial appearance of silver but also provided a substitute for other features, such as lightness and durability.”⁴²³

Hall’s discussion on representation could assist in understanding the phenomenon of Tang *sancai*: “In the reflective approach, meaning is thought to lie in the object, person, idea or event in the real world, and language functions like a mirror to *reflect* the true meaning as it already exists in the world. As the poet Gertrude Stein once said, ‘A rose is a rose is a rose’. In the fourth century BC, the Greeks used the notion of *mimesis* to explain how language, even drawing and painting, mirrored or imitated Nature; they thought of Homer’s great poem, *The Iliad*, as ‘imitating’ a

⁴²³ Rawson, 1984, p. 23.

heroic series of events. So the theory which says that language works by simply reflecting or imitating the truth that is already there and fixed in the world, is sometimes called ‘mimetic’.⁴²⁴

Could have *sancai* wares been used as display objects in the Tang court? What was the purpose of copying metal works that were a thing of which the Tang court was not in a lack of supply?⁴²⁵ We shall only say that Tang possible users of *sancai* wares were aware that *sancai* could not be a substitute for gold, no matter how exquisite the imitation. The mass production and the perfect mimicking technique that has developed suggest that there was something in the people’s mind that has stimulated the development of *sancai* production. It is clear that *sancai* wares were used for display at funerals and in the creation of aspects of status.

The grand ceremonies of worshipping the Buddha Holy Relic (Note 2.1) perhaps give an idea about the subconscious thoughts on the relationship between *sancai* ware and precious metal work. From a debate quoted in Maniutra and Shepherd’s book *Presence*, we read that “the charge for the painter is to show Guanyin⁴²⁶ manifesting himself everywhere out of nowhere, while assuring the implied viewer of the painting

⁴²⁴ Hall, 1997, p. 24.

⁴²⁵ *Ce Fu Yuan Gui* 冊府元龜 and *Jiu Tang Shu* 舊唐書 record Wangbo 王播, a Military Commissioner of Huainan Region 淮南節度使王播: he alone has three times offered, as a tribute to the emperor, a large quantity of silver articles. “In AD 824... Wangbo 王播 who was the Military Commissioner of Huannan 淮南 presented two silver makeup boxes as tribute”...淮南節度使王播進宣索銀妝奩二。 *Ce Fu Yuan Gui*, p. 2034 ; “...In AD 825, Wangbo again presented two hundreds silver wine vessels, one hundred silver cups with lids, other two thousands bowls”... 又進銀榼二百枚, 銀蓋碗一百枚, 散碗二千枚...*Ce Fu Yuan Gui*, p. 6118 ; “...In AD 827, he presented again big or small [sized] bowls three thousand and four hundred”... 進大小銀碗三千四枚...*Jiu Tang Shu*, p.4277.

⁴²⁶ Guanyin 觀音, is a Buddhist deity, Avalokitesvara in Sanskrit, who was believed to save beings from danger.

that the deity is always right in front of him or her.”⁴²⁷ Rawson pointed out that the agency of an image or an object is empowered by information available to viewers. Further Rawson gives an insight of the effect that the power of a conceptual idea or a material object can have on the viewers.⁴²⁸ Believers gave up all their belongings and even sacrificed their bodies as an offering to the Holy Relic. The scene of a respectful worshipping congregation and other images indisputably captured the sights and minds of the population. The huge crowds assembled could not in any way view with their eyes the Holy Buddha Relic, which measured only 4 cm x 2 cm. It was therefore by an absent representation that people gave credence to their faith. Clunas's term, “beyond representation”⁴²⁹ allows us to sense the agency of the Buddha Holy Relic as the evident power which is formed by conceptual, social and economic situations.⁴³⁰

Although made of clay, Tang *sancai* assumes to a certain extent the representation of precious metal work and their virtual value. Therefore, one major feature of *sancai* is its potential to capture the imagination with the brilliant surface of intriguing and

⁴²⁷ Maniura and Shepherd, 2006, p.15.

⁴²⁸ In her article *The agency of and the agency for the Wanli Emperor*, Rawson has brought to light the depth of understanding the agency of an image. See Rawson, 2007b, pp. 97-111.

⁴²⁹ "Of course, representation is inconceivable without an initial 'presence'. The idea of 'presence' in turn implies or even asserts the contrary possibility of 'absence', that the image is 'just a picture'. This possibility rests in turn on a specific visual epistemology, with its whole heavy Platonic freight of disquiet at the essentially fallible nature of such a project, and leads ultimately to its subsequent modernist overthrow. The notion that Chinese painting, and in particular the forms of painting most highly valued by male members of the elite such as Wen Zhengming, developed historically to the point 'beyond representation'...But the point, as other commentators have also argued, is not to claim priority for China in achieving 'modernism'; rather it is to question the very validity of the assumption of an essential progression through representation to non-representation. Rather than seeing Chinese painting as going 'beyond representation', it may be more helpful to see representation itself not as some universal category of analysis, to be transcended or submitted to differentially by a range of historically specific visual cultures, but as being in itself a specific local history of strictly limited value in understanding what is going on in the varied pictorial practices of mid-Ming China, which could accommodate in one person such a range of responses and deployments of the image." Clunas 2006, p. 40

⁴³⁰ Nelson, 2000, p.8.

sometimes foreign shapes.

6. The cessation and revival of Tang *sancai*

The date when Tang *sancai* went out of fashion is not clear. We find no evidence that the firing of lead-glazed *sancai* ware continued in Henan and Shaanxi during the Five dynasties 五代 (AD 907-960), which succeeded the Tang dynasty. In the fifty-three years that spanned the Five Dynasties period, political upheaval and economic disorder prevailed, as a result of the rapid succession of states and kingdoms established in the north and the south of the country. It can consequently be assumed that little importance was given to the production of this particular type of ware.

Lead-glazed wares appeared again during the Liao dynasty 遼代 (AD 916-1125), founded by the nomadic Khitan tribes from Manchuria. Their empire occupied the area of present-day Inner Mongolia and Liaoning province 遼寧省, extending well into Hebei province. In that area, three kiln sites have been discovered which produced *sancai* wares in the Liao era: two in Inner Mongolia, the Gangwa kiln 缸瓦窯 at Chifeng 赤峰 and the Nanshan kiln 南山窯 at Lindong 林東, and one at the northwest of Beijing, the Longquanwu kiln 龍泉務窯.

Sancai wares were also produced in the Song dynasty 宋代 (AD 960-1279) and in the Jin dynasty 金代 (AD 1115-1234). The founding of the Song dynasty marked the

reunification of China for the first time since the fall of the Tang. Ceramic production in the Song period was widely distributed. During that time, *sancai* ware appeared in many kilns, mainly in Henan province, as at the Dengfeng kiln 登封窯, the Lushanduandian kiln 魯山段店窯, the Bacun kiln 扒村窯 and the Qingliangsi kiln 青涼寺窯. In Hebei province, the Cizhou kiln 磁州窯 also produced *sancai* ware. During the subsequent Jin dynasty *sancai* ware was fired at the Ding kiln 定窯 and Guantai kiln 觀臺窯 in Hebei province, and at the Yaozhou kiln 耀州窯 in Shaanxi province.

The recipes for bodies and glazes of the Liao, Song and Jin *sancai* differed from those of the Tang *sancai*.⁴³¹ The colour combinations used for the Liao, Song and Jin *sancai* wares were mainly green, yellow and white and excluded the blue and black used for Tang *sancai*. Yet Tang *sancai* had an important impact on the ceramic production in the Liao, Song and Jin dynasties. The Khitan tribes from Manchuria, founders of the Liao dynasty, took the step of learning the Chinese language, converted to Buddhism and endeavoured to emulate the Tang. The Song and Jin established their states in territories of the Tang in the centre of the country, where the influence of the Tang could still be felt despite the decline of their empire.

⁴³¹ Kerr and Wood state: "A few minor differences can be seen between the Tang and the Liao lead glazes in the ways that their colouring oxides are used. Liao dynasty green glazes tend to be richer in iron oxide, and lower in copper oxide, than those of the Tang dynasty, making them more yellow-green in tone....A hard biscuit firing to about 1120°C has been proposed for Liao earthenware and, as with the Tang wares, their body materials were essentially underfired stonewares...." See Kerr and Wood, 2004, 505. Wood suggests that: "As with Tang and Liao *sancai*, the Song and Jin Cizhou glazes were applied to light-coloured, underfired stonewares, which were then glaze-fired to about 1000°C. In addition to the standard yellows, greens and ambers, Song *sancai* can also show an occasional use of turquoise-blue, dark iron-red, and what may be an iron-manganese purplish-brown." Wood, 2007, p. 209.

In the period of Liao and the Song dynastic rule, *sancai* lead-glazed wares were used as tomb objects. However, Buddhist *sancai* objects were also unearthed. A box containing Buddha holy relics as well as three stupas, all made of *sancai* material, were excavated in the sanctum of a Northern Song 北宋 (AD 960 – AD 1127) pagoda, at the ruins of the Fahai temple 法海寺,⁴³² in Mixian county 密縣, Henan province. These objects, as shown in Figure 2.45 and Figure 2.46, bear witness to the skill and precision with which *sancai* could be worked to give Buddhist figures a certain aspect of splendour and solemnity.

The above mentioned relics box, square at its base, 28.5 x 28.5 cm, with a height of 46.5 cm, is mounted with a removable top cover in the form of a truncated pyramid ornamented with petalled flowers and, on its edges, with Ruyi-shaped clouds 如意.⁴³³ In the middle of each of the four sides of the box a gate with both doors closed is molded in a brownish glaze with rows of studs, imitating large metal nails, in a glaze of a darker colour. A Heavenly King stands on each side of the gate. Inside this *sancai* large box are placed two small white-glazed boxes and two small silver boxes which contained the relics. The box has a purely symmetrical concept in shape and design; all the lateral edges of the box are decorated with a bluish green glaze on which is applied a row of round petalled flowers. On each corner, a yellow glazed lion sits as a watch guard.

⁴³² Fahai temple 法海寺 was built in the year of Xianping 咸平(AD 999) under the reign of Emperor Zhenzong 真宗(AD 998 – AD 1022) of the Northern Song dynasty. The name of the temple, Fahai, was given by Emperor Zhenzong.

⁴³³ Ruyi-shaped clouds is a symbolic pattern for auspicious. Ruyi form was used on many different kinds of material, like jade and lacquer work, as pattern for textile widely in the Song dynasty.

In Figure 2.46 we see one of the three square-based stupas, with a height of 98.5 cm, all glazed with yellow, green and brown colours⁴³⁴; the other two stupas are 47.5 cm and 51.5 cm high (Figure 2.47). On its square base, the large stupa houses a Buddha figure sitting in the centre of its first level facing an opening in the form of a large window without doors. This opening, with a Heavenly King standing on each of its sides, is cut and molded on all four sides of the square stupa in a symmetrical manner. Above the first level, the stupa is structured pagoda-like with seven green-glaze tiled roof projections. The top roof holds in its centre a sort of cylindrical grooved steeple. Patterns of round petalled flowers, Ruyi clouds and Buddha figurines ornament symmetrically all the four sides of the stupa. A plaque with inscriptions of a date and a name seems to indicate that this object, evidently produced in the finest manner, was ordered for a donation – a hypothesis that further supports the high value attached to Tang *sancai*.

Buddhist pagodas and architectures, built with lead-glazed *sancai* from the Liao and Song periods, can be seen today in Henan province and in Anhui province 安徽省.⁴³⁵ It is likely that Buddhist pagodas were also built during the Tang period with the use of *sancai* architectural material, and that the Liao and Song had inherited and applied the same Tang methods.

⁴³⁴ *WW*, 1972, 10, pp. 63-66.

⁴³⁵ Youguo Pagoda 佑國鐵塔, in Kaifeng city 開封 Henan province, and Xinghua Temple Pagoda 興化寺塔, located in Mengcheng 蒙城 Anhui province 安徽省, were built during the Song dynasty.

7. Conclusion

The finds in the ruins of Tang Palaces suggest that Tang *sancai* wares were involved in the daily life of the Tang court. The core issues of the long-lasting debates reside in the following questions:

- Were Tang *sancai* wares used only as tomb objects or did they also serve for everyday life?
- Were Tang *sancai* utensil-shaped wares used for eating and drinking for the living?

The answers I believe are found in the detailed study, firstly, of the Tang *sancai* objects unearthed in China in places other than tombs; secondly, in the finds in countries where Tang *sancai* ware was exported; and, lastly, in the salvaged haul of the Belitung cargo, the vessel sunk in the Tang era on its way to the Middle East.

From the brief information given in the archaeological reports on the finds at the ruins of Tang palaces, we understand that the Tang *sancai* shards discovered belong to utensil-shaped objects and pillows. However, the hierarchy of materials for vessels for eating and drinking as stated by Rawson supports the argument that Tang *sancai* held a relatively low status compared with precious metal works and ceramics, white and green. Furthermore, Wood and Kerr's analysis of the low-fired lead glaze ware provides the substantiation of the fact that *sancai* was poisonous and consequently not suitable for containing food. There is no evidence to indicate that the people in

China have ever generally used lead-glazed wares for eating and drinking. The uses of Tang *sancai* can therefore be determined as having been for burials as well as for daily life in the Tang court, but that the utensil-shaped *sancai* wares were not purposely meant for eating and drinking.

The original ink-brush writing on the bases of the two dishes of the Japanese Nara *sancai* collected in the Shōsō-in repository provide significant evidence to suggest that Tang *sancai* has been possibly used as ritual offering containers in China at that time. Indeed the find of fragments of a *sancai* Buddha statue in the ruins of Qinglong temple suggests that Tang *sancai* had also been used in a religious context. The broader use of later *sancai*, Song and Liao, in religious rituals reinforces the argument.

The salvaged *sancai* wares from the Belitung cargo point to the display value that Tang *sancai* has taken during the Tang era. The exotic character and the ostentation of Tang *sancai* reflected the luxuriousness and the cosmopolitan environment of Tang court life. It is likely, therefore, that some of the Tang *sancai* utensil-shaped wares, in addition to their employment for ritual offerings, may have been used as decorative and display objects in the court. Similarly, *sancai* pillows, considered as decorative objects, were well adopted also for usefulness in daily life.

The emergence of *sancai* architectural material was the consequence of the development of the economy and the pursuit of the colourful lifestyle of the Tang.

Sancai tiles were nevertheless not widely used during the Tang Dynasty. Palace roofs of the Tang, unlike the Ming and Qing palaces of the Forbidden City, were not entirely covered with *sancai* tiles. In the second half of the seventh century, *sancai* tiles were already being applied, though on a small scale, to buildings such as the pavilion roof in the Shangyang Palace. However, it is during the Tang that large-sized *sancai* architectural appeared. The importance, nevertheless, is to observe the influence *sancai* architectural material has had beyond China in places which have followed and copied the Tang way of life, such as Japan and the Bohai State where *sancai* architectural material was also unearthed.

Archaeological reports do not provide sufficient information to enable us to ascertain how and why the decline of Tang *sancai* took place. However, from reports concerning tomb objects, we could gather ample details to suggest that Tang *sancai* production could have slumped in parallel with the decline of the Tang Dynasty, particularly for objects of fine quality. Could the reason be the high cost of production of *sancai* as compared to that of other wares? The question shall be studied in the next chapter, "Technology and sources of innovation".

Chapter Three

Technology and sources of innovation

To date Tang *sancai* kilns have been found in three provinces in China, namely Shaanxi, Henan and Hebei provinces. Archaeological excavations have taken place at the three sites and detailed reports on all of them have been published: in 1992, on the Huangbao kiln site 黃堡窯址, in Shaanxi province;⁴³⁶ in 2000, 2002 and 2005 on the Huangye kiln site 黃冶窯址 in Gongxian 鞏縣, Henan province;⁴³⁷ and in 2007 on the Neiqiu kiln 內丘窯址, in Hebei province.⁴³⁸

A fourth kiln named Liquanfang kiln 醴泉坊窯,⁴³⁹ producing Tang *sancai*, was found during excavations that took place between June 1998 and March 1999, in Liquanfang 醴泉坊, west of Xi'an in Shaanxi province. No excavation report on this kiln has been published so far. However, during field work in 2006, Zhuo Zhenxi 祿振西,⁴⁴⁰ who took part in the excavation, allowed six *sancai* shards taken from the Liquanfang

⁴³⁶ Two volumes of a comprehensive report on the finds at the Huangbao kiln site provide information on the Tang *sancai* site, the workshop and the production. Tangdai Huangbao Yaozhi 1992.

⁴³⁷ The report on the Huangye kiln published in 2000 deals with the first finds. The 2002 report summarized the previous study on the Huangye kiln site and illustrated the finds in coloured plates. Further archeological excavations took place in 2002 and 2003. The report published in 2005 focused on the new finds. Huangye, 2000; Huangye, 2002; Huangye, 2005.

⁴³⁸ Xingyao (a), 2007; Xingyao (b), 2007 and Xingyao (c), 2007.

⁴³⁹ This Tang *sancai* kiln is located in a place known as Liquanfang 醴泉坊 and is therefore addressed as the Liquanfang kiln. The appellation was used in the Huashang news 華商報 in an article which reviews the most important archaeological excavations of the last ten years in Shaanxi province. See Huashang News, 13 January 2000. Furthermore, while talking to archaeologists of the Shaanxi Archeological Research Institute, I learned that they were referring to this newly found Tang *sancai* kiln as Liquanfang kiln, a name which seems to have been adopted by scholars.

⁴⁴⁰ Zhuo Zhenxi 祿振西, a well-known archaeologist, is the administrative director of the Chinese Ceramic Research Institute, the administrative director of the Shaanxi Province Archaeological Research Institute, and Guest Professor of Northwest University. She was leading the team in charge of the archaeological excavations at the sites of the Tang *sancai* Huangbao kiln and the Song *yaozhou* kiln 耀州窯.

kiln site to be analyzed in the laboratories of the Oxford Archaeology Institute. The results are shown in the Appendices and will be discussed in the sections covering clays and glazes further on in this chapter.

In this chapter, I shall examine the archaeological excavation at the four kilns mentioned above and make comparisons between them with regard to the kiln structure, the firing, the clay, the forming, and the glazing, of which little study has been made by other scholars. I shall also include in this chapter the results of the laboratory tests performed on the shards of the Liqianfang *sancal* kiln. By doing so, I aim to draw a clear figure of the interrelationships between the different kilns and to understand why Tang *sancal* wares were produced in different provinces, but were found only in certain precise areas,⁴⁴¹ unlike most other Chinese ceramic wares.⁴⁴²

1. Kiln sites

Before discussing the issues concerning the techniques of production of Tang *sancal*, I shall give some general information on each of the four *sancal* kiln sites mentioned above.

⁴⁴¹ As observed in Chapter One and Chapter Two of this thesis, the locations where Tang *sancal* wares were unearthed suggest that Tang *sancal* was employed exclusively by the imperial and elite families, either as tomb objects or for particular purposes in everyday life in the imperial court. See Conclusion of Chapter One, pp. 95-97 and Chapter Two, pp. 168-171.

⁴⁴² In general, each of the ancient Chinese kilns produced its featured ceramics in local areas within the boundaries of a province. Among Tang dynasty kilns are the *yue* kiln 越窯 in Zhejiang province 浙江省 and the *changsha* kiln 長沙窯 in Hunan province 湖南省. But ceramics which were produced in different provinces, such as the white glazed ware produced in the *xing* kiln 邢窯 in Hebei province 河北省 and in the *gongxian* kiln 鞏縣窯 in Henan province 河南省, were made for local use, which is not the case of Tang *sancal*. For more detailed discussions, see Zhongguo Taoci Shi, 1982, pp. 202-206,

1.1 The Huangbao kiln site in Shaanxi Province

This kiln, named after the county Huangbao 黃堡,⁴⁴³ is located 100 kilometers north of Xi'an, in the administration of the city of Tongchuan 銅川市. It was excavated in two stages: the first in 1959, when the bulk of Tang *sancai* shards were discovered,⁴⁴⁴ and the second in 1984, when the kilns were found. A river, the Qi 漆水, flows through the city of Tongchuan from north-east to south-west. Kilns which produced *sancai* wares were sited on the western bank of the Qi River. The area is surrounded by forests and holds rich reserves of porcelain clay and coal (Map 3.1).

The discoveries were quite significant. During the second phase of excavations, three Tang *sancai* firing kilns and a complete, well-preserved workshop for Tang *sancai* were unearthed. Two of these kilns were set up 13 metres northwest of the workshop; the third was located at the northeast corner, next to the workshop (Figure 3.1). They were found between about 2.2 metres and 3 metres below the present ground level.⁴⁴⁵

The workshop was formed by seven cave-like chambers dug out underground and lined up in a single row occupying an area of 636 square metres, 31.8 metres from

⁴⁴³ Kilns are located along the Qi River over three kilometers. These kilns included not only producers of Tang *sancai* but also those producing green *yaozhou* ware 耀州瓷. Some scholars are confused by the names of the kilns. Whether they produced *sancai* or green ware, kilns in the Huangbao area were referred to as Huangbao kilns of the Tang dynasty and the Five Dynasties in order to distinguish them from the kilns of the Song dynasty which were called *yaozhou* kilns. For further discussion, see Tangdai Huangbao Yaozhi 1992, p. 527-528.

⁴⁴⁴ About 85,000 shards were found during the first excavation in 1959. Among them were shards of green wares, *sancai*, black ware, white ware, as well as a ware made with an unglazed body on which black glazing was applied in the form of a design or pattern. This excavation is significant in that it allows the establishment of the date of firing of ware in this area, which began in the early Tang dynasty. Tangdai Huangbao Yaozhi 1992, p.1.

⁴⁴⁵ More detailed discussion about the form of the kilns will be found in the section on kiln construction in this chapter.

east to west, 20 metres from north to south. All seven caves faced south. The archaeological report states that the chamber located farthest east, with an area of 10.32 square metres, was used as a dwelling for workers and keepers. Next to this chamber is a second one, occupying 13.52 square metres, which was used for the drying of formed objects and for glazing. The third chamber, with a surface of 39.49 square metres, is the largest and it served as the area for forming, shaping and molding. In this chamber, a small kiln was installed and was used for testing the colour results after glaze firing. The fourth chamber, 23.83 square metres large, was the section for final molding. The fifth chamber, with an area of 28.75 square metres, was the place for making candle holders. The sixth and seventh chambers, covering respectively an area of 24.77 square metres and 18.12 metres, were the sections for the manufacture of ewers (Figure 3.2).⁴⁴⁶ The report further says that the workshop was left untouched, with all the tools for production and hundreds of unglazed wares in their original places (Table 3.1) covered with traces of silt from the river, suggesting that it was probably abandoned as a result of a flood.⁴⁴⁷

Kept almost in its original state, the workshop reveals the entire process of how a large Tang *sancai* production centre operated. Archaeologists deduce that the production process was very well organized: the forming, the molding, the final shaping, glazing, and all related work, seem to have followed a pattern. Taking as reference the number of objects left unglazed, it is assumed that at least thirty

⁴⁴⁶ Tangdai Huangbao Yaozhi 1992, pp. 10-19.

⁴⁴⁷ The altitude of the workshop is 8.5 metres above the normal water level of the Qi River. Archaeologists suggest that a great inundation by the river has occurred submerging the chambers. Tangdai Huangbao Yaozhi 1992, p12. 10-19.

labourers were required to run a kiln of such a scale. This leads to the suggestion that the workshop could not have been managed by members of a family, but may have been run by some kind of organization. Compared to the workshops unearthed at the Huangye *sancai* kiln site in Henan province, the Huangbao Tang *sancai* workshop is so far the largest single and best preserved. No Tang *sancai* workshop has been found either at the Liqianfang *sancai* kiln site in Shaanxi Province or at the Neiqiu *sancai* kiln site in Hebei province.

The finds of the Huangbao *sancai* kiln sites as listed in Tabl 1.4 and Table 3.1 illustrate that Huangbao kilns have been producing quite the full range of *sancai* items. In fact, candle holders, boxes, ewers, jars, plates and lion figures were found at the workshop site, while at the kiln sites, plates, lavers, trays, jars, pots, bowls, stem cup, water pitchers, cups, toys, figurines, lids, gourd-shaped vases, vases, pillow, lions, camels, horses, as well as architectural material were unearthed. Moulds were also excavated of lions, dragons, rhinoceroses, monkeys, bell toys and Bodhisattva figures.

1.2 The Liqianfang kiln site in Shaanxi Province

Excavation at the site of this kiln took place from June 1998 to March 1999. The kiln is located at the west side of inner Chang'an City, the capital of the Tang dynasty. It was discovered during work for paving heating pipes under the ground. Unfortunately, buildings were erected on the top of the site of this kiln preventing any future excavation in the foreseeable future. An excavation report has been published

mentioning the discovery of three kilns, but it gives no other details, particularly with regard to the shape and size of the kilns. The report says that plates, jars, pillows, pots, bricks, figurines, horses and roosters were unearthed. A shard engraved with characters dating to Tianbao Sizai 天寶四載, corresponding to the year AD 745, was found in the Liquanfang site. This find is an important indication to the effect that the Liquanfang kiln was set up not later than AD 745.

1.3 The Huangye kiln site in Henan Province

The Huangye *sancai* kilns are located five kilometers east of Gongyi city 鞏義市⁴⁴⁸, in the middle of Henan province. A river called Huangye 黃冶河, a tributary of the Lou River 洛水, which is a tributary of the Yellow River 黃河, flows through Gongyi city from south to north. Tang *sancai* kilns were scattered over the Big Huangye village 大黃冶村 and the Small Huangye village 小黃冶村, on both banks of the Huangye River 黃冶河. Over time the waters of the river have crafted the land into a hilly countryside with a thick layer of yellow earth. With its natural resources, a rich reserve of thriving trees, gaoling clay 高嶺土 and coal mines, Huangye was found to be the ideal place for setting up a ceramic kiln.⁴⁴⁹

In publications which appeared before the book, "Huangye Tang *sancai* Kiln 黃冶唐三彩窯," was published in 2000, scholars often called this kiln site Gongxian Tang

⁴⁴⁸ Gongyi 鞏義市 is the name which was given to Gongxian 鞏縣 in June 1991 when it was upgraded from village to city.

⁴⁴⁹ Huangye 2000, pp. 1-5.

sancai kiln 鞏縣唐三彩窯. However, the three main publications⁴⁵⁰ on this kiln site all name the kiln as Huangye kiln 黃冶窯, after the villages where the kilns were located.

The Huangye kiln site 黃冶窯 was the first Tang *sancai* kiln to be discovered and the first one to have been excavated. It was located in 1957 during a survey on kiln sites in Henan province⁴⁵¹ and the kilns were unearthed just a little more than three decades ago, when excavations took place, first in 1976 for a period which lasted till 1983, and then in a second period from 2002 to 2003. Nine *sancai* kilns and four workshops were unearthed during the excavations of the second period.⁴⁵²

The nine kilns are scattered over three areas, namely District I, District II and District III, on both banks along the Huangye River (Map. 3.2). Of the four workshops, two were dug-out caves and two were houses built above the ground. One of the workshops was found in District I, one in District III and two in District II. Only the workshop located in District III is rather well preserved, while the others are damaged. The one in best condition consists of four linked chambers. Each chamber is 3.5 metres wide and 2.4 metres long. The total floor area of the workshop is about 33.6 square metres.⁴⁵³

⁴⁵⁰ Archaeological excavations at Huangye *sancai* kiln sites have taken place several times. The reports were published in Huangye 2000, Huangye 2002 and Huangye 2005.

⁴⁵¹ It was during the survey that Feng Xianming 馮先銘 and Li Huibing 李輝柄 indicated that the kiln producing Tang *sancai* wares was located in Huangye 黃冶, Gongxian 鞏縣 county. For more details, see *WW* 1959, pp. 56-58. See Huangye, 2000, p. 5.

⁴⁵² Huangye 2005.

⁴⁵³ Huangye, 2005, p. 8.

Archaeologists claim that kilns started producing ceramic in this area from the period of the North and South dynasties 南北朝 (AD 420-AD 589). Archaeological excavations show that more kilns appeared during the Sui dynasty. These kilns produced green glaze, white glaze and brown glaze ceramic wares. However, during the Tang, *sancai* became one of the most important ceramic productions in this area.

1.4 The Neiqiu kiln site in Hebei Province

Deposits of *sancai* shards and kiln tools were found at the east bank of the north branch of the Liyang River 李陽河 in Neiqiu county 內丘縣, as well as at the south bank of the Cheng River 澄河, in Lincheng county 臨城縣, Hebei province 河北省.⁴⁵⁴

The archaeological report states that there were three kilns which fired *sancai* wares - two in Neiqiu county and one in Lincheng county. These three kilns were found amongst twenty-one other kilns that manufactured the white glaze *xing* ware 邢窯.⁴⁵⁵

The find was made during surveys and archaeological excavations which were undertaken five times, between 1987 and 1991, in an area thirty kilometers long and ten kilometers wide from the northern part of Lincheng county to the southern part of Neiqiu county (Map 3.3).⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵⁴ *WW*, 1987,9, pp.1-10.

⁴⁵⁵ *Xing* ware, with its fine white glaze, is an important Tang ware in that it was supplied to the Tang court. Shards of white glazed ware bearing the characters Ying 盈 or Hanlin 翰林 were excavated at the ruins of the Daming Palace and at the Neiqiu and Lincheng kiln sites. *WW*, 1987, 9, pp. 1-10; *WW*, 2002, 4, pp. 83-83. Scholars argue that the wares with the character Ying 盈 were ordered by the Baibao Daying Ku 百寶大盈庫, which can be translated as Hundreds Treasures Full Filling Storage, the storage at the Daming Palace, whilst those with the characters Hanlin 翰林 were ordered by the Hanlin Yuan 翰林院, Hanlin Academy, an institute of academicians. For further discussion, see Lu Minghua, 1987, pp. 257-262.

⁴⁵⁶ For discussion, see Wang Huimin, Fan Shuhai and Zhang Zhizhong, 2007, pp. 60-112.

The naming of the *sancai* kilns found in Hebei province is inconsistent, and in some cases quite confusing. Some scholars call these kilns *xingyao Tang sancai* 邢窯唐三彩 (*xing* kiln Tang *sancai*),⁴⁵⁷ because they were found in the area where the white glazed ware, the *xing* ware, was produced. Other scholars call them Neiqiu *sancai* 內丘三彩,⁴⁵⁸ after the name of the county. The recent excavation also demonstrates that *sancai* was also produced in another county, known as Lincheng. Therefore, in recent publications, scholars started to call these kilns either Nieqiu *sancai* or Lincheng *sancai*. Some scholars even attributed to each firing kiln the name of the village where it was located. As a result, more than three kiln names have been used.⁴⁵⁹ Hereafter in this thesis, I shall refer to the *sancai* kilns located in Hebei province as Nieqiu *sancai* kilns 內丘三彩窯.⁴⁶⁰

Nieqiu county is located in the south of Hebei province, where the lower slopes of the Taihang Mountain 太行山 joins the Hebei Plain 河北平原. The Fuyang River 滏陽河 together with its branches, the Xiaoma river 小馬河, the Siyang river 寺陽河, the Zhi river 泚河 and the Zhibei river 泚北渠, all provided water for ceramic production and were convenient for transportation. Dense forests and coal reserves represented a good source of material for firing the kilns.⁴⁶¹ Rich reserves of a fine quality of

⁴⁵⁷ *WW*, 1987, 9, pp. 1-10; Jia chenghui, Leiyong, Feng Songlin and Feng Xiangqian, 2007, pp. 491-495.

⁴⁵⁸ See Huangye, 2000, V.

⁴⁵⁹ The three new names for *sancai* kilns are: Neiqiu Chengguan Yaozhi 內丘城關窯址, Beidafeng Yaohzhi 北大豐窯址, Sheshou Yaozhi 射獸窯址. See Wang Huimin, Fan Shuhai and Zhang Zhizhong 2004, pp. 191-237.

⁴⁶⁰ There are three reasons for my reference to the *sancai* kiln sites located in Hebei province as Neiqiu *sancai* kiln 內丘三彩窯. The first is that the area of Lincheng was on the boundary of Neiqiu county during the Tang and Song dynasties (For detailed discussion, see Ye Zhemin 葉喆民, 2007, pp. 227-231.). The second is that, according to the archeological customary rule, kilns are to be named after the name of the place where they were located. The third reason is that this name will help to dissociate the Neiqiu *sancai* kiln from the white *xing* ware kilns. The name *xing* ware was already used during the Tang dynasty to address the fine white-glazed wares that were used by the Tang court. It is not appropriate to call "*xing kiln sancai*" lead-glazed colourful ware.

⁴⁶¹ Li Zhiyan discussed the excavation at the *xing* kiln site and talked about the finds of Tang *sancai* there. Li

Gaoling clay, which made *xing* ware famous for its refined body, were an additional advantage compared with other *sancai* kilns in Shaanxi and Henan provinces.⁴⁶²

The archaeological report suggests that the production of white ceramic in Neiqiu area started in the North and South dynasties 南北朝 (AD 420-AD 589). It was in the Sui dynasty that production of white glazed ware was developed on a larger scale.⁴⁶³ *Xing* ware was chosen by the Tang court as one of the ceramic wares for everyday use, a fact which has conferred to it a privileged position among other white wares. Tang *sancai* was produced in the same area where *xing* wares, favoured by the Tang court, were produced. Could have the Tang court placed orders for *sancai* ware while at the same time it was receiving supplies of the white ware? We find no evidence that *sancai* wares were made in the early Tang, but only production in the middle Tang.

A compilation of the finds of *sancai* in all the kiln sites is given in Table 1.4. In the other *sancai* kilns above, shards were found of utensil-shaped wares as well as of figures, such as horses, camels, Tomb Guardians and Heavenly Kings. But at the Nieqiu kiln in Hebei province only shards of utensil-shaped wares, such as jars, pots, and plates were unearthed.

Even if Nieqiu *sancai* kilns produced figures similar to those made by the other kilns, it can be assumed that they were neither in large sizes nor in large quantities,

Zhiyan, 2007, pp. 263-270; Yang Wenshan discussed in detail the finds of Tang *sancai* at the *xing* kiln site. Yang Wenshan, 2007, pp. 184- 191.

⁴⁶² Tang *sancai* wares made in Nieqiu kiln shared the same kind of clay with *xing* ware. Therefore, the clay of the Nieqiu *sancai* is much finer compared to those *sancai* wares that come from Shaanxi and Henan provinces.

⁴⁶³ Xingyao (c) is a book that compiled published articles on *xing* ware. Xingyao (c), 2007, p. 8.

considering that the areas using Tang *sancal* burial objects were situated farther away, mainly in Xi'an and Luoyang where the imperial and elite tombs are located, and transportation would have been problematic and uneconomical.

Smaller Tang *sancal* items, however, such as utensil-shaped ware, may have been produced in the Neiqiu kiln contemporaneously with *xing* ware, the white ceramic favoured by the Tang court for daily use, which was under regular manufacture there. It is not difficult to imagine, in view of the massive demand for Tang *sancal* during the high Tang, and perhaps at the specific request of the court, that potters of *xing* ware started to produce also *sancal* small-sized containers and burial objects.

2. Kiln structure and firing

Among the four kiln sites of Tang *sancal* mentioned in the previous section, archaeological excavations have been undertaken in only two: the Huangbao kiln site in Shaanxi province and the Huangye kiln site in Henan province. With regard to the Neiqiu kiln site in Hebei province, the archaeological report claims that the *sancal* kilns were surveyed and the locations noted, but that up to the present no excavations have taken place. The report, however, gives details on kilns of *xing* ware, to which I shall refer for comparison further on in the discussion.

As for the Liquanfang kiln site in Xi'an city, Shaanxi province, information about kiln structure is unknown and excavation is not foreseeable in the near future, the site

having been occupied by modern residential buildings.

2.1 Kiln structure

According to Liu Kedong⁴⁶⁴ 劉可棟, *mantou*-shaped kilns were well developed during the time of the Sui 隋代 (AD 581-618) and Tang 唐代 (AD 618-907) dynasties. Huangye Kiln 黃冶窯 in Henan province 河南省 is one of the *mantou* shaped kilns where *sancai* wares were produced.

Du Baoren⁴⁶⁵ 杜葆仁 examined three *sancai* kilns in the region of Huangbao 黃堡窯 in Shaanxi Province, which are supposed to be the best-preserved Tang *sancai* kilns excavated up to now. From his report, we learned that these kilns, using wood firing, were constructed with bricks, and he suggests that they were *mantou* kilns in prototype cross-draught style.

Kerr and Wood⁴⁶⁶ emphasize that the examination made by Du Baoren gives the most comprehensive figure of early stoneware and earthenware production in north China. In addition, Kerr and Wood give a more specific description after studying the Huangbo region as a whole, where seventeen workshops of the Tang dynasty (AD 618-907), Five dynasties (AD 907-960), Song dynasty (AD 960-1279) and Jin

⁴⁶⁴ Liu Kedong made a detailed research on mantou-shaped kilns in China through history. Liu Kedong, 1987 pp.173-190.

⁴⁶⁵ Du Baoren made the pioneer archaeological research on the Tang *sancai* kilns that were excavated at the Huangbao kiln sites. Du Baoren, 1987 pp.33-37

⁴⁶⁶ Kerr and Wood made a comprehensive study on Chinese ceramic technology from historical and archaeological sources. Kerr and Wood, 2004. pp. 312-333

dynasty (AD 1115-1234) were uncovered. They hold the same opinion as Du Baoren, namely that *sancai* kilns in the Huangbao region were cross-draught type⁴⁶⁷ which was a simple and efficient system helping to improve evenness in firing. These features of kilns built from bricks, coated with coarse sand and fired with wood are very similar to those of the Han dynasty (206 BC-AD 220) tile kilns. The Huangye Kiln in Henan province is one of the *mantou* shaped kilns where *sancai* wares were produced. Unfortunately, there is no other archaeological report on kiln technology on the other Tang *sancai* kilns, such as the Liquanfang kiln and the Neiqiu kiln.

Details provided by archaeological excavations at the Huangbao kiln site in Shaanxi province and the Huangye kiln site in Henan province suggest that cross-draught style *mantou* kilns 半倒煙式饅頭窯 were employed for firing *sancai* wares in the Tang dynasty. The main features of the cross-draught style *mantou* kilns are their construction with bricks; their use of wood for firing with the firebox placed half a metre lower than the level of the kiln chamber at the front; and that a radical new principle, namely exit flues built horizontally in line behind the kiln chamber, linking the two chimneys set side by side (Figure 3.3). This design of kiln structure allows firing at high temperatures. Liu Zhenqun 劉振群 suggests that the firing temperature of cross-draught style *mantou* kilns may have been as high as 1200-1300°C.⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁶⁷ The cross-draught style of kiln design was first used in north China in the late Western Zhou period (c.1100-771BC). From the evidence supplied by archaeologists, it seems that the northern style of *mantou* kiln was developed from traditional cross-draught brick kilns. Kerr and Wood, 2004, pp.312-333.

⁴⁶⁸ Liu Zhenqun made a detailed research on Chinese kilns and firing. For more discussion, see Liu Zhenqun, 1986, p.297.

Kerr and Wood suggest that the earliest high-temperature *mantou* kilns⁴⁶⁹ in China emerged in the Northern and Southern Dynasties (AD 420-589), but became general in north China during the Tang dynasty.⁴⁷⁰ They state that “the Huang-pao (Huangbao) site is particularly valuable as it not only allows comparisons to be made between *san-tshai* (*sancai*) and stoneware kilns of the Tang dynasty, but also embraces some seven centuries of kiln development in northern China.”⁴⁷¹

Describing the kilns, Kerr and Wood say: “Both Tang dynasty *san-tshai* and stoneware kilns at Yao-chou (Yaozhou) were of cross-draught style and were built from brick, coated with coarse sand. They were fired with wood and the similarities between their designs and those of typical Han dynasty tile kilns are striking. The main differences between the low-and high-temperature Thang dynasty kilns lay in firing-chamber proportions and overall sizes. In detail, the *san-tshai* kiln was longer than it was wide, while the stoneware kiln, though larger, had a width that exceeded its length. The floor area of the *san-tshai* firing chamber was 2.08 metres long, by 1.68 metres wide (3.5 square metres), while the stoneware kiln had a floor space

⁴⁶⁹ For more discussion, see Rose Kerr and Nigel Wood, 2004, pp.314-325. Although according to archaeological finds, *mantou* kilns were constructed from the Warring States period (485BC-221BC), kilns of this type have been excavated at Houma village in Shanxi province 山西省侯馬村 and at Wu'an Wuji in Hebei province 河北省. See *WW*, 1960, 8-9, p. 92, and *KGXB*, 1979, 7, p. 338. Earlier *mantou* kilns had an up-draught design with a covered roof and exit holes connecting the flue channels in the back wall, and did not support high temperature firing. Liu Zhenqun, 1986, pp.295-300.

⁴⁷⁰ “The cross-draught style of kiln design, apparently first used in north China in the later Western Zhou period was a simple and efficient system. As the combustion gases were forced to travel semi-horizontally their flame-speeds were slowed, and this allowed more energy to be transferred from the burning fuel. Lower flame-speeds made higher kiln-temperatures easier to reach and generally improved fuel-economy in firing. Another advantage of the cross-draught design was its solid floor. This allowed the weight of the wares to be taken straight to a solid base, rather than a perforated floor above the firebox. The heat in these kilns could therefore be increased substantially, if necessary, without causing the kiln’s floor to fail, or the wares at the foot of the setting to be seriously over-fired. Placing the exit flues at the very base of the kilns’ back walls also countered the tendency of the flames to linger in the higher areas of the firing chamber. The flues coaxed the flames downwards, as they traveled from the firebox towards the exit flues.” Kerr and Wood, 2004, p.312.

⁴⁷¹ Kerr and Wood, 2004, p. 315.

about 2.86 metres long, by 3.4 metres wide (9.7 square metres).⁴⁷²

Among the three Tang *sancai* kilns unearthed at the Huangbao kiln site in Shaanxi province, Kiln No. 5, as it was named by the archaeologists, is the best preserved *sancai* kiln (Figure 3.4). Its measurements are reported as follows: the kiln chamber is 2.1 metres in depth, 2.1 metres in front width and 2.9 in rear width; the surviving section of the wall is 0.18 to 0.36 metres in height; the fire chamber, which is located in front of kiln chamber, is 1.2 metres deep and 1.18 metres wide at the entrance; the floor of the fire chamber is 0.42 metres lower than that of the kiln chamber. There are four flues linking the two chimneys. The chimney is 1.18 metres wide and 1.2 metres long.⁴⁷³ All the *sancai* kilns were constructed with bricks and the kiln chambers are in the shape of *mati* 馬蹄形, horseshoe (Figure 3.5).

At the Huangye kiln site in Henan province, another well-preserved Tang *sancai* kiln was found, the drawing of which is shown in Figure 3.6. Its measurements are as follows: the chamber is 1.34 metres in depth, 0.66 metres in width at the front and 1.03 metres at the rear; the surviving wall section is 0.50 metres high; the fire chamber, which is located at the front of the kiln chamber, is 0.42 metres deep and has a width of 0.54 metres at the entrance; the floor of the fire chamber is 0.42 metres lower than that of the kiln chamber; the wall between the kiln chamber and the chimney is 0.10 metres thick. There are four flues linking the two chimneys. The wall between the two chimneys is 0.20 metres thick. The left side chimney is 0.40

⁴⁷² Kerr and Wood, 2004, p. 315.

⁴⁷³ *WW*, 1987,3 pp.32-37.

metres wide and 0.52 metres long; the right side chimney is 0.37 metres wide and 0.49 metres long.⁴⁷⁴ The *sancai* kilns at the Huangye kiln site share the same features of the kilns at the Huangbao kiln site in Shaanxi province. They were constructed with bricks, and the kiln chambers have *mati* shapes (horseshoe).⁴⁷⁵

The above figures provide essential information on the size of Tang *sancai* kiln chambers. The archaeological report on the Huangbao kiln sites mentions that each of the three *sancai* kilns is about 5 cubic metres,⁴⁷⁶ whereas the stoneware kilns of the Tang dynasty, which were excavated in the same area in Huangbao, are about 21.9 cubic metres.⁴⁷⁷ The chamber of Tang *sancai* kiln at the Huangye kiln site is even smaller than the one in Huangbao. We have no information on the size of chambers of the Neiqiu *sancai* kilns, but the report on the *xing* kilns states that the size of the chamber for firing *xing* ware is larger than 10 cubic metres.⁴⁷⁸ This fact suggests that *sancai* kilns were quite small. As a result, it can be suggested that Tang *sancai* kilns had a low capacity of production, which meant a relatively high cost.

2.2 Firing

According to the archaeological reports, kiln equipment, such as triangular setters, setting rings, setting discs, saggars, as well as column and parting pads (Figure 3.7) were found in the Huangbao, the Huangye and the Nieqiu kiln sites. The reports

⁴⁷⁴ Huangye 2005, p.6.

⁴⁷⁵ Huangye 2005, pp.2-6.

⁴⁷⁶ Tangdai Huangbao Yaozhi 1992, p.22.

⁴⁷⁷ Tangdai Huangbao Yaozhi 1992, p.42.

⁴⁷⁸ Xingyao (c), 2007, p.16.

mention that wares were stacked one on top of the other, separated by setters between them for firing. Such a setting method enabled the use of the higher space in the kiln chamber thus saving costs.⁴⁷⁹

Comparing firing skills between each of the *sancai* kilns, it is interesting to note that saggars in different sizes were employed at the Huangbao *sancai* kilns in Shaanxi province,⁴⁸⁰ whereas at the Huangye kilns in Henan province *sancai* wares were fired, without saggars, "naked", or luoshao 裸燒, as the method is called in Chinese.⁴⁸¹ We do not know if saggars were employed at the Nieqiu *sancai* kilns in Hebei province, where they were widely used by *xing* kilns for firing white glazed wares.⁴⁸²

Kerr and Wood summarized the functions of saggars as follows:⁴⁸³

- to protect the wares from coal or wood ash;
- to contain the effects of any explosions of wares;
- to protect the wares from cooking draughts;
- to encourage even heat distribution throughout the kiln, both through their mass and through the uniformity of the settings that they allow;
- to allow more thorough filling of the kiln space by avoiding the use of unstable stacks;
- to allow taller kiln-chambers to be built and exploited.

⁴⁷⁹ For more discussion, see Kerr and Wood, 2004, pp. 335-341; Sui Jiansheng, 1986, pp.306-313; Li Zhiyan and Zhang Fukang, 1986, pp. 76-76; Tangdai Huangbao Yaozhi 1992, p. 24; Huangye, 2005, p. 10.

⁴⁸⁰ Some of the saggars were made to contain one object; while some others were larger and designed to contain several wares. For more detailed discussion, see Tangdai Huangbao Yaozhi 1992, pp. 491-493;

⁴⁸¹ Huangye, 2005, p.10.

⁴⁸² Bi Nanhai and Zhang Zhizhong discussed the firing process of *xing* ware. Bi Nanhai and Zhang Zhizhong, 2007(a), pp. 271-277.

⁴⁸³ Kerr and Wood, 2004, p. 342.

It is evident that the quality produced by firing with saggars was higher than that obtained by "naked" firing. But this naturally represented a costlier operation because of the extra space needed for placing saggars and the resulting lower output. In view of the intensive production that was required to meet demand, the Huangye kilns seem to have dispensed with the use of saggars, which leads to the suggestion that *sancai* wares produced in the Huangbao kilns probably had fewer flaws than those made at the Huangye kilns.

Firing Tang *sancai* ware was carried out in two phases. A first firing was made, without saggars, to toughen the body after the forming operation. A second firing was undertaken after applying the glazes for their maturation.

Firing temperatures used for Tang *sancai* bodies and glazes were examined several times by scholars. Results differ. Li Zhiyan and Zhang Fukang 張福康 suggest that "The biscuit firing temperature was about 1050°C for utensils and slightly lower for tomb figurines... The glaze firing was carried out in a kiln of moderate size using oxidizing flame at a temperature below 900°C."⁴⁸⁴ Li Guozhen 李國珍 claims that they were fired at a temperature in a range between 1050°C and 1150°C.⁴⁸⁵ Sun Xinmin 孫新民 states that the temperature for firing *sancai* bodies was 1100°C, and for glazing it was 900°C.⁴⁸⁶ Yang Wenshan 楊文山 claims that the *sancai* wares made in the Neiqiu kilns were fired at a temperature for bodies of 1180-1190°C, and

⁴⁸⁴ Li Zhiyan and Zhang Fukang, 1986. p.76.

⁴⁸⁵ Li Guozhen 李國珍 and other scholars made research on the technical aspects of Tang *sancai*. Li Guozhen, 1986, pp. 77-81.

⁴⁸⁶ Sun Xinmin talked about the archaeological excavation at Huangye kiln site. Sun Xinmin, 2002, p.3.

for glazes of 1000°C.⁴⁸⁷ Rawson and Tite state that the firing temperature used to produce the *sancai* and white ware bodies varied from about 1100°C up to 1200°C.⁴⁸⁸ Kerr and Wood suggest that “Typical biscuit-firing temperatures for tomb ceramics were about 850-1,000°C, but some late Thang dynasty san-tshai wares exported to Mesopotamia show signs of much harder initial firings (c. 1200°C) in order to toughen them for their long trade journeys and eventual domestic use.”⁴⁸⁹ Wood states: “While there is general agreement about the firing temperatures used for Tang Chinese *sancai* glazes (c.900-950°C), some very different firing temperatures have been proposed for the bodies themselves. These tend to fall into two groups: c.950-1050°C and 1100-1200°C.”⁴⁹⁰

3. Clays, shaping, innovation and inspiration

Clays of Tang *sancai* have been well studied by scholars. But this is the first time, that a comparison and examination of clays from all the *sancai* kiln sites will be discussed. By including the analysis of the Liquanfang *sancai* bodies, the discussion will be complete. Moreover, I shall use the result of the research on the clays of the Liquanfang kiln site to bring to light the interrelationship between the different *sancai* kilns. I shall use the significant finds of a well-preserved Tang *sancai* workshop as a case study to discuss the shaping technique of Tang *sancai*. Furthermore, I shall build upon the work of other scholars on the cause of forms in Tang *sancai*, to argue

⁴⁸⁷ Yang Wenshan, 2007 (b), p.453.

⁴⁸⁸ Tite and Rawson, 1987-1988, p.48.

⁴⁸⁹ Kerr and Wood, 2004, p.501.

⁴⁹⁰ Wood, 2007, p. 205.

that the potters copied Tang *sancai* luxury objects in other materials that were used in imperial and elite daily life, such as the delicately crafted and decorated wood and lacquer works.

3.1 Clays

Two types of clay were employed for *sancai* production: a yellowish loessic clay and a white gaoling clay. Tang *sancai* bodies made of these two types of clay were found at three of the kilns sites: Huangbao, Huangye and Neiqie. The archaeological reports on each of the kiln site claim that white kaolin was the main clay used for *sancai*, with lesser uses of loessic clay.⁴⁹¹

Clays that were employed in the *sancai* kilns, except at the Liquanfang kiln, are well studied.⁴⁹² Table 3.2 shows the SEM analysis made in various laboratories. The examinations suggest that loessic clay consists mainly of minute grains of quartz, feldspar and mica, with small amounts of kaolinite, illite (a hydro-micaceous clay) and calcium carbonate. The iron oxide content tends to be about 6%, mainly in the form of yellowish limonite-type minerals such as goethite.⁴⁹³ *Sancai* with white bodies were made from high alumina clay (approximately 30 per cent Al_2O_3) containing low iron (less than 2.5 per cent FeO) but significant titanium

⁴⁹¹ Tangdai Huangbao Yaozhi 1992, p.15, p.46.; Sun Xinmin 2002, p. 3, p. 10.; Yang Wenshan 2007, pp.448-449.

⁴⁹² Researches on Tang *sancai* bodies were made in the last years by scholars Li Zhiyan and Zhang Fukang, 1986, p.69; Tite and Rawson, 1987-1988, pp.43-48; Kerr and Wood, 2004, pp.87-119, pp.122-132. I shall not enter into discussions in this thesis on the components of Tang *sancai* clay which scholars had already determined. I shall look, however, at the untouched issues on this subject.

⁴⁹³ Kerr and Wood, 2004, p.91.

(approximately 1 per cent TiO₂).⁴⁹⁴

Table 3.3 contains the analysis performed on Tang *sancai* shards from the Liquanfang kiln.⁴⁹⁵ It is interesting to see that the component of the *sancai* bodies from the Liquanfang kiln site have striking similarities with the above mentioned characteristics of *sancai* wares from the Huangbao and Huangye kiln sites: high alumina, low amount of iron and titanium. A question remains with regard to the source of the kaolin used at the Liquanfang kiln, since this material is not available around Xi'an city where the kiln site is situated. This leads to the assumption that the white kaolin clay may have been sent from the kiln sites at Huangbao or Huangye.

As described in Chapter One of this thesis, the most important consumption of Tang *sancai* burial objects was in Xi'an, Shaanxi province, where imperial tombs and their attendant burials are located. To meet the great demand for these objects, a kiln nearer to the consumer site may have been planned and established. The Huangbao kiln site is about 100 kilometers north of Xi'an, while the Huangye kiln site is in Henan province farther away. Considering the large *sancai* objects used – two *sancai* horses, 66 cm high, 68 cm long, and two *sancai* camels, 77cm high, 56 cm long, were found in the tomb of Prince Li Zhen 李貞 –,⁴⁹⁶ it made more sense from the economical and practical point of view to have clay transported rather than the

⁴⁹⁴ Tite and Rawson, 1987-1988, pp. 43-48.

⁴⁹⁵ These shards consist of six pieces given to me by the archaeologist Zhuo Zhenxi 嵇振西. Their pictures are reproduced in Table 3.3. The analysis was performed by Chris Doherty, presently a D.Phil student in petrographic and chemical studies of archaeological ceramics.

⁴⁹⁶ Li Zhen 李貞 was the eighth son of the Tang Emperor Taizong 太宗. Li Zhen's tomb is one of the attendant tombs of the Zhaoling 昭陵, the tomb of Emperor Taizong. *WW*, 1977, 10, pp. 41-49.

ready-made *sancai* wares. This could have avoided the risk of damage to the objects during transportation and allowed the displacement of comparatively larger quantities of clay to Xi'an to support the production at the Liqianfang kilns.

Unfortunately, the important *sancai* production centre at the capital of the Tang, the Liqianfang kiln site, which could have provided significant information on the relationship between Tang *sancai* and the Tang burial custom and court life,⁴⁹⁷ will not be excavated in the foreseeable future for the reasons explained earlier in this chapter.

3.2 Shaping

Looking at the finds of Tang *sancai*, we notice that they cover a wide variety of items, from utensils, like plates, bowls, ewers, jars, bottles and so forth, to objects imitating daily life necessities, like treasure boxes, stoves, chariots and so forth, to figures like horses, camels, grooms, tomb guardians, Heavenly Kings, officials, court ladies, attendants and so on.

To achieve the forming, moulding or shaping of all these kinds of articles, different methods were involved. I shall take for my discussion the Tang *sancai* workshop which was found well-preserved at the Huangbao kiln site, having been abandoned

⁴⁹⁷ During field work in Xi'an, Zhuo Zhenxi 祿振西 suggested that before the arrival of the archaeologists at the Liqianfang kiln site, many shards had been taken away by the farmers who worked on the spot and sold to a private Xi'an collector. Zhuo Zhenxi saw the shards with the collector and mentioned that they include large fragments of wonderful tomb figures.

due to floods as referred to earlier in the section on kiln structures.

Table 3.1 records the tools that were left in the workshop, the layout of which is shown in Figure 3.1. This layout illustrates explicitly the manufacturing process. Chamber 3, as the largest chamber and at the centre of the workshop, accommodates a wheel, a working platform, and a small stove set up in the corner on its east side. The small stove deserves particular attention because of its importance in allowing trials of glaze colours.⁴⁹⁸ It can be argued that the chief craftsman may have used the tools, such as the wheel or moulds stored in this chamber, in order to form the object and then to shape it according to a predetermined style or model. Satisfied with the details, he would have then applied the glaze in conformity with a chosen or created design. The object would then be fired in the small stove and, if approved, would serve as a sample for the production by other craftsmen of larger quantities. Because of the limited size of the firing chamber of the oven – 60cm long, 20 to 40cm wide and 13 to 20 cm deep –, it is likely that trials of glaze colours were made on small items.

Chamber 2, which is adjacent to chamber 3, was the area for drying formed objects and for glazing, according to archaeologists. Chamber 4 was devoted to moulding. As for chambers 5, 6 and 7, they contained mainly wheels and clay vats, as well as saggars. More than 300 unglazed candle holders were unearthed in chamber 5; a large quantity of unglazed ewers, jars, plates with two handles, candle holders and

⁴⁹⁸ From the drops of *sancai* glazes left on the platform attached to the stove, archaeologists believe that the stove served only for testing results of glazes after firing. For more details, see Tangdai Huangbao Yaozhi 1992, p.14.

basins were found in chamber 6; while in chamber 7 many ewers survived (Table 3.1).

It can be noticed here that separate chambers with different materials suggest sub-division of labour, a condition representing a major step in mass production. Moreover, the finds of large numbers of objects suggest, indeed, that mass production was undertaken in these chambers. It can be considered, therefore, that in this workshop a Tang *sancai* industry was actually formed.

From the tools unearthed in the workshop, it has been established by the excavators that the Tang *sancai* manufacturing process consisted of four phases: throwing on wheel, moulding, shaping and, lastly, assembling. Utensil-shaped wares, like bowls, basins and ewers were made by throwing on wheel, whereas obviously lions and other large figurines had to be moulded part by part. Shaping is the process by which the forms were refined; this stage includes adding parts that could not be done by the wheel, like fixing handles and spouts to the ewers. Some of the *sancai* figures, such as Heavenly Kings and tomb guardians that require particular facial expressions, were shaped individually. Assembling is the phase by which different moulded parts of an object are put together by the craftsmen before glazing. This operation is commonly undertaken where large figures are concerned.

3.3 Shaping, innovation and inspiration

Tang *sancai* wares unearthed in tombs covered an impressive diversity. They were

highly attractive not only on account of their resplendent brilliant glazes, but also due to the attractiveness of their shapes.

The skills and technique of making ceramics was inherited by craftsmen over centuries. Throwing was already used in the Yangshao Culture 仰紹文化,⁴⁹⁹ during the Neolithic period in China.⁵⁰⁰ The skill of moulding can be observed in particular in the terracotta army discovered in Lintong county 臨潼縣, Shaanxi Province.⁵⁰¹ From that period, artisans were employing moulds for the basic parts of objects, and then assembling them together to make lifelike and life-size pottery figures.⁵⁰² There was nothing new during the Tang in the shaping techniques. Yet by employing these same techniques, new ceramic shapes were created with the production of Tang *sancai* ceramic which marked the characters of their time.

Taking a close look at the shapes of *sancai* utensils, we may perhaps divide them into two categories: the first that of objects resembling utensils of daily use, such as dishes, bowls, pots, tea sets, and so forth (Figure 3.8); the second related to rituals, such as vessels for offerings, incense burners, holy-water bottles and so forth (Figure 3.9).

⁴⁹⁹ Yangshao Culture 仰紹文化 was a Neolithic Culture in the area along the central part of the Yellow River 黃河.

⁵⁰⁰ Kerr and Wood, 2004, pp.390-391.

⁵⁰¹ The terra-cotta army was discovered near the tomb of China's First Emperor 秦始皇 (259BC-210BC) in 1974. It consisted of hundreds of thousands of pottery soldiers in various styles and positions. For more details see Portal, 2007.

⁵⁰² A detailed research by the Terracotta Museum on terracotta soldiers studied how each part of the body was made and assembled. Yuan Zhongyi and Chen Xuwan, 1996, pp.1097-1109; Liu Zhancheng, 1996, pp. 1110-1114. Ledderose also discussed in detail the making of the pottery soldiers. Ledderose, 2000, pp.51-72.

As discussed in Chapter two of this thesis, there was a notable influence of silver work on Chinese ceramic production probably from the 5th and 6th centuries.⁵⁰³ Due to fashions and trends of social life, silver wares had even a greater impact in the Tang dynasty on the manufacture of utensil-shaped *sancai* wares. Tang *sancai* objects were used, in particular, by imperial and elite families as tomb objects to provide the deceased with luxury in afterlife; it is not surprising that such wares imitated metal wares.⁵⁰⁴ An example is shown in Figure 3.10 representing three *sancai* tripod dishes, of which "B", 6.4 cm high and 28.5 cm in diameter, collected in the Freer Gallery in Washington, is decorated in its centre with a flying goose surrounded by *ruyi*-shaped clouds and flowers engraved in the clay body to give it the effect of the hammering produced in metal work. This piece seems to follow the example of a silver bowl, 15 cm in diameter and 5.8 cm high, as shown in Figure 3.11, with a similar decoration, all beaten in the metal, unearthed amongst the hoard of silver at Liulin Beiyincun, Yao county in Shaanxi province 陝西省耀縣柳林背陰村.⁵⁰⁵ The inner centre is patterned with a flying goose, also surrounded by flowers, extended by petals that cover fully the inner wall of the bowl.

Sancai incense burners in different shapes and sizes were produced according to styles of original metal works which served for rituals. (Figure 3.12 and Figure 13, two incense burners) show the close similarity of the copy to the original. An example of Tang *sancai* which copied ritual metal work is the holy water bottle being

⁵⁰³ Rawson 1982, p.20.

⁵⁰⁴ For more discussion, see Chapter Two of this thesis, pp. 109-110; pp. 152-165.

⁵⁰⁵ Archaeologists claim that this hoard of silver represented gifts to Emperor Xuanzong 宣宗. from Jing Hui 敬晦, a Yantie zhuanyun shi 盐铁转运使, Salt and Iron Monopoly Commissioner. *WW*, 1966, 1, pp. 46-47; 百橋明穗, 1997, lot 173, p. 398.

presented in the hand of Guanyin 觀音. Another *sancai* holy water bottle, 24.2 cm high, fully glazed in green colour, the tone of which hints to the colour of bronze (Figure 3.14) and a bronze holy water bottle, 21.5 cm high, (Figure 3.15) exemplify the comparison.⁵⁰⁶

Miniature tables were also produced in *sancai* in different creations. One of them, 26 cm long, 19.2 cm wide and 6.5 cm high, excavated in the tomb of Prince Li Feng 李鳳,⁵⁰⁷ (Figure 3.16), mimicking delicate woodwork, is made with a pattern of rippled lines decorating the top and all four sides. In the collection at the Shōsō-in Temple, there is a rectangular wood table, 50 cm long, 42 cm wide and 6.2 cm high,⁵⁰⁸ (Figure 3.17) finely painted on all sides, except at the centre of the top, where probably some other object was mounted. This wood table may have been made in Japan. However, it probably followed the shape of a contemporary Tang period from China.⁵⁰⁹

Hardly anything in wood from the Tang period survives in China, such as the lacquered flower-shaped tray (39 cm in length, 37 cm in width and 10.1 cm height) shown in Figure 3.18 belonging to the Shōsō-in collection. Although this tray is most likely a Japanese lacquer work, it is probably a copy of Chinese craft; this kind of shape having been much mimicked in Tang *sancai*. “The top of the tray is painted red on the black lacquered ground and then covered with oil, the edges being covered

⁵⁰⁶ 中野 徹 discussed in detail about this particular shape of bottle, which is used for rituals. See 百橋明穂, 1997, lot 159, pp. 393-394.

⁵⁰⁷ *KG*, 1977, 5, pp. 313-326.

⁵⁰⁸ Treasures of The Shoso-in, 1960, The Middle Section, IX.

⁵⁰⁹ Treasures of The Shoso-in, 1962, The North Section, VIII.

with gold leaf. The sides and the bottom are lacquered black, and the sides are painted on the lacquered ground with flowers and leaves in greenish white, brown, white and red. The border line between the side and the bottom is painted red and the back is not covered with oil. The legs are made of wood and covered with gold leaf on the black lacquered ground.”⁵¹⁰ From its fine design and the expensive way this lacquer tray has been decorated, it can be suggested that it was affordable only to the higher echelons of society. There are twenty-nine pieces of this kind of shaped trays in the collection of the Shōsō-in Temple.

Chinese Tang *sancai* dishes, as shown in Figure 3.19 and Figure 3.20, may represent the artisans' efforts in achieving a resemblance to such lacquers. The special material, fine and sophisticated workmanship, and the skilled labour involved in the production of lacquer works made them costly and beyond the reach of ordinary people in the history of China.⁵¹¹

Inspiration for the shaping of Tang *sancai* wares was drawn from many types of artefacts mostly representing a higher value and exotic features. One example is a rhyton collected in the British Museum, 9.2 cm high, green-glazed on the outer side and yellow-glazed inside with the motif of a beast head shown in Figure 3.21. Another is a rhyton-mannered *sancai* cup, 6.8 cm high, designed with a

⁵¹⁰ Treasures of The Shoso-in, 1961, The South Section, X.

⁵¹¹ Before gold, silver and ceramic wares became the main utensil objects in the imperial court, lacquer works were one of the most valuable items. Large quantities of lacquer works were unearthed from the imperial tombs of the Warring States Period (475 BC-221 BC) and the Han dynasty (206 BC-220 AD). For more discussion, see Garner 1979; Wang Shixiang, 1987; Shen Fuwen, 1991; Clifford, 1992; Rawson, 1992 and Chen Zhenyu, 2007.

Chinese-featured dragon head, 7.5 cm wide at the mouth, decorated with yellow, white and green glazes (Figure 3.22). This cup was excavated in Miaogou 苗溝 in Luoyang 洛陽, and is collected in the Luoyang Museum 洛陽博物館. The origin of the rhyton possibly goes back to Ancient Persia (550 BC-330 BC), where it was used by the court. The Persians were already making rhyton cups in different materials from the fourth century BC (Figure 3.24).⁵¹²

We do not know what kind of beast inspired the Chinese potters to produce vessels such as the green rhyton in Figure 3.21. Nevertheless, a cup, from a collection of the British Museum, identical in shape and size, made of white clay body and white glaze (Figure 3.23), is probably a *xing* ware of Hebei province, or from Henan province, where white clay and glazed wares were also produced. This leads to the suggestion that this shape was copied in different kiln sites. Most likely, this white glazed beast-headed rhyton cup was made in the *xing* kiln site where *sancai* was also produced. However, there is no information on where rhyton cups of this particular shape have been found other than the sources of the green and the white pieces mentioned above.

⁵¹² “Between 550 and 330 BC the Achaemenid kings of Iran controlled an empire that stretched from the River Indus to North Africa and from the Aral Sea to the Persian Gulf. It was the greatest empire the world had seen up until that time.” Curtis and Tallis, 2005, p. 9. When Simpson discussed the vessels that appeared in Persepolis, he states: “The rhyton, or ‘pour’, is another quintessential Persian form of vessel which is nevertheless also absent from depictions at Persepolis. It typically consists of a conical or trumpet-like horn, usually hammered from relatively thin sheet metal and inserted, sometimes at right angles, into a proportionately much smaller cast or hammered animal-headed protome, with a pouring hole or spout typically in the muzzle or chest. A second type of rhyton was simply the form of an animal head but an added spout crucially differentiates this from animal-head buckets and cups (protomes), which continued in use (and inspired Athenian potter to make versions in clay). Most surviving rhytons are silver, although gold (mostly dubious) and bronze versions are also known. Faience and pottery rhytons also survive. An exceptional (albeit fragmentary and highly weathered) glass rhyton excavated at Persepolis has a protome in the form of a bull, with a lion pouncing on the back of its neck. This classic example of official imagery proves the impact of ‘court style’ or ‘international Achaemenid style’ on workshop production and recalls the stylized realism of the silver amphora handles. As with the most elaborate metalwork, the ears and horns of the bull on this rhyton were separately attached from another material, and additional inlay was set within a rectangular strip on the neck (although these are now missing). The vessel lacks pouring spout, presumably because of the risk of drilling a hole through the finished piece.” Simpson 2005, p. 107.

The question now arises as to how the artisans belonging to a low social class came to encounter the objects that belonged to the imperial and elite lifestyles and which served them as models for their *sancai*-decorated creations. It is possible that the Zhenguan Shu 甄官署, a bureau of the imperial institution, which was in charge of organizing and dealing with imperial burials, gave some kind of blueprints to *sancai* workshops. The Tang text *Jiu Tang Shu* 舊唐書 records the duty of Zhenguan Shu 甄官署 as:

The commander of Zhenguan is responsible for supplying ashlar and things related to pottery and clay. All chime stones, steles, stone tablets, stone figures, beasts and horses, grinds, millings, bricks and tiles, bottles, vats and this kind of things, bereavement, burial, and tomb objects, are all to be supplied. “甄官令掌供琢石陶土之事·凡石磬碑碣、石人獸馬、碾磑磚瓦、瓶缶之器、喪葬明器，皆供之。”⁵¹³

Officials of the Zhenguan Shu, being familiar with and well informed about court life, may have made the drawings or models of the most desired objects at court and may have provided them to the workshop artisans. As I have argued in Chapter two of this thesis, one of the main purposes of Tang *sancai* was its use as burial ware, with the probable objective of mimicking expensive and rare objects, and so provides the deceased with luxury in afterlife. It seems possible that the Huangbao *sancai* workshop was operated under the supervision of an official administration. Except for the Liqianfang kiln site, Huangbao was the nearest *sancai* manufacturing centre to the Tang capital, which was well supplied with pottery clay to meet the demand for Tang *sancai*. No textual records survive to suggest that the Zhenguan Shu had

⁵¹³ *Jiu Tang Shu* 舊唐書, p.1896.

worked with a *sancai* workshop directly, but it is evident that there were types of lacquer and silver that were ordered in ceramic wares.

As well as these Tang *sancai* pieces in exotic shapes, standard pieces also contributed to the Tang *sancai* production. Such standard shapes were more obvious in *sancai* objects which mimicked metal works. Two *sancai* cups with moulded flowers, as shown in Figure 3.25 and Figure 3.26, both carry a pattern of a four-petalled flower, with dense dots (or pearls, Zhenzhudi 珍珠地 in Chinese) all over – all typical of a metal design, as can be seen in the similar flower-patterned 10 cm silver cup (Figure 3.27) from the collection of the Hakutsuru Fine Art Museum in Japan, 白鶴美術館. The two *sancai* cups have a different glazing: one is gold-like yellow glaze and the other is green and creamy-white with a touch of yellow. They are very slightly different in size: one is 9.8 cm in diameter (Figure 3.25), while the other is 10.1 cm (Figure 3.26). Another example is a popular type of *sancai* dish with three low legs as shown in Figure 3.28. This dish is made in the manner of a three-legged silver tray illustrated in Figure 3.29, from the collection of the Shōsō-in. Such silver trays were probably used as containers for fruits or other foods.

4. Glazes, decoration, innovation and inspiration

A combination of several colours of lead glaze on ceramic was an innovation and a particular characteristic of Tang *sancai*.

4.1 Glazes

Considerable research on the lead glaze used for Tang *sancai* has been modeled by scholars.⁵¹⁴ Several separate analyses on the firing temperatures of Tang lead glazes have given similar results: glazes were applied to the pre-fired bodies following with their shapes and design; this was succeeded by a second firing at a low temperature varying between 700°C and 900°C.⁵¹⁵ Wood explains that “The lead-oxide eutectic mixture, on which most Tang *sancai* glazes depend, starts to melt at 650°C, but the glaze firings for most Tang *sancai* wares have been variously estimated as being ‘below 900°C’ and ‘about 950°C’. Most Tang *sancai* glazes, therefore, seem to have been slightly overfired to encourage the dramatic (but usually well-controlled) running and merging of the lead-rich glazes that is very much part of the *sancai* style. When the above analyses are reconstructed, a firing temperature of about 1000°C seem to work best...”⁵¹⁶

The discussion as to whether the lead glazes that were applied on *sancai* ceramics are the same lead glazes that were used on Han dynasty lead-glazed ware seems to have led to a final conclusion: “Tang *sancai* glazes were developed on the basis of the lead glaze originated in the Han Dynasty or a little earlier, as shown by the close similarity of their chemical compositions. As far as colours and colouring elements are concerned, the lead glazes made in the Han Dynasty are all mono-colored glazes, most of which are green glazes, with only a few examples of yellow glazes. The

⁵¹⁴ See Zhang Fukang and Zhang Zhigang, 1982, pp.23-43; Li Guozhen and Chen Naihong, 1986, pp. 77-81; Li Zhiyan and Zhang Fukang, 1986, p.70; Kerr and Wood, 2004, pp. 482-484; pp.500-503; Tite and Rawson, 1987-88, pp. 39-61. More discussions will be found further on in this section.

⁵¹⁵ Zhang Fukang and Zhang Zhigang, 1982, p. 32.

⁵¹⁶ Wood, 2007, p. 203.

Han potters used only two kinds of colouring elements, namely Cu and Fe. In the Tang *sancai* glaze, Co was used in addition to Cu and Fe.”⁵¹⁷

With his analysis, Zhang Fukang confirms the view that lead glazes were used on Han as well as Tang wares (Table 3.4).⁵¹⁸ Another analysis made by Wood points to the same conclusion (Table 3.5).⁵¹⁹ The analysis of Tang *sancai* shards in Table 3.6 shows that they were excavated in the Liqianfang kiln site, which demonstrates that the components of the lead glazes fall in the same groups of lead glazes that were used in other Tang *sancai* kiln sites (Table 3.7).⁵²⁰

Watson has also argued, with artifacts from the Han down to the Tang dynasties, that there is a lineage of using lead glaze in the history of Chinese ceramic: “An old theory that the use of lead flux was introduced to the Far East from Parthian Persia in the course of Han diplomatic and military contacts in the 2nd or 1st century B.C. is unproven and seems unlikely, although it is plausible that knowledge of lead-glazing should have spread through Central Asia during Han times and perhaps a little earlier. In China lead-glazing appears on pottery towards the end of the 6th century, under the Sui dynasty, applied to the imitation of more or less exotic shapes and ornament, all of strongly westernizing types.”⁵²¹

⁵¹⁷ Li Zhiyan and Zhang Fukang, 1986, p.70.

⁵¹⁸ Zhang Fukang, 1986, pp.46-54.

⁵¹⁹ Wood, 2007, p.129.

⁵²⁰ Li Guozhen and Chen Naihong, 1986, pp. 77-81; Li Zhiyan and Zhang Fukang, 1986, p.70; Kerr and Wood, 2004, pp. 482-484; pp.500-503; Rawson and Tite, 1987-88, pp. 39-61.

⁵²¹ Watson, 1997, pp. 206-217.

4.1.1 Cobalt blue

Cobalt blue, which is the pigment used to colour the blue glaze on/in Tang *sancai*, remains one of the most debated topics in the field of Chinese ceramic. The argument concerns following issues:

- the source of the cobalt blue;
- the definition of Tang Qinghua 唐青花, Tang blue-and-white;
- whether the cobalt blue used on Tang ceramic is applied under the glaze or is in the glaze itself.

The question arose due to the excavation in 1975 at the ruins of the Tang city of Yangzhou of a shard, probably a fragment of a pillow, 8.4 cm long, 7.5 cm wide, and 0.6 cm thick, decorated with rhombic patterns in cobalt blue on a white body with a transparent glaze (Figure 3.30).⁵²² The discussion heated up when more shards decorated only with cobalt blue were found later at Yangzhou in 1985 and in 1990, at the Huangye *sancai* kiln site in 2002-2003,⁵²³ and in the Belitung cargo in 1998.⁵²⁴ About thirty cobalt blue decorated shards of bowls, dishes, ewers and pillows were found in Yangzhou in the 1980s, (Figure 3.31)⁵²⁵ and fourteen shards from utensil objects were unearthed at the ruins of a Yangzhou Tang architectural site in 1990. Furthermore, a considerable quantity of shards of blue-and-white glass wares with

⁵²² The shard was excavated 4.34 metres below ground level, an undisturbed cultural layer of the Tang dynasty. A brown-glazed Tang pot and a coin bearing the characters “Kai Yuan Tong Bao”, 開元通寶, were unearthed together. *WW*, 1977,9, p. 29

⁵²³ Huangye, 2005, p. 13.

⁵²⁴ Flecker discussed the shipwreck, the Belitung cargo and the finds in the cargo. Flecker 2000, pp.199-217; Flecker, 2001, 335-354; Scott discussed in detail about the finds in the Belitung cargo. Scott, 2003, pp. 13-15.

⁵²⁵ *WW*, 1985, 10, a, pp.67-71; *WW*, 1985, 10, b, pp.72-76; *WW*, 1985, 10, c, pp.77-80; *WW*, 1985, 10, d, p.96; Xu Bingkuan, 1988.

Middle Eastern features and shards of Middle Eastern potteries, such as pots and ewers, decorated with turquoise blue glaze on rough loessic clay, were found at the site.⁵²⁶ Archaeologists suggest that the architectural site was probably an inn, the size of the construction being larger than the houses of ordinary people, although there were no signs of a particular building style.

Three dishes decorated in cobalt blue on white ware were found in perfect condition in the Belitung wreckage. All three share the same style of decoration: a geometric pattern in the centre surrounded by palmettes (Figure 3.32).⁵²⁷ One dish, 23.3 cm in diameter, has in its centre a square or rhombus design; inside the square or rhombus there is a flower-shaped pattern; palmettes flourishingly extend from each outer corner of the geometric design towards the edge of the flat bottom. Another smaller-sized dish, 17.5 cm in diameter, has a similar pattern, but the cobalt seems to have slightly run giving a blurred effect. The design on a third dish, 23.7 in diameter, consists of three small overlapping rhombi each enclosing a palmette-like rosette; palmettes surround the rhombi respecting a consistent decoration theme. On the inner wall of each dish, stemming vertically from the bottom to the border, we can see four equidistant relief pleats; between the pleats, on the border of the dish, four little palmette leaves have been added.

Some scholars suggest that the cobalt blue used on Tang ceramics came from the

⁵²⁶ No detailed information about the finds of the foreign glass and ceramics is given in the archaeological report. *KG*, 1994, 5, pp.413-420.

⁵²⁷ Scott 2003, pp. 13-15.

Middle East, while others argue that cobalt mines existed in China and that there was no lack of technique in the use of cobalt.⁵²⁸ Ma Wenkuan 馬文寬 holds the idea that the cobalt was imported in China during the Tang.⁵²⁹ Ma's arguments are based on the analyses of the components of cobalt in the major mines in Zhejiang 浙江, Jiangxi 江西 and Yunan 雲南 provinces in China which show that the characteristics of the Chinese cobalt are a high content of manganese and a low content of iron. This differs from the cobalt applied on the Tang wares which is rather pure, with only a trace of copper and nickel.⁵³⁰ More research is needed to reach a definite answer.

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to pursue this subject further. However, I accept the view that the cobalt blue used for the Tang ware came from the Middle East. My position is supported by three points: firstly, the blue colour was a popular colour in the Middle East;⁵³¹ secondly, cobalt blue was used on ceramic in the Middle East before China;⁵³² thirdly, most of the decorations of cobalt blue-decorated dishes consist of geometric patterns that often appear on the items that came from the Middle East.⁵³³ For example, the glass wares that were unearthed at the Famen Temple were

⁵²⁸ Yang Wenxian and Zhou Kun talked about blue decorated Tang ware. Yang Wenxian and Zhou Kun, 1985, pp. 25-26.

⁵²⁹ *KG*, 1997, 1, pp. 73-84.

⁵³⁰ Tite and Rawson, 1987-1988, pp. 39-61.

⁵³¹ Pope has made significant research on Persian art. He discussed in detail the trend, taste and use of pottery in Persia. For more discussion, see Pope, 1939, vol. II, pp. 1146-1702.

⁵³² For more discussion, see Allan, 1991.

⁵³³ Pope discussed the geometric pattern in details: "The decorations are for the most part comparatively simple, but the range of motifs is quite astonishing. Geometrical figures constitute the sole ornament on one group, sometimes called Solomon's seal are quite common. The most frequent plant motif consists of palmette leaves of nine bracts, but very freely rendered half-acanthus segments are also used, and these are variously combined. Thus the palmettes may be spaced on three axes and separated by club-shaped bars; or the three may be attached to a centre motif and assume the movement of the ancient trisul, while four of the half-acanthus leaves attached to the corners of a square may be given a similar rotating motion. The ancient rosette may fill the entire bottom of a bowl, or, in smaller scale, may be set within the arms of a lightly sketched irregular foliate cross, while the equally ancient pomegranate with its leaves also stands as an isolated pattern. Other bowls show more naturalistic plant sprays. The palm tree is especially important in this repertoire, and the rendition ranges from an almost geometrical conventionalization to a quite naturalistic effect. It is sometimes formally framed in a pair of branching willow boughs, but occasionally is used almost pictorially, as on a fine specimen in the National Museum, Tehran. A special form is found on a bowl

decorated with geometric patterns (Figure 3.33).⁵³⁴ These dishes are very similar in design to glass fragments from the site of Samarra in Iraq. It is therefore likely the dishes came from Middle East; indeed, these kinds of patterns were not popular in the China at the time and were probably designed for the overseas market to comply with orders from buyers. For instance, amongst the salvaged wares from the Belitung cargo, geometric patterns were used on *sancai* ware and on *changsha* ware.⁵³⁵

Rawson writes: "The Chinese seem to have been remarkably responsive to the tastes of distant markets, as the history of their later ceramic industry indicates. It is now becoming clear that in the Tang period also they were able to establish what would sell and proceeded to make it. The blue-decorated wares from Samarra ... should be mentioned in this context. The white bodies are based upon Chinese wares, but the blue decoration is in Middle Eastern taste. Fragments of blue-decorated Gong Xian-type whitewares found at Yangzhou seem to indicate that the Chinese were aware of Middle Eastern interest in blue-decorated ceramics that they had manufactured their own versions specifically for export."⁵³⁶

An ongoing debate concerns the definition of Tang blue-and-white. As soon as the cobalt blue-decorated shard was discovered at Yangzhou, it was addressed as Tang

in the British Museum consisting of a lattice structure topped by acanthus segments, similar to Assyrian artificial trees. The willow bough which recalls a Susa I motif is also used alone, bent into a wreath reminiscent of the Classical laurel wreath, on either plates or the shoulder of a jar. On a similar jar slightly different deciduous foliage forms a tree which alternates with a cypress on a festooned stem." Pope, pp.1483-1484. For more discussion, see Hobson, 1932; Lane, 1937, pp. 33-54; Lane 1971; Pope, 1939 and Raby, 1994.

⁵³⁴ See Famensi, 1994, p. 84.

⁵³⁵ Scott, 2003, pp. 13-25.

⁵³⁶ Rawson, 1987-88, pp. 56-57

Qinghua, Tang blue-and-white, a name inspired from blue-and-white porcelain which started to be popular in the Yuan dynasty 元代 (1271 AD - 1368 AD) and is still popular today. The question is whether this kind of ware should be addressed as Tang dynasty blue-and-white. This debate is significant because, if the term Tang Qinghua, or Tang blue and white were accepted, this would give the impression that blue-and-white porcelain production started as early as Tang dynasty, which is not the case.

To be clearer, I shall briefly refer to the acknowledged definition on blue-and-white porcelain which appeared during the Yuan dynasty, as summarized by Li Huibing.⁵³⁷

According to this definition, when speaking of blue-and-white ceramic, the following features have to be taken into consideration:

- the gaoling clay;
- the high temperature firing - above 1300°C;
- the translucent body after firing;
- the under-glaze cobalt blue-decoration.

The shards which were decorated with cobalt blue from the Tang do not meet the above mentioned conditions for the following reasons:

- a) Although the component of the body of cobalt blue-decorated Tang ceramic is the gaoling clay and the firing temperature is above 1300°C,⁵³⁸ the result differs from

⁵³⁷ Li Huibing raised the question that the blue decorated Tang ware can be considered as blue-and-white ware. Li Huibing, 1995, pp.63-71.

⁵³⁸ See Huangye 2000, Huangye 2002.

the blue-and-white of the Yuan and later dynasties inasmuch as they are not translucent after firing.⁵³⁹

- b) The cobalt blue used for the pattern was applied as a glaze directly on the body and was not applied as an under glaze.⁵⁴⁰
- c) They were not made at Jingdezhen, where the acknowledged blue-and-white porcelain was produced originally in the Yuan dynasty.

In the context of blue-and-white designation, I argue that the cobalt blue-decorated ceramic of the Tang dynasty should not be considered as blue-and-white ceramic and called Tang Qinghua 唐青花. I believe this constitutes an incorrect association of the Tang ceramics with later blue-and-white porcelain which is misleading in the light of the present understanding of the development of Chinese ceramic history. In my opinion, it would be more appropriate to address the Tang ware as Tangdai guliao zhuangshi taoci 唐代鈷料裝飾陶瓷 (Tang dynasty cobalt blue-decorated ceramic).

In the production of Tang *sancai*, cobalt was used as a glaze colouring material. As an example, a jar, shown in Figure 3.34, 25.4 cm high, was fully glazed with cobalt. Here, cobalt was applied directly on the body as a glazing, then fired directly. Relatively few Tang *sancai* objects were found which were made with the same method of overall blue decoration. As a close variant, Figure 3.35 shows a stem dish, 23.5 cm in diameter, fully glazed with cobalt blue on its inner and outer sides, but has

⁵³⁹ Some of the blue-and-white wares are not translucent due to the thickness of the body. However, the high firing temperature and the combination of the clays in Jingdezhen 景德鎮 does give a translucent effect.

⁵⁴⁰ Li Jiazhi studied the cobalt blue decoration method in the Tang ware. Li Jiazhi, 1986, p. 133.

in its centre a white-blue-and-green pattern. Yet another variant in the use of using cobalt as glaze-colouring is illustrated in Figure 3.36 showing a miniature treasure box, 13.3cm high, coloured with two glazes, blue and yellow. Scholars suggest that the cobalt blue on the white dishes found at the site of the Huangye kiln were applied on the bodies of the ceramic without any other glaze over it. Yet, in the Yuan dynasty, cobalt was used to produce patterns on which a layer of transparent over-glaze was applied.

As this thesis deals only with Tang *sancai*, and taking into account that cobalt blue-decorated wares were fired in the same kilns that produced Tang *sancai* ware, the cobalt blue-decorated Tang *sancai* wares shall be discussed in the framework of decoration in the following section.

4.2 Decoration

Tang *sancai* was the most colourful ware in its time. Fired in an oxidizing atmosphere, the iron oxide turns to amber; copper oxide produces green; antimony becomes bright yellow and manganese makes purple. The new colorant, cobalt, was introduced to *sancai* ceramic in the Tang. Cobalt oxide gives the glaze a dark or pale blue hue. An elaborated patchwork of coloured designs gives a dazzling effect. On some of the *sancai* wares, the combination of colours can be up to four, of which amber, brown, green, blue, creamy white, straw yellow and black (Figure 3.37). Even as a single colour, the shine of Tang lead glaze gives the object a substantial

glimmer as in the monochrome *sancai* horse shown in Figure 3.38.

4.2.1 Decoration technique

Pouring, dripping, filling and brushing were the methods of applying the glazes. Pouring is the main process for the glazing operation. Generally, two colours of glazes are employed for pouring. These glazes were often put on side by side, but as they were quite fluid, they tended to run and mix together. This kind of decoration is often used on the shoulder part of jars, bottles, “monk bowls” and so forth (Figure 3.39). Dripping is the practice of applying on the surface of the object splashes and dribbles of colours. This is done freely, yet evenly splashed, with two or three colours, generally on utensil-shaped wares, such as pots, bottles, dishes, and so forth (Figure 3.40). Filling is the method of applying glazes on objects with delicate patterns where the design requires a clear edge of each colour, such as for painting plants, birds, flowers, clouds and so forth (Figure 3.41). Brushing is often used for figure glazing, such as Tomb Guardians, the mane of horses and camels, and so forth (Figure 3.42). Some *sancai* objects were decorated by a combination of two or more of the above methods. Craftsmen used the glazes with dexterity to enhance the shape of the object, like the horse bronze ornaments and bridle shown in Figure 3.43. Another original technique for *sancai* was the resist process, also called wax dyeing, *laxie* 蠟纈⁵⁴¹ in Chinese, a term borrowed from textiles. This method is used to “resist” or prevent the dye from reaching all the cloth, thereby creating a pattern and

⁵⁴¹ The *Laxie* 蠟纈 method consists of applying melted wax or some form of paste to pre-designed areas of the cloth before dipping it in dye. Wherever the wax has seeped through the fabric, the dye will not penetrate, creating thus the intended patterns. This is also known as resist-printing.

ground. The decoration of the Tang *sancai* jar in Figure 3.44 demonstrates how *sancai* copied the textile pattern made by the tie and dye technique. The earliest *laxie* 蠟纈 textiles were unearthed in Xinjiang province 新疆省, and are dated by archaeologists to the 5th century 南北朝 (Figure 3.45).⁵⁴²

Wood explains the process in detail: “This involved applying patch of resist medium to a thin clear glaze before firing, then overglazing by painting, pouring or dipping with the coloured *sancai* glazes. It was once assumed that wax or grease were the usual resist media in Tang *sancai* wares – in which case the overglazes would have simply run off the resisted areas during application, and the resist medium would have burned away in the glaze firing. However, some examples of Tang *sancai* show dusty patches in the resisted areas that took traces of white clay. It seems possible, in these cases, that the *sancai* potters may have borrowed the textile technique of using a clay and flour paste mixture as a resist medium. This would have been applied on top of the clear glaze and allowed to dry before the coloured glazes were brushed on. The small detail of set resist could then have been picked off, taking small areas of the coloured overglazes with them. In using this method some of the clear underglaze would have come away with the resist material, and it is noticeable that the centres of the resisted areas on many Tang *sancai* wares are dull and almost bald of glaze, which may support the idea that some kind of kaolin-resist process had been used. This is still supposition but, however achieved, the dappled glazes and slightly uneven surfaces that resulted from *sancai* resist-glazing techniques are

⁵⁴² *WW*, 1972, 3, pp. 15-16.

characteristics of some of the finest and most ambitious examples of these wares.’’⁵⁴³

Another method also belonging to textiles is the *jiaxie* 夾纈,⁵⁴⁴ also called tie and dye.

In his research on the history of Chinese textiles, Chen Weixu 陳維繼 argued that a new technique of textile prints appeared during the Tang.⁵⁴⁵ One of them is the

jiaxie 夾纈 which was invented by the sister of Jieyu 婕妤, a consort of Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗. At the behest of the Emperor, the court undertook to produce cloth with this method. At first, production was made in secret, and later, when disclosed, became quite popular. Patterns made by *jiaxie* were adopted as themes for ladies' dresses during the Tang. The famous painting Daoliantu 搗練圖, *Court Ladies Preparing Newly-Woven Silk*, by Zhang Xuan 張萱 (AD 713- AD 755), depicted the pattern on the dress worn by the ladies (Figure 3.46).

Actual Tang textiles with *jiaxie* patterns can be seen in the collections of the British Museum and the Xinjiang Museum 新疆博物館. Examples are shown in Figure 3.47 of flower designs arranged in a geometric pattern typical of the *jiaxie* technique. In pursuit of innovation, the Tang potters seem to have once more applied textile fashion to ceramics. This can be seen on a Tang *sancai* dish, 35.8 cm in diameter (Fig 3.48), decorated with big bright symmetrical dots formed by colourful concentric circles and arcs, which resembles closely the *jiaxie*-patterned design on the dress worn by the court girl in the painting of Daoliantu referred to above. The dots are white; they are

⁵⁴³ Wood, 2007, pp. 204-205.

⁵⁴⁴ The *jiaxie* 夾纈 method consists of pressing a folded cloth between two wooden boards on which patterns have been cut out. The boards are tied and dye is then pushed down into the cuts. The ties prevent the entire material from being dyed. The result is an identical twin pattern on the cloth when unfolded. This is also known as tie-dyeing.

⁵⁴⁵ Chen Weiji studied Chinese the history of textile technology. Chen Wenji, 1984, p.270.

circled by green, then brown then white thick lines on a green background on the bottom of the dish; on a brownish background at the outer edge of the dish. The dot and circles in the pattern of the court girl's dress share exactly the same order of colours. The general tones and hues in the dish and in the dress are very similar.

Marbled patterns were another new style of decoration that was used on Tang *sancai* ware (Figure 3.49). The technique consisted of using two colours of clay, often white and brown, mixed together to achieve the motif of a flower, a geometrical figure, a wood pattern and the like, over which was applied a thin layer of transparent glaze, usually yellow or green. Archaeologists claim that this technique of ceramic design lasted only about four hundred years, starting in the high Tang, and disappearing when the North Song dynasty 北宋 came to an end. To date pieces using this technique have only been found at the Huangye *sancai* kiln.⁵⁴⁶ This kind of design was used for dishes, bowls, and more frequently pillows. Few Tang period marbled items have been excavated. A horse mounted with a groom, 36.2 cm high and 30 cm long, entirely made with a marble design (Figure 3.50) which was found in the tomb of Prince Yide 懿德太子.⁵⁴⁷ But such figures made with marble patterns are extremely rare.

Marble design is the term given by western scholars to this type of pattern. Chinese scholars call it *jiaotai* 絞胎, literally meaning mixing bodies (clays). The design does not exactly imitate marble patterns, but rather wood. In the context of the

⁵⁴⁶ Huangye, 2000, pp.48-50.

⁵⁴⁷ *WW*, 1979, 1, pp.

examples discussed, it is evident that inspiration for Tang *sancai* was drawn both from rare and expensive materials as far as shaping was concerned, and from textiles and other materials. In the following section, I shall elaborate on the reason for the wood pattern seems to have copied twisted wood.

4.2.2 Technical innovation in decoration

In addition to the attraction produced by the shine of the glaze, the patterns used for decoration brought another significant element of appeal to *sancai* objects. With the multiple colours of glazes provided to them, Tang *sancai* artisans were able to create a large number of designs and patterns.

Inspiration of these designs and patterns came from different sources. As discussed earlier in this chapter, (in section 3.3 on "Shaping innovation and inspiration"), the shaping of Tang *sancai*, was greatly influenced by metal works which implied also the mimicking of the natural shine of gold and silver. This is illustrated in Figure 3.51 by the *sancai* ceramic copy replicating faithfully the gilt silver tripod in Figure 3.52. The bright yellow glaze sets the tone of the glimmer of gold, thus enhancing the object it imitates. Another example is a *sancai* horse equipped with finely moulded ornaments and saddle, as seen in Figure 3.53, closely imitating the bronze and gilt ornaments provided to horses in real life.

It could be argued that the motivation for creating the *jiatou* pattern is the high cost of the delicate and sophisticated wood crafts, which were sought by the elite during

the Tang. Here again, I have to refer to the collection of woodworks in the Shōsō-in Temple in Japan to suggest that the *jiaotai* pattern was perhaps an attempt to copy the pattern of burr wood and its dense swirls.⁵⁴⁸ Shōsō-in wood box covers (Figure 3.54) illustrate fine marquetry. As a consequence of the development of their skill in *jiaotai*, artisans have successfully achieved, by the same technique, the creation of flower and geometric patterns.

A group of utensil objects (Figure 3.55) is displayed with the splashing method. This kind of glazing was quite popular on Tang *sancai* wares. Similar splashed wares were produced in the Middle East (Figure 3.56). However, they also carried strongly incised designs and are often named as *Sgraffiato*.⁵⁴⁹ Lane claims that the origins of the *sgraffiato* technique can be traced back to between the 5th and 7th centuries on Coptic wares from Egypt.⁵⁵⁰ It is generally accepted that this type of design was gradually developed and was stimulated by the dialogue with Middle Eastern potters through the ceramic trade.⁵⁵¹ However, the rough incised designs were omitted, or replaced by regular moulded motifs. As mentioned earlier, during the excavation in 1990 at a Tang architectural site, which was probably the site of an

⁵⁴⁸ Burr denotes wood containing knots or other growths and shows a pattern of dense swirls in the grain when sawn. It is used for veneers and other decorative woodwork. It is rare because it is found only in deformed branches of a tree.

⁵⁴⁹ Lane gives information in detail on the word *Sgraffiato*: “The word ‘Sgraffiato’ appears to be a linguistic bastard, born of the impact of Nordic minds on the Italian language; it does not occur in Italian dictionaries I have consulted, and Mr. Hobson, with scholarly refinement, prefers the better authenticated ‘graffiato’. Mr. Rackham, on the other hand, following Falke, at present both says and writes ‘graffiato’; video meliora proboque; deteriora sequor. The word is loosely used of any pottery with a design carved or engraved on the surface while the clay is biscuit hard, and then covered with a transparent glaze and fired. More properly, it should be confined to a form made of coarse clay with a coat of white slip; the decoration is cut through the slip, and when covered with a clear lead-glaze, shows dark in contrast to the light surrounding surface.” Lane, 1937-38, p.33.

⁵⁵⁰ Lane, 1937-38, p.34.

⁵⁵¹ See Lane, 1937-38, pp.33-54; Pope, 1939, pp.1446-1664; Crowe, 1975-77, pp.263-278; Whitcomb, 1990-91, pp. 43-65; Allan, 1991; Morgan, 1994, pp. 119-123 and Wood, 2007, pp.198-199.

inn building of the Tang, a large quantity of shards of ware bearing *sgraffiato* characters were unearthed. We have no evidence to trace who used these wares, except to assume that it may have been foreigners. Neither can we argue whether these wares were brought to China as personal belongings of foreigners or as samples of ceramic orders. Whatever the case, the finds of Tang *sancai* shards at Samarra (Figure 3.57)⁵⁵², in present day Iraq, and at Fustat⁵⁵³, in present day Egypt, suggest that Chinese splash glazed wares were traded in the Middle East and perhaps “greatly prized by the Arabs”, as Lane claims.⁵⁵⁴

Another design that has had a strong link with the Middle East is represented by the cobalt blue decorated wares. Allan writes: “The legacy of the Islamic potters to the world is unique. It was they who first saw the potential of white tin glaze as a ‘canvas’ for ceramic decoration. It was they who first used cobalt blue on that white ground, and hence invented ‘blue-and-white’, centuries before such a colour scheme became the trade mark of Chinese export porcelain and then of European taste.”⁵⁵⁵

From the limited finds of cobalt decorated wares, we can assume that the wares found at Yangzhou (Figure 3.31) were probably made to respond to the demand from Middle East markets: the patterns on most of these white wares show geometric or palm tree designs, all obviously distinctive of the region and carrying an Islamic flavour.⁵⁵⁶

⁵⁵² Sarre, 1925.

⁵⁵³ Scanlon, 1971a and Gyllensvärd, 1973.

⁵⁵⁴ Lane, 1938-38, p. 36.

⁵⁵⁵ Allan, 1991, p. 3.

⁵⁵⁶ Allan suggests that the taste for geometric patterns in the Islamic world owes more to the Islamic religious background. Allan, 1991, p. 4.

Pope indicates that “The palm tree is especially important in this repertoire, and the rendition ranges from an almost geometrical conventionalization to a quite naturalistic effect.”⁵⁵⁷

If, as I argued above, cobalt effectively originated from the Middle East in the Tang, it can also be suggested that it was highly likely brought to China by the merchants to provide the Chinese potters with the necessities for the production of the ceramics with Islamic patterns that were in fashion or in demand.

It follows therefore that consumption, as trade developed, contributed to creativity and production, which in turn induced further consumption. In this connection, Grundrisse states: “Consumption mediates production in that it alone creates for the products the subject for whom they are produced... Marx further discusses consumption as the ‘motive for production that suggests an internal image, as a need, as drive and as purpose’.”⁵⁵⁸

4.3 Represent ation

Glaze decoration on *sancai* figures is quite realistic and yet imaginative. Horses, camels, riders and grooms are often painted according to the nature of the object, sometimes with colours that are slightly over-elaborated. Heavenly Kings are often decorated with bright armor, to reflect their role of fully braced protectors. The

⁵⁵⁷ Pope studied in detail Persian art. Pope, 1939, p. 1483.

⁵⁵⁸ For more discussion see Dant, 2005, p. 17.

tomb guardians are often painted in vivid colours, perhaps to make them as impressive as possible. As seen in Figure 3.37, guardians are impressively decorated with three or four colour glazes. There was no fixed formula of how to decorate the imaginary beasts: their manes could be yellow, white or green; their bodies appear in yellow, or turn out in multi-colours. It was probably left to the artisan's creativity and imagination to use these combinations of colours to make the beasts look vigorous, energetic and lively.

In mimicking precious metal items, or wood, or lacquer works and in copying textile patterns or Middle Eastern style designs, the "objecthood", as Fried states, depicts the social behaviour of the time:⁵⁵⁹ "Like the shape of the object, the materials do not represent, signify, or allude to anything; they are what they are, and nothing more. And what they are is not, strictly speaking, something that is grasped or intuited or recognized or even seen once and for all. Rather, the "obdurate identity" of a specific material, like the wholeness of the shape, is simply stated or given or established as the very outset, if not before the outset; accordingly, the experience of both is one of endlessness, or inexhaustibility, of being able to go on and on letting, for example, the material itself confront one in all its literalness, its "objectivity," its absence of anything beyond itself."⁵⁶⁰

⁵⁵⁹ The specific word "objecthood" was used by Fried in his book *Art and Objecthood*, a book on theories about media. The Oxford online dictionary explains the word "something placed before the eyes, or presented to the sight or other sense; an individual thing seen or perceived, or that may be seen or perceived; a material thing" Fried poses in his book: "There is, in any case, a sharp contrast between the literalist espousal of objecthood - almost, it seems, as an art in its own right - and modernist paintings' self-imposed imperative that it defeat or suspend its own objecthood through the medium of shape. In fact, from the perspective of recent modernist painting, the literalist position evinces a sensibility not simply alien but antithetical to its own: as though, from the perspective, the demands of art and the conditions of objecthood were in direct conflict." Fried, 1998, p. 153.

⁵⁶⁰ Fried, 1998, p. 165.

Indeed, Tang *sancai* both created and recreated the cosmopolitan culture of the Tang and their intercultural influences for the afterlife. Freedberg argues: “Such are the reasons for giving all images their full weight as reality and not merely (simply, old-fashionedly) as representation... . Representation is miraculous because it deceives us into thinking it is realistic, but it is only miraculous because it is something other than what it represents.”⁵⁶¹

5. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined the finds in the different Tang *sancai* kiln sites discovered to date, observing the technology, innovation and sources of inspiration for producing Tang *sancai* ceramics, particularly in terms of shaping and glazing. These detailed studies enable us to see the distinction between each kiln, but also what they had in common and the connection between them.

The well-preserved Tang *sancai* kilns at Huangbao, in Shaanxi province, and at Huangye, in Henan province, lead to the acknowledgment that the wares seem to have been costly on the following grounds: Cross-draught style *mantou* kilns were used for firing Tang *sancai*; the kilns were constructed with bricks; wood was used as fuel. This kiln structure allows firing temperatures of up to 1200-1300°C. In the smaller *mati*, or horseshoe-shaped firing chambers in Tang *sancai* kilns only a small quantity of *sancai* wares could be placed. Firing was made without saggars in the Huangye

⁵⁶¹ Freedberg, 1989, pp. 438-439.

kilns. Where saggers were employed, as in the Nieqiu and the Huangbao kilns, the space in the firing chamber became even more limited.

Two types of clay were used for *sancai* wares: white kaolin and yellowish loessic clay. My research on the clays used in the Liqianfang *sancai* kilns completes the study on Tang *sancai* clays. The result supports the claim that these two types of clay were employed by all the *sancai* kilns. Considering that the Liqianfang kiln site was situated inside Chang'an city which lacked a natural reserve of gaoling clay, I argued that Huangbao and Huangye kilns could have been the source of supply for that kiln.

Firing temperatures for the two types of clay differ: loessic clay requires about 950-1050°C, while gaoling white clay was fired at 1100-1200°C.

The well-preserved Huangbao Tang *sancai* workshop, which was abandoned due to a flood, provides significant information about the methods of Tang *sancai* production. With the different chambers in the workshop revealing a carefully organized work system (in all probability, as an industry geared for mass production), it could be easily figured how Tang *sancai* wares underwent the various processes that resulted in their brilliant appearance: the forming, the moulding, the shaping, the assembling, the drying, the body firing, the glazing, and finally the second firing after glazing.

Shaping of Tang *sancai* involved traditional ceramic production techniques: throwing,

moulding, shaping and assembling. Glazing was done by different methods: pouring, dripping, filling and brushing. While these operations do not present anything particular from the technical point of view, it was rather the actual shapes and the style of glazes that have given Tang *sancal* its outstanding character.

Tang *sancal*'s faithful imitation of metal-shaped wares and the shining glazes they were given to mimic the glitter of gold and silver are especially significant in understanding the drives to make those wares. However, many shapes and patterns of Tang *sancal* were and exclusive to this type of ceramics. These shapes and patterns were inspired by exotic influences, by precious materials, by a luxurious lifestyle, by Chinese beliefs and by lavish burial customs. In their pursuit of innovation, artisans applied to Tang *sancal* every pattern that came into fashion whether it was from textiles, wood, lacquer works and the like. Inspiration was also stimulated by the trade conducted between China and the Middle East. This idea is supported by the emergence of imported cobalt which was applied as decoration on white ceramics – a type of ware that carries strong Islamic undertones.

With their shapes and colours and, in general, their extraordinary appearance and impact, Tang *sancal* wares, can be considered without doubt representational objects of a remarkable era of Chinese development and prosperity.

Conclusion

This thesis has addressed the creation and use of what is today called "Tang *sancai*" . This brightly-glazed ware flourished for a very limited period of not more than 190 years. A few later versions of Tang *sancai* were made in the Liao and Song period. However, neither of these productions reached the variety or glowing colours of the original Tang ceramics. This thesis has addressed some of the hitherto, un-noticed characteristics of Tang *sancai*. First and foremost of these is the way in which the use of Tang *sancai* was almost certainly confined to the Tang imperial family and the elite members of the Court. This very limited use suggests close official control of the *sancai*. Such control is particularly remarkable because Tang *sancai* was made at a number of different kilns across quite a wide range of area of the central plains in Shaanxi, Henan and Hebei provinces.

Sancai seems to have been valued for its spectacular appearance. Not only was the glaze very brilliant, but the different shapes in which the vessels and figurines were made were lively and complex. Thus considerable attention was obviously given to the Tang *sancai* ceramics for display. The first area in which they were used was, of course, for burial in the tombs of the elite.

This thesis has taken a close examination of tomb excavations in China where Tang *sancai* objects were found. The sites and content of these tombs are essential

evidence of the control of *sancai* for use by the highest elite. The physical location of the tombs which contained Tang *sancai* wares was limited to a number of provinces, namely: Shaanxi and Henan, both with the largest concentration of tombs and both representing the seat of power and governing bodies of the Tang court and the imperial and elite families; and Shanxi, Hebei, Jilin, Hunan and Hubei provinces, as well as Beijing, all of these being the places where Tang noble families and high officials resided. Two decrees recorded in Tang texts relating to the burial system which reveal a strict hierarchical order in the allotment of burial land – such land as having been found to enclose the tombs of imperial and elite families only. This kind of regulation suggests that all aspects of the burials were strictly controlled. In addition, the skill and creativity involved in the production of Tang *sancai* also indicate its use at the level of the court. With its combination of lead glaze colours that gives it an effect of brilliance, this ceramic ware was made, in particular, with the intent of mimicking expensive metalwork, like gold, silver and even other materials, including bronze, lacquer, wood, and textiles, all of which had been employed by members of the imperial families and the elite in their everyday life.

To further support my argument, I considered the connection between ceramic workshops and the Zhenguan Shu, the Tang imperial institution which was in charge of organizing and dealing with imperial burials. The valuable objects possessed by imperial families and used by them in everyday life were not accessible to ordinary people, hence to potters. It is therefore reasonable to suppose that a direction was provided to the artisans by an institution such as the Zhenguan Shu, although the

documentary evidence has not survived. The direction was to enable the potters to produce copies in Tang *sancai* with the shapes and decorations of those items which the imperial families and nobles would continue to cherish and use in their afterlife. It is also a significant observation that Tang *sancai* ware, in view of its costly manufacture, in addition to the extra expense and labour for the lead glaze, could not be afforded by ordinary people. In fact, from the study of kiln structures and firing techniques, productivity of Tang *sancai* was lower compared to that of unglazed ware, considering that it required firing two times, thus limiting the quantity of each firing; that the firing chambers for *sancai* were smaller than those of other ceramic kilns; and that some kilns used saggars to achieve a higher quality, thus reducing the capacity of the firing chambers.

Eventually, Tang *sancai* entered a phase of mass production. This could be evidenced by the discovery of the well-preserved workshop at the Huangbao kiln site and the large quantities of Tang *sancai* items found there. The kiln was organized into separate chambers, each with different materials and tools, suggesting a sub-division of labour and consequently denoting a major move in mass production.

This thesis has also looked at Tang *sancai* from a new perspective – that of agency of this ware in the way through which its functions underlie the behaviours and beliefs of society in the era at issue. Objects and servants, represented by figures, would function in the afterlife as regulated by the institutional frameworks of the Tang, while tombs would function as palaces located in the afterlife, their structures and their

contents having another level of agency determined by the beliefs of the Tang elite. This outlook helps to examine the ways in which Tang *sancai* objects may have been thought to work and also to understand the reasons that led to mass production.

The preparation for life after death is brought to light in the observations on the correlation between wall paintings and the setting of burial objects in tombs. The paintings seem to suggest how the living devised plans to ensure for the departed the comfort and luxury they enjoyed during their lifetime. They were meant to replicate the environment of palaces and, at the same time, set the order of placing the Tang *sancai* ware consisting mainly of objects in the form of utensils, such as dishes, bowls, jars, and the like, as well as articles for everyday use, such as candle holders, treasure boxes, and figures – figures of officers, court ladies, musicians, horses, camels and so forth. The organization and contents were determined by the institutions of the Tang court: the number of objects, including servants and guards of honour, would establish the status of the tomb occupant; the objects would function in the afterlife as determined by the institutional frameworks of the Tang; the tombs and their contents, including guards in the form of Heavenly Kings, represented a level of agency determined by a belief system of the Tang elite.

On a long debate on whether Tang *sancai* utensil wares were used for eating and drinking in everyday life, this thesis has taken the position that Tang *sancai* wares were not made as utensils intended for everyday use, but as vessels to be employed for ritual offerings. My argument relies on a scrutiny of the archaeological

excavation reports on three Tang imperial palace sites, namely those of the Jiucheng Palace, the Daming Palace and the Shangyang Palace. It could be observed that the spots where *sancai* shards were excavated were those where ritual performances in the Tang court took place. The argument is further strengthened by the examination of the use of Japanese Nara *sancai* dishes, which were in fact copies of Tang *sancai* made in Japan. The Japanese monk, Doji, who studied Buddhism in China, had brought the production technique back with him to Japan and it is highly likely that he also introduced the practice and purpose of using the dishes. The brush handwriting on the base of two Nara *sancai* dishes, which were handed down and kept with treasures from the Nara period in the Toda-ji Temple, recorded specifically that their use was for ritual offerings. Complementing my argument, I referred to certain scholars who oppose the view that Tang *sancai* vessels were used for food and drink on the grounds that the glazes contained lead, a poisonous substance, and that there was, moreover, no tradition or record of using lead-glazed wares in pre-Tang China. Indeed, the finds on the palace sites of shards of Tang *sancai* as compared to the large quantity of shards of other ceramics of everyday use are rather sparse. Additionally, no text record has been found which mentioned that Tang *sancai* was used by the court as daily dishes.

In the broader context of ritual activity, Tang *sancai* was not limited to vessels for offerings but, as discovered at the site of Qinglong Temple, was extended to figures of Buddha. Japanese Nara *sancai* also produced Buddhist items, such as stupas. The extensive use of *sancai* in religious ceremonials in the Liao, the Song and the Jin

dynasties, when a revival of *sancai* took place after the cessation of production at the end of the Tang, provides further evidence of the close relationship between *sancai* and ritual affairs. Although the early *sancai* Buddhist objects, whether Chinese Tang *sancai* or Japanese Nara *sancai*, were relatively small, life-sized Luohan statues can be seen in the British Museum, while pagodas can be seen at sites in China, like Kaifeng in Henan province and Mengcheng in Anhui province.

Another issue tackled in this thesis concerns Tang *sancai* as architectural material, a subject which has hitherto not been much researched, and which is being analyzed here for the first time. The reports on excavations of Tang *sancai* architectural material in Tang imperial palace sites – the Daming Palace and the Huaqing Palace in Shaanxi province, the Shangyang Palace and the Wanxiangshengong Palace in Henan province, as well as the Longquan Palace of Bohai State, in Helongjiang province – provide essential information. This survey has revealed that *sancai*, as an architectural material which was developed in the Tang era and included tiles and tile-ends, was most likely being used as early as AD 675. A pavilion covered entirely with *sancai* tiles suggests that *sancai* architectural material was being amply employed. The use of larger architectural materials, such as a dragon-head pipe link unearthed at the site of the Lianhua Bath at the Huaqing Palace, as well as other decorative objects applied to buildings, started as early as AD 723.

Although Tang *sancai* in the form of objects or of architectural material was found in different provinces in China, the kilns that produced it were located in three provinces

only: Shaanxi province, with the Huangbao and the Liquanfang kilns; Henan province, with the Huangye kiln; and Hebei province, with the Neiqiu kiln. This thesis summarized the studies and achievements of other scholars on *sancai* glazes and bodies produced at these three kilns. To these studies are added the results of the analysis, undertaken at the Institute of Archaeology, University of Oxford, on the glazes and bodies of Tang *sancai* shards unearthed at the site of the Liquanfang kiln, a newly discovered Tang *sancai* kiln located inside the city of Xi'an. The presence of this kiln in the capital of the Tang, which was known to have no natural resources of clays and glazes, points to the large demand for *sancai* ware probably to respond to the number of lavish burials. From the study of the components of glazes and bodies of each kiln, it may be demonstrated that the raw material used at the Liquanfang kiln was supplied either by the Huangbao or the Huangye kilns or by the sources that provided Huangbao and the Huangye kilns. As the site of Liquanfang is not yet excavated, further research shall be needed on the kiln when it will be unearthed – on its structure, its workshop and the type of ceramic that was mainly produced there. This study could be helpful for understanding further the Tang imperial burial patterns.

A question raised in this thesis is that of the Tang *sancai* found at the Longquan Palace. The composition of this Tang *sancai* is very different from that unearthed in all other sites and it is therefore probable that it did not come from any of the above mentioned kilns. It can be assumed that a kiln, so far not discovered, existed in Heilongjian province to supply that area with its needs of *sancai* ceramics.

This thesis also touched the topic regarding the cobalt blue that was used on Tang ceramics – another subject which scholars have been discussing for decades. I hold the view that Tang ceramics to which cobalt blue was applied should not be considered as Tang blue-and-white ceramics or named as such, but should more appropriately be addressed as Tangdai guliao zhuangshi taoci, Tang dynasty cobalt blue-decorated ceramics. I argued that the cobalt blue used on Tang *sancai* was imported into China for the purpose of decorating ceramics intended for export to overseas markets, mainly in the Middle East, where such ceramics were in considerable demand. The fact that cobalt blue-decorated Tang *sancai* ware was found in the Belitung cargo salvaged from the wreckage suggests that the ceramics were produced purposely for the overseas markets. A deeper research as to the source of the cobalt blue could be helpful in this respect, particularly by way of comparison between the cobalt blue used for decoration in the Middle East and the one used for the decoration of Tang *sancai* in China. Such a research can also be important to determine if the Tang cobalt blue-decorated items were destined to the same markets as the later blue-and-white porcelain from the Yuan dynasty. It is not the scope of this thesis to extend the research on Tang *sancai* found outside China. Yet, considering the strong undertones of foreign culture that Tang *sancai* bears as an export ceramic, a comprehensive study can take this subject a step further.

Middle Eastern customers, perceiving in Tang *sancai* Chinese features which attracted them, ordered articles with special decorative characteristics associated with their cultural and social environment. These articles, sometimes in large sizes and in shapes

that were evidently impractical for everyday use, suggest that *sancai* has found, with its dazzling colours, another employment, namely that of display. To the Chinese, these articles reflected the representation of a reality inasmuch as they successfully mimicked metal shapes coming from an exotic land. In their apparent desire for ostentation and their pursuit of exoticism in lifestyle, the Tang imperial and elite families have acquired such articles as showpieces that were to serve as a mark of luxury and status in afterlife.

With its character as an outstanding decorative element and with the various roles it has played over the long span during which it has prevailed, Tang *sancai* represents a defining feature of its time.

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Appendices

Maps	App.1 - App.11
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Pages App.1 - App.11

Map 1.1

Provinces in China where tombs that contained Tang *sancai* objects are located

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Map 1.1

Map 1.2

Location of Tang *sancai* kiln sites in Hebei, Shaanxi, Henan Provinces and in Xi'an

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Map 1.3

Location of the eighteen Tang imperial tombs

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Map 1.3

Map 1.4

Location of the attendant tombs of the Zhaoling

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Map 1.4

Map 1.5

Map of Henan province and the location of Mount Mangshan

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Map 1.5

Map 1.6

Map of Shanxi province

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Map 1.6

Map 2.1

Location of Yangzhou in Jiangsu Province and the Great Canal

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The Great Canal

Map 2.1

Map 2.2

Complex of the Daming Palace

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Map 2.2

Map 3.1

Location of the Huangbao kiln site

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Shaanxi province

App. 9

Map 3.1

Map 3.2

Three Districts where the Huangye Tang *sancai* kiln sites were located

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Map 3.2

Map 3.3

***Xing* kilns in the areas of Lincheng and Neiqiu counties**

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Map 3.3

T A B L E S

T A B L E S

Pages App.12 - App.44

Table 1.1 Tang *sancai* excavated in tombs within China

Table 1.1.1 Shaanxi Province

No.	Name of the tomb	Location of the tomb	Date indication	Rank of the tomb occupant	Number of <i>sancai</i> objects excavated	<i>Sancai</i> objects excavated	Other important objects excavated	Condition of the tomb	Publication
1	Yongtai Gongzhu mu 永泰公主墓 ¹	76.5 kilometres west of Xi'an	Princess Yongtai died in AD 701 and buried in AD 706	Princess	172	24 male mounted figures, 3 female mounted figure, 6 female standing figures, 24 male alien-looking standing figures, 1 alien-looking mounted figures, 10 horses, 9 dishes, 10 bowls, 4 cups, 5 miniature cooking stoves, 6 boxes, 1 miniature cooking utensil, 1 vase, 23 bottles, 2 jars, 1 spoon, 1 shallow cup with single handle, 3 lids, 1 plate, 2 candle holders, 3 supporters, 31 bottle lids.	8 gold accessories, 77 gilt brass horse ornaments, 777 painted figures including tomb guardians, Heavenly Kings, mounted figures, male standing figure, female standing figure, alien-looking equestrian, mounted musician, animals.	Tomb pillaged before the official excavation	<i>WW</i> 1964, 1, pp.7-18
2	Zhanghuai taizi mu 章懷太子墓 ²	About 70 kilometres west of Xi'an	Zhanghuai taizi re-buried in AD 706, his wife was buried in the same tomb in AD 711	Prince	No detailed information ³	Female standing figure, horse, groom, Heavenly Kings, civil officer, tomb guardian	A pair of gilt door knockers	Tomb pillaged before the official excavation	<i>WW</i> 1972, 7, ZH, pp.13-19

¹ A joint burial tomb, where Princess Yongtai 永泰 was buried together with her husband. Princess Yongtai was a grand-daughter of the Tang Emperor Gaozong 高宗 (AD628-683), and Empress Wu Zetian 武則天 (AD624-705). She was the seventh daughter of the Tang Emperor Zhongzong 中宗 (AD 656-AD710). She was put to death, aged 17, along with her husband, by her grandmother Wu Zetian in about AD 701.

² A joint burial tomb, where Prince Zhanghuai 章懷 was buried together with his wife. He was the second son of Emperor Gaozhong and Empress Wu Zetian. He was killed by Wu Zetian

³ The total number of tomb objects excavated is about 600.

3	Yide taizi mu 懿德太子墓 ⁴	About 70 kilometres west of Xi'an	Yide taizi died in AD 701	Prince	No detailed information ⁵	Horse, equestrian	8 gold ornaments, 19 gilt horse ornaments, figures	Tomb pillaged before the official excavation	<i>WW</i> 1972, 7, YD, pp.33-41
4	Zheng Rentai mu 鄭仁泰墓	In Liquan xian 禮泉縣 About 80 kilometres west of Xi'an	Zhen Rentai died in AD 663	Youwuwei i dajiangjun 右武衛大將軍 ⁶ , Tanganjungong 同安郡公 ⁷	No detailed information ⁸	1 lid with under-glazed blue decoration	Heavenly Kings, tomb guardian, female and male standing pottery figures, miniature figure, musicians on horseback, mounted figures, camels, animals.	Tomb pillaged before the official excavation	<i>WW</i> 1972, 7, ZRT, pp.33-41
5	Li Feng mu 李鳳墓 ⁹	Fuping xian 富平縣, Shaanxi province	Li Feng buried in AD 675	Prince	3	1 coupled dish, 2 miniature rectangular Ta 榻-shaped objects	225 figures including mounted figures, musicians on horse back, standing male figures, 63 gilt brasses and horse ornaments, 8 pairs of stirrups, 1 bronze mirror, 5 glass balls, 3 wood figures.	Tomb pillaged before the official excavation	<i>KG</i> 1977, 5, pp.313-326

⁴ Prince Yide 懿德 was the eldest son of emperor Zhongzong. He was put to death by Wu Zetian at the age of nineteen.

⁵ The total number of tomb objects unearthed is about 1000.

⁶ Youwuwei dajiangjun 右武衛大將軍, Right Guard General, a military title.

⁷ Tanganjungong 同安郡公, Duke of Tangan, a noble title.

⁸ The total number of tomb burials is 532.

⁹ A joint burial tomb, where Li Feng 李鳳 was buried together with his wife whose family name was Liu 劉氏. Li Feng was the fifteenth son of the Tang Emperor Gaozong.

6	Yue Wang Li Zhen mu 越王李貞墓 ¹⁰	In Liqian xian 禮泉縣 About 80 kilometres west of Xi'an	Yue Wang Li Zhen died in AD 686, re-buried in AD 716	Prince	19	4 grooms, 2 mounted female figures, 2 horses, 2 camels, 7 stem dishes, 2 bowls.	13 male standing figures, 24 standing figures, 2 Heavenly Kings, 2 civil officers, 2 tomb guardians, 3 horses, 8 roosters, 12 sheep, 8 dogs, 1 silver knife, 2 jade accessories, 157 glaze beads.	Tomb pillaged before the official excavation	WW, 1977, 10, pp.41-49
7	Hu xian xipo cun Tang mu 戶縣西坡村唐墓	Hu xian 戶縣, east of Xi'an	No information	No information	12	1 Heavenly King, 2 tomb guardian, 2 camels, 2 horses, 2 female mounted figures, 3 grooms.	1 pair of gilt stirrups.	Tomb pillaged before the official excavation	Zhang Minsheng 1988, 3, pp.34-36
8	Xi'an xijiao Tang mu 西安西郊唐墓 No specific name given	100 metres north-west of the New Xibei 新西北 railway station, west suburb of Xi'an	No information	No information	11	1 item of tomb guardian, 5 items of tomb figure, 2 horse, 2 camel, 1 piece of double dragon handles pot	7 painted figures	No information	Chen Anli 1990, 7, pp.43-46
9	M63 ¹¹	West suburb of Xi'an	No information	No information	9	1 equestrian, 1 boy with cow, 1 figure plays drum, 1 Xun 埙 music instrument, 1 bird, 2 ewer, 1 four-eared jar, 1 bowl, three-legged pot	White glaze ceramics, 1 bronze mirror.	No information	KGYWW 1991, 4, pp.50-95
10	Huanghe jijie chang Tang mu 黃河機械廠唐墓	East suburb of Xi'an 西安	No information	No information	4	1 lion dog, 1 ewer, 2 vases	1 bronze mirror, 1 silver plated brass plate, 2 painted female figures, 2 white glaze bowls.	Tomb badly damaged	Xujin 1992, 1, pp.25-28

¹⁰ Li Zhen 李貞 was the eighth son of the Tang Emperor Taizhong 太宗.

¹¹ 144 tombs were excavated at the same time. These tombs include 4 Sui 隋 (AD581-618) tombs, 136 Tang tombs, 2 Song 宋 (AD960-1279) tombs, 1 Ming 明 (AD1368-1644) tomb and 1 Qing 清 (1644-1911) tomb. Among the 136 Tang tombs, there was only one tomb named M6 which contained *sancai* objects.

11	Huizhao Taizi mu 惠昭太子墓 ¹²	Xiquan xiang, Lintong xian 西泉鄉，臨潼縣	No information	Prince	1	Bottom of a jar	3 stone boxes, 24 jade ornaments and accessories, 195 marble sticks with inscription.	Tomb pillaged before the official excavation	<i>KGYWW</i> 1992, 4, pp.46-55
12	Wei meimei mu 韋美美墓 ¹³	East suburb of Xi'an	Wei meimei died in AD 732	No title	2	1 bowl, 1 ewer	2 Heavenly Kings, 2 tomb guardians, 1 inlaid gold and silver mirror, 1 gilt silver scoop-shaped object, 1 shell-shaped gilt silver box, 1 bronze bowl, 1 bronze basin, 1 bronze scissor, 1 iron flattener, 1 iron pail, 1 jade rabbit, 1 ceramic bowl with three legs and a tortoise-shaped handle, 2 pagoda-shaped jars.	No information	<i>KGYWW</i> 1992, 5, pp.58 -6 3

¹² Prince Huizhao 惠昭 was the eldest son of the Tang Emperor Xianzong 憲宗 (AD806-820).

¹³ Wei Meimei 韋美美, who died at age 17, was the eldest daughter of Cao Xunru 曹恂如 who was titled Zuoweiveicang 左威衛倉. Left Guard of Director, a military title.

13	Jinxiangxianzhu mu 金鄉縣主墓 ¹⁴	East suburb of Xi'an	Yuyin 於隱 ¹⁵ died in AD 689, buried in AD 690. Princess Jinxiang 金鄉縣主 died in AD 722, buried in AD 724	Princess Jinxiang 金鄉縣主	2	1 dish, 1 cup	154 painted figures including 2 tomb guardians, 2 Heavenly Kings, 1 civil officer figure, 1 military officer figure, 7 grooms, 2 riding camels, 19 female figures, 18 male figures, 5 female mounted figure, 8 hunters on horse back, 23 musicians mounted on horses, 3 female dancers, 8 acrobatic figures, 2 performing figures, 2 female sitting figures, 1 miniature figure, 1 resting figure, 16 horses, 9 camels, 24 miniature animals	Tomb pillaged before the official excavation	<i>WW</i> 1997, 1, pp.4-19
14	Wen Sijian mu 溫思暎墓	East suburb of Xi'an	Wen Sijian died in AD 695, buried in AD 696	Shangzhu guo 上柱國、 Sinong Shaoqing 司農少卿、 Taizhong Dafu 太中大夫	1	A jar	241 painted figures, horses, camels, cows, 2 ceramic bowls	Tomb pillaged before the official excavation	<i>WW</i> 2002, 12, <i>WSJ</i> , pp37-49

¹⁴ A joint burial tomb. Jinxiangxianzhu 金鄉縣主 is the grand daughter of Tang Emperor Gaozu 高祖 (AD 566 – June 25, 635) who founded the Tang dynasty and ruled between AD 618-626 before being succeeded by his son, Li Shiming 李世民, who became Emperor Taizong; she was the third daughter of Tengwang (King of Teng) Li Yuanying 藤王李元嬰, son of Emperor Gaozu and younger brother of Li Shimin.

¹⁵ Yuyin 於隱, husband of Jinxiangxianzhu.

15	Xi'an xibei zhengfa xueyuan nan xiaoqu 34 hao Tang mu 西安西北政法學院南校區 34 號唐墓	South suburb of Xi'an	No information	No information	3	1 jar, 2 pots	12 wonderfully painted figures, tomb guardians, camels, horses,	No information	WW 2002, 12, #34, pp50-65
16	Yao Wupo mu 姚無陂墓	South suburb of Xi'an	Yao Wupo died in AD 697, buried same year	Pingzhou Sicang 平州司倉 ¹⁶	19	Male mounted figure, female mounted figure, miniature sheep	1 silver cup, 2 silver ornament, 2 knocker base, 1 bronze mirror	No information	WW 2002, 12, YWP, pp72-81
17	Kang Wentong mu 康文通墓	Swallow Pagoda district in Xi'an City	Kang Wentong died in July AD 696, buried in October 697	Chushi, 處士 ¹⁷	22	10 tomb guardians, 7 figures including 1 groom, 1 camel, 1 horse, 1 miniature well, 1 miniature milling stone	11 painted figure, 1 jade pig	Tomb pillaged before the official excavation	WW 2004, 1, pp.17-30

¹⁶ Pingzhou sicang 平州司倉, zheng bapin xia 正八品下

¹⁷ Chu Shi 處士 is not a high level title for officials in the Tang dynasty.

18	Nanjiao Tang mu (M31) 南郊唐墓 (M31)	South suburb of Xi'an	No information	No information	41	4 tomb guardians, 4 Heavenly Kings, 2 tomb figures, 5 groomers, 1 musician mounted on camel, 1 kneeling camel carrying goods, 2 alien-looking figures, 3 female figures, 5 figures with wind-protecting hat, 3 male figures, 6 horses, 1 acrobat figure, 6 objects including lid, elephant-looking head, dragon head ornament, lotus leaf-shaped base, tube-shaped base	43 tomb objects including painted figures and animals.	Tomb pillaged before the official excavation	WW,2004, 1,pp.31-61
19	Gudu Sizhen Mu 孤獨思貞墓	Baqiao District 灞橋區, East suburb of Xi'an	No information	No information	132	2 tomb guardians, 2 Heavenly kings, 5 civil officers, 7 male standing figures, 2 female standing figures, 38 figures with wind-protecting hat, 2 alien-looking dancing figures, 23 musician on horse back, 6 horse grooms, 4 camel grooms, 6 large horses and 9 small horses, 4 camels, 9 cows, 5 pigs, 5 sheep, 10 roosters, 5 ducks.	330 glass beads, 11 low quality jade ornaments, 1 bronze mirror, some horse decorative ornaments.	Tomb pillaged before the official excavation.	Sui Tang Mu 1980.

Table 1.1.2 Henan Province

No	Name of the tomb	Location of the tomb	Date indication	Rank of the tomb occupant	Number of <i>Sancai</i> objects excavated	<i>Sancai</i> objects excavated (Pictures 1, 2, 3)	Other important objects excavated	Condition of the tomb	Publication
1	Henan Yanshi Tang Cui Shen mu 河南偃師唐崔沈墓	Xinzhuang Village, Yanshi county 新莊村，偃師縣	Cui Shen re-buried in Xinzhuang village in AD 706	Wen lin lang 文林郎 ¹⁸	8	1 plate, 7 small bowls	38 tomb objects, including tomb guardians, figures, horses, 1 miniature cow chariot.	Well preserved	<i>WWKGZL</i> 1958, 8, pp.64-66
2	Zhengzhou city, Shangjie and Yingyang 鄭州市，上街，滎陽		No information	No information	4 ¹⁹	2 bowl ²⁰ , 1 dou-shaped cup ²¹ , 1 jar ²²	Figures	No information	<i>WW</i> 1995,5, pp.23-39

¹⁸ Wen lin lang 文林郎 was the ninth rank for civil officials in the Tang dynasty.

¹⁹ Four tombs contained *Sancai* wares within the group of Tang mu which were excavated at the same time.

²⁰ One *sancai* bowl was excavated in the two tombs named Zhongyuan zhiyaochang Tang mu liang zuo 中原制藥廠唐墓兩座; the other one was found in the tomb named Sheng jihua sengyu yanjiu suo Tang mu 省計劃生育研究所唐墓

²¹ One *sancai* dou shape cup was found in the tomb named Xi chengzhuo Tang mu 西陳莊唐墓

²² One *sancai* jar was unearthed in the tomb named Shangjie qu fanguanju gongdi Tang mu 上街區房管局工地唐墓

Table 1.1.2

3	Gongyi shipin chang Tang mu 鞏義食品廠唐墓	Xiaoxi village 孝義村, Gongyi city 鞏義市	No information	No information	23	2 sets of box and cover containing cups, 1 ink stone, 1 spite cup, 1 double-dragon handle ewer, 2 bowls	56 items including tomb guardians, Heavenly Kings, civil officers, alien- looking figures, miniature figures, male and female figures, snake with human head, female mounted figures, camels, horses, 10 miniature utensils and animals	Tomb pillaged before the official excavation	<i>WW</i> 1998,11, pp.37-50
4	Yangwen cun Tang mu C5M1045 楊文村唐墓 C5M1045	3 kilometres northeast of Luoyang 洛陽 city , south side of foot of Mangshan 邙山 mountain	No information	No information	12	1 dish with set of 7 cups, 1 plate, 9 cups, 1 flask with a alien-looking figure taming a lion	1 male figure, 1 female figure, 1 sheep, 1 dog, 1 duck, 3 jars.	Tomb pillaged before the official excavation	<i>KGYWW</i> 2002, 6, pp.18-20

Table 1.1.3 Other provinces and cities

Name of the tomb	Location of the tomb	Date indication	Rank of the tomb occupant	Number of <i>Sancai</i> objects excavated	<i>Sancai</i> objects excavated	Other important objects excavated	Condition of the tomb	Publication
Changsha jinjiao Tang mu 長沙近郊唐墓	Suburb of Changsha 長沙, Hunan province 湖南省	No information	No information	2	2 saucers.	No detailed numbers of objects found. White glaze ewer, mirror, musician, tomb guardian, figure.	No information	<i>WW</i> ,1959, 8, pp23-26.
Li Hui mu 李徽墓	Yunxian 鄖縣, Hubei Province 湖北省	Died in AD 683	Grandson of Emperor Taizong	4	1 bowl, 1 dragon-handled cup, 1 horn-shaped cup, 1 vase.	5 gold and 2 silver ornaments, 1 silver spoon, 1 brass spoon, gilt iron lock.	damaged	<i>WW</i> ,1987, 8,pp.30-36.
Jinsheng cun san hao Tang mu 金勝村三號唐墓	South suburb of Taiyuan 太原 city	No information	No information	5	1 vase, 1 circular box with cover, 1 stem cup, 2 miniature vases.	20 male and female figures including 2 Heavenly Kings, 1 civil officer, 1 miniature figure, 1 figure with shield, 4 male figures, 6 female figures, 4 dancing figures, 2 kneeling female figures, 4 beasts, 1 fish face figure, 2 squat figures, 28 dishes, 6 bowls, 4 jars, 2 vases, 2 Ruyi-shaped dishes, 2 horses, 1 camel, 2 pigs, 1 cow chariot.	Tomb badly damaged.	<i>KG</i> ,1960,1, pp.37-39.
Nanjiao Tang dai bihua mu 南郊唐代壁畫墓	South suburb of Taiyuan 太原 city	No information	No information	12	3 female figures, 3 male figures, 1 horse, 1 camel, 1 cow, 1 sheep, 1 rooster, 1 duck.	6 jars	Damaged	<i>WW</i> ,1988, 12,pp50-59.

Table 1.1.3

Zhenhua nanjie Tang mu 振華南街唐墓	Datong city 大同市, Shanxi province 山西省	No information	No information	1	Three-legged jar	2 white-glazed bowls of different sizes, 1 bronze mirror	Badly damaged	Bai Yanfang 1998, 11, pp.65-66
Beida Bohai mu 北大渤海墓 ²³	5 kilometres north-west Zhongjing city 中京 ruin ²⁴ , Jilin province 吉林省	No information	No information	2 ²⁵	1 vase, 1 bowl	5 shells	4 tombs badly damaged, 7 tombs in good condition	<i>WW</i> 1994, 1, pp.35-43
97LF13M1	Liulihe 琉璃河, northwest of Beijing 北京	No information	No information	1	1 vase	3 green glazed ceramics, including jars, vases and bowls, 1 belt with a set of 13 bronzes	Good condition	<i>WW</i> 2000,11,pp.32-38
95QXM37	West suburb of Xingtai 邢臺, Hebei Province 河北省	No information	No information	1	1 jar	No information	No information	<i>KG</i> , 2004, 5, p.45

²³ This excavation uncovered a group of 11 tombs.

²⁴ Zhongjing city 中京 is one of the five cities in Bohai Guo 渤海國 (formerly Zhenguo 震國) established by the Mohe nation 靺鞨族 in AD 698 in the area of the Bohai sea. Bohai guo is the name given to Zhenguo by the Tang emperor in AD 713 after its surrender in AD 705.

²⁵ These two pieces of *sancai* ware were excavated in tomb number M7.

Table 1.2 Tang *sancai* found in China in sites other than tombs

Place	Description of the Location	Year of excavation	Number of <i>sancai</i> objects excavated	Other ceramic objects excavated	Other important objects excavated	Publications
Qinglongsi 青龍寺 ²⁶	Qinglong Temple, located in the south-east suburb of Xi'an. Excavation in the area of the north gate of Qinglong Temple. It was the size of one-seventh of the total area of the Temple.	1979-1980	1 broken Buddha statue	White and black colour of glaze ceramic shards, in the shape of ewer, bowl and box.	A large quantity of clay tiles, tile-ends and bricks. Some of the tile-ends and bricks with the pattern of lotus and beast-mask, clay and stone ink-stones, 1 gilt bronze Buddha statue, 2 silver Buddha statues, 2 bronze Buddha statues, 1 red clay small stupa, 9 broken stone Buddha statues, 3 broken lotus statue supports, stone lamp pillar with Buddhist inscription.	<i>KGXB</i> 1989, 2, pp.231-261
Jiuchenggong 九成宮 ²⁷	Ruins of Jiucheng Palace, a hilly area of 1100 metres above sea level, 163 kilometres north-west of Xi'an.	1990-1994	2 shards: one is the mouth part of a container, the other the base of a dish	Vast number of ceramic shards, most of which in white glaze. A small quantity of black glazes.	3 gilt bronze Pusa 菩薩 statues, 1 lotus-shaped gilt bronze statue, 68 coins, lotus pattern clay tile-ends, clay lotus pattern bricks, iron tools, 1 broken ivory hair-pin, 1 bone hair-pin and 1 broken bone comb	<i>KG</i> 1995, 12, pp.1083-1099

²⁶ Qinglongsi 青龍寺, the Qinglong Temple, was a famous lama temple in the Tang dynasty. Monks from Japan and Korea came to the Qinglong Temple to study at the Lama School of Buddhism.

²⁷ Jiuchenggong 九成宮 was the summer palace for Emperor Gaozong. It was built in AD 593 by Emperor Sui Wendi 隋文帝 (AD581-604) of the Sui dynasty (AD581-618), and was called Renshougong 仁壽宮 at that time.

<p>Shangyanggong Yuanlin 上陽宮園林²⁸</p>	<p>Ruins of the garden of Shangyang Palace, south-east of Luoyang city. Total excavation area about 1648.6 square metres.</p>	<p>1989-1993 Total time of excavation: 155 days in two times</p>	<p>A few shards, broken pieces of green-glazed pillows and a marble-glazed bowl.</p>	<p>1 white glaze jar</p>	<p>100 yellow-glazed and green-glazed tiles, 46 grey clay tiles, 200 yellow-glazed and green-glazed tiles with tile-end, 144 unglazed and 59 glazed tile-ends in yellow and green colours, 108 clay yellow-glazed lotus pattern bricks, 2 green-glazed beast-mask bricks, 2 yellow-glazed beast-mask bricks, 2 stone dragon-head architectural spares, 1 small figure model.</p>	<p>KG 1998, 2, pp.38-44</p>
<p>Taiyechi 太液池</p>	<p>The garden of the Tang imperial court, Daming Palace 大明宮. The discovered vestiges include the remains of structures and roads on the shore of the pool, various types of building foundations, a newly discovered island, two groups of man-made garden-sights, wells, and a drainage system with larger and smaller ditches.</p>	<p>2000-2004</p>	<p><i>Sancai</i> shards have been discovered mingled with shards. No details has been given</p>	<p>Shards of white wares, black wares, and celadon wares, some of which, most probably <i>Xing</i> ware 邢窯器²⁹, bear the imperial marks <i>Guan</i> 官 and <i>Ying</i> 盈. The shards suggest the shapes of vessels like bowls, dishes, pillows, boxes, ewers, spits, jars, etc.</p>	<p>Green-glazed and brown-glazed tiles (fig.), lotus pattern and auspicious animals with grapes design, bricks, tiles. Some of the bricks and tiles are molded with name, date, name of the workshop and auspicious words.</p>	<p>KG 2005, 7, pp.29-34</p>

²⁸ Shangyanggong Yuanlin 上陽宮園林 was the garden of Shangyang Palace from where Emperor Gaogong governed China in his late age, and where Empress Wu Zetian lived and died after she was forced to hand over the throne to Emperor Li Xian known as Zhongzong 中宗.

²⁹ Xing kiln 邢窯 was located in Hebei province 河北省. This kiln is well-known for producing white-glazed wares.

Taiyechi 太液池	As above. At the southeastern bank of the western sub-pool, this dig revealed a group of waterside building remains, including vestiges of a pile-supported corridor and a pavilion.	2005	Many broken wares in shapes of bowls, dishes, ewers, jars and pillows. No number given.	Celadon lobed bowl ³⁰ , white wares bearing character of <i>Guan</i> or <i>Ying</i> , and a marble-glazed pillow.	Stone panels, baluster columns and plinths, bricks and tiles.	<i>KG</i> 2005, 12, pp3-6
Taipingfang Block 太平坊	Taipingfang Block in Tang Chang'an city revealed two sections of the Qingmingqu 清明渠 canal ³¹ , a well and 13 ash-pits.	2003	1 bowl	Green-glazed broken Heavenly King, ceramic candle holder	Stone dragon head architectural spare, 2 lotus pattern tile-ends, bone handle tooth brush.	<i>KG</i> 2005, 9, TPF, pp.34-41
Bohaiguo Shangjing Longquanfu 渤海國上京龍泉府	The excavation was at the palace site of, the Shangjing Longquanfu Bohai State in Heilongjiang province 黑龍江. It consists of the main pavilion with an auxiliary corridor and the eastern and western side pavilions.	2000-2001	dragon head, as part of architectural material (Picture 4)	No	Lotus patterned tile-end, flower-patterned bricks	<i>KG</i> 2005, 9, LQF, pp.42-49
Xiaoyan Pagoda 小雁塔 Jianfu Temple 薦福寺 ³²	The ruin of the Jianfu Temple 薦福寺 of Tang dynasty was at the east side of Xiaoyan Pagoda 小雁塔, Xi'an 西安.	2003	52 wares. No detailed information.	Bowl, cup, dish, box, ewer, vase and pillow, in different colours of glazes, like white, celadon, green, brown and black. Some are marble-glazed.	Clay and limestone ink-stones, lotus pattern tile-end, beast mask brick.	<i>KG</i> 2006, 1, pp.48-53

³⁰ This celadon lobed bowl is Mise ware 秘色瓷 according to the excavation report.

³¹ Qingmingqu 清明渠 canal was built for the purpose of drawing water from the Jue River 灊水 to the city. The canal flowed by Taipingfang site from south to north. Taipingfang site was one of the upper-class living areas around the imperial court.

³² The Jianfu Temple 薦福寺 was one of the most important temples in the Tang dynasty. Many Buddhist masters, like Monk Daoan 道岸, Monk Fazang 法藏, Monk Zhizhou 智舟, Monk Hongbian 弘辯, Monk Qibai 棲白, have lived in this temple. It was one of the three major Buddhist scripture translation centres at that time.

Table 1.3 Tang *sancai* found outside of China

Place	Description of the Location	Year of excavation	Number of <i>sancai</i> objects excavated	Other ceramic objects excavated	Other important objects excavated	Publications
Yangzhou City 揚州城	Excavation at the ruins of Luocheng 羅城, a commercial city and port during Tang dynasty, in Yangzhou city, Jiangsu Province 江蘇省.	1975	598 <i>sancai</i> shards were excavated. 1 moulded fish-shaped vase, 3 alien-looking masks, 1 jar, 1 under-glazed-blue jar with lid.	Over 15000 shards including celadon, white and black colour glazes. Toys.	Ink-stones. Tile-end with lotus design and beast design.	<i>WW</i> 1977, 9, pp.16-30
Japan	Shōsō-in the relics repository at Todai-ji temple in Nara, Japan.		30 pillows, 27 bowls and dishes			Narasaki, 2000, pp. 60-65
Japan	57 ruins mainly at Nara and Kyoto	First found in 1954, last found in 1995	290 <i>sancai</i> shards including pillows, bowls, dishes, jars, ewers, vases, lids, cups and figures			Narasaki, 2000, pp. 60-65
Sri Lanka	Mantai					Carswell, 1978, pp.25-42
Egypt	Fustat	1912-1924 ³³ 1964 ³⁴				Scanlon 1971a Gyllensvärd 1973

³³ Scanlon 1971a

³⁴ Gyllensvärd, 1973

Iraq	Jawsaq al-Khaqani, Samarra	1912-1913				Sarre 1925
Indonesia	Belitung cargo	1998-1999	200	350 possibly <i>Ding</i> wares, 200 <i>Yue</i> wares, 56500 <i>Changsha</i> wares 長沙窯	10 gold and 24 silver vessels, 8 inscribed silver ingots mirrors, 30 bronze mirrors, assorted bronze, iron and lead utensils, 2 glass bottles, 1 lacquer plate, 1 ink-stone, ink and spices.	Transactions of The Oriental Ceramic Society, 2001-2002, vol.p.66. ³⁵

³⁵ Guy 2001-2001, vol. p.66.

Table 1.4 Excavations at kiln sites

	Huangye kiln		Huangbao kiln		Xijiao Liquanfang kiln		Neiqiu kiln	
Kiln tools (Figure 3.7)	1976-1983 ³⁶	Flat stand supports, flat triangular supports, three branched shape supports, sagers, moulds for camel heads, moulds for toys, like birds, lions, Buddhas, and moulds for decorative flowers.	1984-1985 ³⁷	Sagers, triangular supports, moulds for lions, dragons, rhinoceroses, monkeys, bell toys, Bodhisattvas, figurines, lids, decorative patterns, etc.	1999	Moulds for decorative patterns, three-branched supports.	1984-1985 ³⁸	Kiln tools were found but no specific information has been given in the excavation reports. ³⁹
	1984 ⁴⁰	About 70 kiln tools. Three-branched supports, coniform supports, cylinder support, flat stand supports, rectangular supports.						
	2002	No details.						

³⁶Excavations have been made several times at the site of Huangye between 1976 and 1983. Three strata of cultural deposits were discovered in an area of 25 square meters. The first upper layer, 1.8m thick, is the Song dynasty cultural deposit. A copper coin named “Xinping Yuanbao 咸平元寶”, a date corresponding to AD 998-1003 was found in this layer. The second layer (middle layer) is the deposit of Tang *sancai* ceramics about 0.5m thick. A copper coin named “kaiyuan tongbao 開元通寶” was unearthed in this second layer. The third layer (the lowest layer) is Sui dynasty 隋代 (AD 581- 618) or early Tang dynasty, according to the excavators. Gongyi 2002, p.8.

³⁷ Excavation at the Huangbao kiln sites started in 1984. Five layers of cultural deposits were excavated. Tang *sancai* kiln sites were found in the lower fifth layer. The first layer was an agricultural field, the second layer was a Ming dynasty 明代 (AD 1368-1644) and Qing dynasty 清代 (AD 1644-1911) deposit, the third layer is a Jin dynasty 金代 (AD 1115-1234) and Yuan dynasty 元代 (AD 1279-1368) deposit, and the fourth layer was a Song deposit. WW 1997, 3, pp. 23-32.

³⁸ Investigation started in 1984, and in 1985 *sancai* deposits were found. The excavation report is mainly about a Xing kiln 邢窯 not a *sancai* kiln.

³⁹ *Sancai* kiln sites were found within the area where Xing kiln 邢窯 sites were located. Xing ware was one of the tribute wares for the court in the Tang dynasty. Xing kiln is known for its white-glazed ceramics.

⁴⁰ Gongyi 1992, 4, pp. 56-66.

	2003	Flat supports, flat triangle supports, three-branched supports, sappers, different types of mold.						
Ceramics (Figure 6)	1976-1983	Plates, lavers, trays, jars, pots, bowls, stem cups, water pitchers, incense burners, cups, toys, figurines, horses, pillows, monkey-head shaped whistles, molded pattern flasks, tiles.	1984-1985	Plates, lavers, trays, jars, pots, bowls, stem cup, water pitchers, cups, toys, figurines, lids, gourd-shaped vases, vases, pillows, lions, camels, horses, architectural material, such as dragon-head and beast-face decorative tile-ends, tiles, cylinder tiles.	1999	Plates, jars, pillows, pots, bricks, figurines, horses, chooks.	1984-1985	Three-legged jars, jars, pots, jars with two handles, plates ⁴¹ .
	1984	About 300 broken <i>sancai</i> ceramics. Plates, lavers, trays, jars, pots, bowls, stem cups, water pitchers, incense burners, cups, toys, monkey-head shape whistle.						
	2002 ⁴²	1000 bags of unglazed shards, about 600 perfect and repairable objects.						
	2003 ⁴³	800 bags of shards and tools, about 900 perfect and repairable objects.						

⁴¹ The excavation report only mentioned that deposits of *sancai* shards consisted of three heaps. It contained no detailed information about the shape and number of *sancai* shards and wares. The above information is collected from the drawings of various shapes of *sancai* wares that were found at the *sancai* kiln sites. *WW* 1987, 9, pp.1-10.

⁴² No excavation report has been published on the excavation made in 2002 except a book, *The New Archaeological Discovery at Huangye Kiln Site* 黃冶窯考古新發現, 2002

⁴³ Ibid.

Other items	1976-1983	3 pieces ⁴⁴ of copper coins named “kaiyuan tongbao 開元通寶” ⁴⁵	1984-1985	Copper coins named “kaiyuan tongbao 開元通寶” were found at two places. ⁴⁶	1999	A piece of shard with engraved characters dating “Tianbao sizai 天寶四載” ⁴⁷	1984-1985	No information.
Number of kilns	1976-1983	5	1984-1985	3 ⁴⁸	1999	3	1984-1985	No information about <i>sancai</i> kiln sites ⁴⁹ .
	2002	6						
	2003	3						
Area excavated in sq. mtr.	1976-1983	25	1984-1985	4000 ⁵⁰	1999		1984-1985	300 metres along the east side of traffic road
	2002	960						
	2003	850						

⁴⁴ Fu Yongkui 1984, 1, pp. 69-81.

⁴⁵ Kaiyuan tongbao 開元通寶 coins were minted in AD 621, but they have been reproduced many times during the Tang dynasty. They are therefore not a strong argument to prove that this kiln started in AD 621.

⁴⁶ Coins were found in the kiln site as well as at the workshop, but we do not know how many of them were unearthed. *WW* 1987, 3, pp.23-32, pp.32-37.

⁴⁷ Tianbao sizai 天寶四載 equivalent AD 745

⁴⁸ Kiln sites used for firing *sancai* are mingled with Yaozhou kiln 耀州窯 sites within close distance at Huangbao county. Yaozhou kiln, famous for its green-glazed wares, is one of the important kilns from the Song period 宋代 (960-1127). The *sancai* kiln sites – 17 of them – were discovered while excavating the Yaozhou kilns. They include Song Yaozhou kiln sites and Tang *sancai* kiln sites. According to Du Baoren, there are four kiln sites that belong to the Tang dynasty, of which three were used for producing *sancai* wares. One set of workshops for making *sancai* wares was identified among fourteen unearthed workshops. *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ No specific information about *sancai* kiln sites. The report said 5 kiln sites were found in the area of Xiguan kiln 西關窯區 where *sancai* shards were discovered. *WW* 1987, 9, pp 1-10.

⁵⁰ These 4000 square meters cover not only Tang *sancai* kiln sites, but also mainly the Yaozhou kiln sites. *WW* 1987, 3, pp.23-32, pp.32-37.

Table 1.5 Excavated Tang imperial tombs and their attendant tombs containing Tang *sancai* ware

Emperor's tomb name	Emperor's name	Reign	Named attendant tombs ⁵¹ found containing Tang <i>sancai</i> ware
Xianling 獻陵	Gao Zu 高祖	618-626	Tomb of Prince Li Feng 李鳳墓
Zhaoling 昭陵	Tai Zong 太宗	626-649	Tomb of Zheng Rentai mu 鄭仁泰墓, Tomb of Prince Li Zhen 李貞
Qianling 乾陵	Gao Zong 高宗	649-683	Tomb of Princess Yongtai 永泰公主墓, Tomb of Prince Zhanghuai 章懷太子墓, Tomb of Prince Yide 懿德太子墓
	Wu Zetian 武則天	690-705	
Dingling 定陵	Zhong Zong 中宗	684,705-710	Tomb of Prince Jiemin 節愔太子墓
Qiaoling 橋陵	Rui Zong 睿宗	684-690, 710-712	
Tailing 泰陵	Xuan Zong 玄宗	712-756	
Jianling 建陵	Su Zong 肅宗	756-762	
Yuanling 元陵	Dai Zong 代宗	762-779	
Chongling 崇陵	De Zong 德宗	779-805	
Fengling 豐陵	Shun Zong 順宗	805	
Jingling 景陵	Xian Zong 憲宗	805-820	Tomb of Prince Hui Zhao 惠昭太子墓
Guangling 光陵	Mu Zong 穆宗	820-824	
Zhuangling 莊陵	Jing Zong 敬宗	824-827	
Zhangling 章陵	Wen Zong 文宗	827-840	
Duanling 端陵	Wu Zong 武宗	840-846	
Zhenling 貞陵	Xuan Zong 宣宗	846-859	
Jianling 簡陵	Yi Zong 懿宗	859-873	
Jingling 靖陵	Xi Zong 僖宗	873-888	
Heling 和陵	Zhao Zong 昭宗	999-904	
Wenling 溫陵	Ai Zong 哀宗	905-907	

⁵¹ Except for these attendant tombs with names of their occupant as listed above, the other tombs have no indication of names, probably due to pillaging.

Table 1.6 Attendant Tombs of the Zhaoling⁵²

No.	Tomb Occupant	Status	Buried Year AD
1	Wen Yanbo 溫彥博	Zhongshuling 中書令, Secretariat Director, Third Rank (until AD 767) which became Second Rank. Zaixiang 宰相, Grand Councilor; Yuguogong 虞國公, Duke of Yu, a noble title; Shangshu Youbushe 尚書右僕射, Right Vice Director of the Department of State Affairs, a title he was conferred posthumously.	637
2	Duan Zhixuan 段志玄	Zuowei Dajiangyun 左衛大將軍, Left Guard of General-in-Chief, a military title; Baoguoogong 褒國公, Duke of Bao, a noble title.	642
3	Wei Zheng 魏征	Shizhong 侍中, Director of the Chancellor, one of the most powerful posts in the central government, concurrent with Zaixiang 宰相, Grand Councilor; Zhengguogong 鄭國公, Duke of Zheng, a noble title.	642
4	Yu Wenshi 宇文士	Zhongshuling 中書令, Secretariat Director; Youwei Dajiangjun 右衛大將軍 Left Guard of General-in-Chief, a military title; Dianzhongjian 殿中監, Director of the Palace Administration, an administrative post. Yingguogong 郢國公, Duke of Ying, a noble title.	642
5	Yu Wenchong 宇文崇	Zhongyu Dafu 中禦大夫, Grand Master Commandant-in-ordinary, officer actively entrusted with defense and police work in a Princedom, a Marquisate, or another noble fief; Yingguogong 郢國公, Duke of Ying, a noble title.	664
6	Wang Jun'e 王君愕	Zuowuwei Jiangjun 左武衛將軍, Left Wei Guard General, a military title; Xingguogong 邢國公, Duke of Xing, a noble title.	645
7	Xue Yi 薛頤	Taishiling 太史令, Grand Astrologer, a subordinate of Chamberlain for Ceremonials.	646
8	Gao Shilian 高士廉	Shangshu 尚書, Imperial Secretary, in charge of writing; Youbushe 右僕射, Right Vice Director of the Department of State Affairs; Shengguogong 申國公, Duke of Sheng, a noble title.	647

⁵² WWZL, 1977, 10. pp.33-49.

9	Fang Xuanling 房玄齡	Shangshu 尚書, Imperial Secretary, in charge of writing; Zuobushe 左僕射, Light Vice Director of the Department of State Affairs. Shengugong 申國公, Duke of Sheng, a noble title.	648
10	Chu Liang 褚亮	Hongwenguan Xueshi 宏文館學士, Academician, assigned to give special counsel and assist in drafting imperial pronouncements.	---
11	Tang Jian 唐儉	Libu Shangshu 禮部尚書, Imperial Secretary of the Ministry of Rites, one of the Six Ministers responsible for administration of the central government;	658
12	Tang Jiahui 唐嘉會	Fourth son of Tang Jian 唐儉第四子	---
13	Fang Renyu 房仁裕	Bingbu Shangshu 兵部尚書, Imperial Secretary of the Bureau of Military Appointments, one of the Six Ministers of the central government.	657
14	Consort Wei 韋貴妃	The Consort of Emperor Taizong	---
15	Zhou Hu 周護	Zuoxiaowei Dajingjun 左驍衛大將軍, Left General-in-chief of Imperial Guard, a military title.	658
16	Weichi Jingde 尉遲敬德	Kaifu Yitong Sansi 開府儀同三司, Commander Unequaled in Honour, the first honorific title for eminent generals, First Rank but with no position of responsibility in the court; E'Guogong 鄂國公, Duke of E, a noble title.	658
17	Zhang Shigui 張士貴	Zuolingjun Dajiangjun 左領軍大將軍, Left General-in-chief of the Palace Guard, actively in charge of the palace guard; Guogugong 虢國公, Duke of Guo, a noble title.	658
18	Liang Min 梁敏	Zuojinwu Dajiangjun 左金吾大將軍, Left General-in-chief of Lord of the Imperial Insignia, a military post.	---
19	Zhang Anan 張阿難	Youjianmen Jiangjun 右監門將軍, Right Gate Guard General, a military post that has duty at each of the capital gate; Congxiao Neishi 縱校內侍, Palace Attendant, a quasi official designation of a eunuch.	---
20	Princess Lanlin 蘭陵公主 and her husband Dou Huaize 竇懷哲	Princess.	659
21	Kong Yingda 孔穎達	Guozijiju 國子祭酒, Chancellor of the Directorate of Education, a function performed in rotation by the Erudite of the National University; Qufu Xiangong 曲阜縣公, Duke of Qufu, a noble title.	646

22	Pei Yi 裴藝	Jinzhou Cishi 晉州刺史, Investigating Censor of Jin prefecture, is local administration of investigative and impeaching official; Shunyigong 順義公, Duke of Shunyi, a noble title.	646
23	Ma Zhou 馬周	Zhongshuling 中書令, Grand Councilor, consulted regularly with the Emperor and participated in major governmental decisions.	646
24	Li Jing 李靖	Shangshu Youpushe 尚書右僕射, Right Vice Director of the Imperial Secretariat, was a common variant of Pushe 僕射; Weiguogong 衛國公, Duke of Wei, a noble title.	647
25	Doulu Kuan 豆盧寬	Zhenjun Dajiangjun 鎮國大將軍, State Defense General-in-chief, a title of imperial nobility. Ruiguogong 芮國公, Duke of Rui, a noble title.	647-629
26	Doulu Renye 豆盧仁業	Youwuwei Jiangjun 右武衛將軍, Right Wei Guard General, a military title. Ruiguogong 芮國公, Duke of Rui, a noble title, (Son of Dou Lukuan 豆盧寬).	690-704
27	Xue Shou 薛收	Tiancefu Jishi Canjun 天策府記室參軍, Secretarial Aide of the Tiance Mansion, responsible for the staff of Princely Establishments.	---
28	Mme Pengcheng 彭城夫人	Nanny of the Emperor Taizong	---
29	Zhang Yin 張胤	Sanqi Changshi 散騎常侍, Cavalier Attendant-in-ordinary, an honorific title conferred on favoured officials giving them the status of companions and advisers of the ruler (Teacher of the Emperor Taizong).	650-655
30	Cui Dunli 崔敦禮	Taizishaoshi 太子少師, Grand Preceptor of the Heir Apparent, a title of eminent court dignity. Zhongshuling 中書令, Grand Councilor, consulted regularly with the Emperor and participated in major governmental decisions.	656-660
31	Du Junchuo 杜君綽	Zuorongwei Dajiangjun 左戎衛大將軍, Left Martial Guard General-in-chief, a military post.	662
32	Xu Luoren 許洛仁	Zuojianmen Jiangjun 左監門將軍, Left Gate Guard General, a military post that has duty at each of the capital gate; Guanjun Dajiangjun 贈冠軍大將軍, General-in-chief Commanding the Troops, a prestigious title for military officers of the Third Rank, conferred to him posthumously.	662
33	Zhen Rentai 鄭仁泰	Youwuwei Dajiangjun 右武衛大將軍, Right Wei Guard General-in-chief, a military title. Liangzhou Dudu 涼州都督, Commander-in-chief of Liangzhou, a title of local administration.	663
34	Niu Jinda 牛進達	Zuoxiaowei Dajiangjun 左驍衛大將軍, Left General-in-chief of Imperial Guard, a military title.	---

35	Princess Qinghe 清河公主 and her husband Cheng Chuliang 程處亮	Princess.	664
36	Cheng Zhijie 程知節	Zuowei Dajiangyun 左衛大將軍, Left Wei Guard General-in-chief, a military title; Luguogong 盧國公, Duke of Lu, a noble title.	665
37	Lu Shi 陸氏	The Consort of Prince Lishen 李慎	666
38	Li Mengchang 李孟常	Youwuwei Dajiangjun 右威衛大將軍, Right Wei Guard General-in-chief, a military title.	666
39	Wu Heita 吳黑闥	Hongzhou DuDu 洪州都督, Commander-in-chief of Hongzhou, a title of local administration.	669
40	Li Fu 李福	Eleventh son of Emperor Taizong	670
41	Princess Suian 遂安公主 and her husband Wang Dali 王大禮	Princess.	670
42	Consort Yan 燕妃	The Consort of Emperor Taizong	672
43	Li Xun 李勣	Sikong 司空, Master of Works, responsible for supervising all governmental construction and provisioning through many subordinate agencies and agents. Taizi Taishi 太子太師, Teacher of the Prince; Xionguogong 雄國公, Duke of Xiong, a noble title.	672
44	Li Zhen 李震	Zinzhou Cishi 梓州刺史, Investigating Censor of Zi 梓 prefecture, a local administrative official of investigation and impeachment. Son of Li Xun 李勣	660
45	Princess Chengyang 城陽公主 and her husband Xue 薛瓘	Princess.	656-660
46	Princess Xincheng 新城公主	Princess. Twenty-first daughter of Emperor Taizong	---
47	Princess Changle 長樂公主 and her husband Zhangsun Chong 長孫沖	Princess. Fifth daughter of Emperor Taizong	---
48	Ashinazhong 阿史那忠	Youxiaowei Dajingjun 右驍衛大將軍, Right General-in-chief of Imperial Guard, a military title; Xueguogong 薛國公, Duke of Xue 薛, a noble title.	675
49	Princess Linchuan 臨川公主 and her husband Zhou Doawu 周道務	Princess.	682

50	An Yuanshou 安元壽	Youweiwei Jiangjun 右威衛將, Right Wei Guard General, a military title.	684
51	Jiang Xia 薑遐	Zuoyingyangwei Jiangjun 左鷹揚衛將軍, Left Yingyang Guard General-in-chief, a military title; Sheren Neigongfeng 舍人內供奉, Palace Attendant Secretary, generally acting as receptionist and document handler.	691
52	Jiang Jian 姜簡	Zuolingjunwei Jiangjun 左領軍衛將軍, Left Guard General-in-chief, a military title; Cheng Guogong 郟國公, Duke of Cheng, a noble title;	---
53	Mme Qibi 契苾	Daughter of Qibi Heli 契苾何力), who was Zhenguo Dajiangjun 鎮國大將軍, State Defense General-in-chief; Liangguo Gong 涼國公, Duke of Liang, a noble title.	---
54	Li Zhen 李貞	Yuewang 越王, Duke of Yue, a noble title. (Eighth son of Emperor Taizong)	717
55	Li Chong 李冲	Langyawang 琅玕王, Duke of Langya 琅玕, a noble title. (First son of Li Zhen 李貞)	717
56	Chishi Shanguang 持失善光	Zuojianmen Jiangjun 左監門將軍, Left Jianmen General, a military title; Shangshi Neigongfeng 尚食內供奉, Chief Steward for Goods, responsible for provisioning the Palace Domestic Service with food and drinks. This job was generally held by an eunuch.	722
57	Li Chengqian 李承乾	First son of Emperor Taizong.	Re-buried in 741

Table 1.7 **Tang *sancai* wares placed in the eight niches in the tomb of Princess Yongtai**

YT(g)	YT(e)	YT(c)	YT(a)
dishes, bowls, cups, miniature cooking stoves, boxes, miniature cooking utensil, vase, bottles, jars, spoon, shallow cup with single handle, lids, plate, candle holders, supporters, bottle lids.	dishes, bowls, cups, miniature cooking stoves, boxes, miniature cooking utensil, vase, bottles, jars, spoon, shallow cup with single handle, lids, plate, candle holders, supporters, bottle lids.	male mounted figures female mounted figure alien-looking mounted figures horses	male mounted figures male alien-looking standing figures
dishes, bowls, cups, miniature cooking stoves, boxes, miniature cooking utensil, vase, bottles, jars, spoon, shallow cup with single handle, lids, plate, candle holders, supporters, bottle lids.	dishes, bowls, cups, miniature cooking stoves, boxes, miniature cooking utensil, vase, bottles, jars, spoon, shallow cup with single handle, lids, plate, candle holders, supporters, bottle lids.	male mounted figures female mounted figure female standing figures horses	
YT(h)	YT(f)	YT(d)	YT(b)

Table 1.7

Table 3.1 Finds at the Tang *sancai* workshop at the Huangbao kiln site, Shaanxi province⁵³

Chamber	Size in square metres	Function	Tools	Objects	Others
Chamber 1	10.32	Dwelling			<i>Kang</i> 炕 ⁵⁴
Chamber 2	13.52	Drying of formed objects and glazing	Saggers	3 un-fired candle holders (flattened)	Wood box (decomposed)
Chamber 3	39.49	Forming, shaping, moulding and testing glaze colour	Wheel; working platform 120 x 40 cm, mould; clay vat, 75cm in diameter, 35cm deep; mold of lion	3 basins; 5 candle holders, 1 box, 6 lions; two piles of bowls in good order: one with 420 bowls piled up in 42 rows; the other with 230 bowls in 23 rows	2 stoves; a desk constructed by four polished smooth-surfaced stones; two stone stools; a coin cast with Kaiyuan 開元 characters; a pile of clay; roles of clay sheet
Chamber 4	23.83	Final moulding	Many moulds ⁵⁵		Stove, <i>kang</i> ,
Chamber 5	28.75	Making candle holders	2 wheels; 3 saggers; one clay vat	300 candle holders in 11 rows; another pile of candle holder ⁵⁶	Stove; two piles of clay; 3 stone stools
Chamber 6	24.77	Manufacture of ewers	3 clay vats; remains of wheel installation ⁵⁷	Large quantity of ewers, jars, plates with two handles, candle holders and basins, many damaged, which covered an area of 2.42 x 5 metres at the rear part of the chamber	
Chamber 7	18.12	Manufacture of ewers	remains of wheel installation ⁵⁸	Many ewers ⁵⁹	stove

⁵³ Tangdai Huangbao Yaozhi 1992, pp.12-19.

⁵⁴ *Kang* 炕 is a kind of bed which is fixed in a cave with bricks, adobe and masonry mortar. Usually a *kang* is much larger than a mobile bed.

⁵⁵ No detailed information in the report about the number and shape of molds.

⁵⁶ The report did not give details about the other piles of candle holders, which were probably damaged.

⁵⁷ The report states that there has been a wheel installed in the chamber, but did not confirm if it was destroyed before the flood.

⁵⁸ Same as the wheel remains in Chamber 6.

⁵⁹ The report states that the ewers are buried in sand.

Table 3.2 **Analyses of Tang *sancai* bodies**

Analyses after Li Zhiyan and Zhang Fukang, 1986, Table 1, p.69

	SiO₂	Al₂O₃	Fe₂O₃	TiO₂	CaO	MgO	K₂O	Na₂O
Gong Xian <i>sancai</i> (Group TT1)	66.93	26.59	0.73	1.24	0.19	0.37	2.15	0.41
Gong Xian <i>sancai</i> (Group TT3)	64.52	27.15	1.17	1.45	0.89	0.39	2.09	0.44
Shaanxi <i>sancai</i>	67.52	26.56	0.61	1.39	0.22	0.44	2.01	0.34

Analyses after Rawson and Tite, 1997-1988, Table 1, p.44

	SiO₂	Al₂O₃	K₂O	Na₂O	CaO	MgO	FeO	TiO₂
Gong Xian (Neiqiu) <i>sancai</i>	66.9	26.6	2.1	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.7	1.2
Shaanxi <i>sancai</i>	67.5	27.6	2.0	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.6	1.4

Analyses after Wood, 2007, Table 85, p.200

	SiO₂	Al₂O₃	TiO₂	Fe₂O₃	CaO	MgO	K₂O	Na₂O
Henan <i>sancai</i> body	63.8	29.8	0.9	1.4	1.6	0.6	0.7	1.2
Shaanxi <i>sancai</i> body	65.9	27.8	1.2	1.15	1.5	0.55	1.3	0.5

Table 3.2

Table 3.3 **Analyses of Tang *sancal* bodies from the Liqianfang kiln**

	SiO₂	Al₂O₃	K₂O	Na₂O	CaO	MgO	FeO	TiO₂
Liquanfang 1	64.9	29.0	1.4	0.2	1.8	0.8	1.0	0.9
Liquanfang 2	66.0	0.2	1.1	0.1	0.1	0.3	1.0	0.8
Liquanfang 3	56.9	30.8	1.0	0.7	0.5	0.5	9.5	0.5
Liquanfang 4	64.0	31.8	1.2	0.1	0.4	0.5	0.9	1.0
Liquanfang 5	67.0	28.3	1.0	0.1	0.8	0.4	0.9	1.0
Liquanfang 6	65.0	29.8	1.3	0.1	0.1	0.6	1.1	1.1



Liquanfang 1



Liquanfang 2



Liquanfang 3



Liquanfang 4



Liquanfang 5



Liquanfang 6

Table 3.3

Table 3.4 **Lead glazes used on Han and Tang wares**

Analyses after Zhang Fukang, 1986, Table 3, p. 25

	PbO	SiO₂	Al₂O₃	Fe₂O₃	TiO₂	CaO	MgO	K₂O	Na₂O	CuO
Eastern Han green glaze	46.89	33.88	6.20	2.31	--	--	--	--	--	1.26
Tang green glaze	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	5.24

Table 3.4

Table 3.5 **Typical Chinese copper-green high-lead glazes**

Analyses after Wood, 1997, Table 78, p. 192

	PbO	SiO₂	Al₂O₃	Fe₂O₃	CuO	CaO	MgO	K₂O	Na₂O	BaO	SnO₂
Han green glaze	59.7	29.5	3.7	1.3	1.2	1.9	0.5	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.2
Tang green glaze	55.6	33.6	5.8	--	2.0	1.0	0.5	--	3.0	--	--
Tang green glaze	53.6	32.4	6.7	0.3	0.6	1.2	0.7	0.4	0.2	--	--

Table 3.5

Table 3.6 **Analysis on Tang *sancai* shards excavated in the Liquanfang kiln site**

	PbO	SiO₂	Al₂O₃	Fe₂O₃	CuO	TiO₂	CaO	MgO	K₂O	Na₂O
Liquanfang 1	69	25	3.1	2	--	--	0.6	0.3	--	0.1
Liquanfang 2	53.6	15.8	3.5	4	6	1	--	1	1	1
Liquanfang 3	68.5	26.1	3.6	0.4	1	--	0.4	0.3	--	--
Liquanfang 4	55.7	34.8	5.8	2.8	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.2	--	--
Liquanfang 5	54.1	32.6	6.3	3.3	--	0.1	2.9	0.7	--	0.2
Liquanfang 6	54.3	35.1	5.2	2.7	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.2	--	0.22

Table 3.6

Table 3.7 Typical Chinese copper-green high-lead glazesAnalyses after Li Zhiyan and Zhang Fukang, 1986, Table 1, p. 69

	SiO₂	Al₂O₃	Fe₂O₃	CaO	MgO	K₂O	Na₂O	PbO	P₂O₅	CuO
Green glaze, Huangye kiln	30.66	6.56	0.56	0.88	0.25	0.79	0.36	49.77	0.29	3.81
Yellow glaze, Huangye kiln	28.65	8.05	4.09	1.65	0.42	0.72	0.45	54.59	0.32	--
Green glaze, Huangbao kiln	--	6.71	--	1.28	0.38	0.81	0.28	59.51	0.06	5.24
Brown-yellow glaze, Huangye kiln	25.07	8.22	4.71	--	--	--	--	41.16	0.09	--

Analyses after Li Guozhen and Chen Haihong, 1986, Table 2, p. 78

	SiO₂	Al₂O₃	Fe₂O₃	CaO	MgO	PbO	CuO	K₂O	Na₂O
Yellow glaze, Henan	35.61	--	--	trace	2.45	37.90	--	0.20	trace
Yellow glaze, Shaanxi	30.54	6.93	4.87	1.20	2.10	50.54	--	0.20	trace
Green glaze, Henan	28.43	--	1.60	0.64	1.38	44.92	4.35	0.20	0.10
Green glaze, Shaanxi	34.17	--	0.68	2.54	0.36	36.70	4.30	0.50	trace
White glaze, Shaanxi	31.98	5.83	2.10	2.20	1.38	52.66	--	0.20	0.10

Analyses of Chinese Tang *sancal* found in Fostat, Samarra and Mantai, after Rawson and Tite, 1987-88, Table 1, p. 44

	SiO₂	Al₂O₃	Fe₂O₃	CaO	MgO	PbO	CuO	K₂O	Na₂O
Orange glaze, Fostat	29.3	5.7	2.3	1.6	0.5	59.6	--	1.0	0.5
Green glaze, Samarra	33.6	5.8	--	1.0	0.5	55.6	2.0	--	0.3
Green glaze, Mantai	32.6	6.7	--	0.8	0.6	54.4	3.2	0.3	0.5
Green glaze, Mantai	34.3	5.1	--	1.2	0.5	55.2	2.0	0.4	--

Table 3.7

**D
R
A
W
I
N
G
S**

DRAWINGS

Pages App.45 - App.56

Drawing 1.1

The structure of the tomb of Princess Yongtai

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Drawing 1.2

The structure of the tomb of Prince Yide

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Drawing 1.3

Setting of figures in the tomb of Prince Yide

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Niche YD (f)

Niche YD (e)

Drawing 1.3

Drawing 1.4

Wall painting in the passageway of the tomb of Princess Yongtai

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Wall painting on the east wall of the passageway

Drawing 1.4

Drawing 1.5

Layout of the tomb of Princess Yongtai

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Drawing 1.5

Drawing 1.6

Wall painting on the east wall of the tomb of Princess Yongtai

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Drawing 1.6

Drawing 1.7

Layout of the tomb of Prince Lixian (Emperor Rang)

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Drawing 1.7

Drawing 1.8

Wall paintings at the entrance of the tomb of Prince Lixian (Emperor Rang)

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Flying dragon on the east wall

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Flying tiger on the west wall

Drawing 1.8

Drawing 1.9

Wall painting on each side of niches in the tomb of Prince Lixian (Emperor Rang)

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Drawing 1.9

Drawing 1.10

Ladies-in-waiting in the wall painting after the 2nd hallway in the tomb of Prince Lixian (Emperor Rang)

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Drawing 1.11

Twenty-eight attendants in the wall painting in the corridor of the tomb of Prince Lixian (Emperor Rang)

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Drawing 1.11

Drawing 1.12

Tomb Guardians (Zhen Mu Shou) in a Chu tomb of the Warring States period

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FIGURES

FIGURES

Pages App.57 - App.159

Display of Tang *sancai* objects in the tomb of Gudu Sizhen

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Groom, HT: 48 cm - Horse, HT: 59.6-63.5 cm

Groom, HT: 52 cm - Camel, HT: 62.5-68 cm

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Elephant head jar and carved lotus-shaped stone lamp

Elephant head jar

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HT: 25.5 cm

Carved lotus-shaped stone lamp

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HT: 52.5 cm, Ø: 28.5 cm

Figurines stuffed in niches YT(a) and YT(b)

in the tomb of Princess Yongtai

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HT: 19 cm

HT: 19 cm

Alien-looking grooms and their horses on a wall painting and in pottery

in the tomb of Princess Yongtai

On a wall painting in the passageway of the tomb

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In niches in the tomb

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HT: 20 cm

HT: 69.5 cm

Figure 1.5

Figure 1.6

Figure 1.7

Polo players in the tomb of Prince Zhanghuai

Picture 1.5 Wall painting

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Picture 1.6 Detail

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Picture 1.7 Figures

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Length: 40 cm

Length: 38 cm

Wall painting on the east wall of the first chamber
in the tomb of Princess Yongtai

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Four Tang *sancai* figurines

Male official

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Female holding household object

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HT: 113 cm

HT: 37.3 cm

Female attendants

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Kneeling girl holding a jar

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HT: 24.3 cm

HT: 28 cm

Different shapes of Tang *sancai* ware

Sitting lady holding a mirror
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HT: 26 cm

Sitting lady holding a bird
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HT: 43.7 cm

Dancing figures
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HT: 26 cm

Sitting ladies and sitting musicians

HT: 18.5 cm

Jar
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HT: 35.6 cm

Bowl
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∅: 26.7 cm

Petal-shaped dish
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∅: 28 cm

Boxes
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HT left to right: 3.8 cm, 7.1 cm, 3.9 cm

Figure 1.11

Figure 1.12

Figure 1.13

Figure 1.14

Different shapes of Tang *sancai* ware

Picture 1.11 Woman playing
a harp

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cannot be made freely available via ORA
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Picture 1.12 Male holding
an eagle

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HT: 32.2 cm

HT: 39 cm

Picture 1.13 Petal-shaped dish
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be made freely available via ORA for
copyright reasons.

Picture 1.14 Miniature furniture
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freely available via ORA for copyright reasons.

Diameter: 19 cm

Length: 14.6 cm

Wall paintings on each side of niches
in the tomb of Prince Lixian (Emperor Rang)

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Ladies-in-waiting on a wall painting
in the tomb of Prince Lixian (Emperor Rang)

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Figures from niche LY(b) in the tomb of Prince Lixian (Emperor Rang)

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Figures with wind-protecting hats and figures wearing soft hoods

in the tomb of Prince Lixian (Emperor Rang)

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The figure originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA for copyright reasons.

HT: 36.5 cm

HT: 38.5 cm

Heavenly King

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HT: 123 cm

Figure 1.20

Figure 1.21

Heavenly Kings

(Ink and colours on ancient Buddhist silk banners)

Figure 1.20 Vidradhaka, Regent of
the South.

(From the walled-up chapel, 'Caves of
The Thousand Buddhas,' Tun-Huang)

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be made freely available via ORA for
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Figure 1.21 Virūpākṣa, Guardian
of the West.

(From Cave 17, Dunhuang.
Tang dynasty, 9th century AD)

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HT: 45.5 cm, W: 16 cm

Figure 1.22

Figure 1.23

Heavenly Kings

Figure 1.22

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Figure 1.23

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HT: 65.5 cm

HT: 71 cm

Heavenly Kings

(excavated at the ruins of the Yong'an Temple)

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HT: 55 cm

HT: 62 cm

Tang *sancai* ware imitations of metal ware

Tang *sancai* jar 1

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Gilt silver jar

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HT: 16 cm

HT: 5 cm

Tang *sancai* ewer 2

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Gilt silver ewer

Sasanian 6th-7th century AD

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HT: 33 cm

Tang *sancai* petal-shaped dish 1

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Tang *sancai* petal-shaped dish 2

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Diameter: 19 cm

Diameter: 28 cm

Tang *sancai* utensil-shaped ewers

(excavated at the Huangye kiln)

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HT: 5.3 cm - 9.9 cm

Tang *sancai* utensil-shaped set of cups

(excavated in a tomb in Zhouzhai village, Luoyang, Henan)

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HT: 11.5 cm

Kneeling figure holding a goose-shaped bottle

(Collected in the T.T. Tsui Museum)

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HT: 28 cm

The Jiucheng Palace in a painting and drawing

Figure 2.1 Painting in the manner of a round fan 九成宮紈扇圖

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Figure 2.2 Drawing

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Palace No. 37 of the Jiucheng Palace Complex

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Jiucheng Palace Complex

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Layout of Palace No. 37

Figure 2.4

Figure 2.5

Figure 2.6

Objects excavated at the site of Palace No. 37, Jiucheng Palace

Figure 2.4 *Sancai* shards

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Figure 2.5 White glaze bowls

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Figure 2.6 Bronze statues

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Figure 2.7

Figure 2.8

Objects unearthed at the site of the courtyard of the Daming Palace

Figure 2.7 Stone elephant
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Figure 2.8 Stone lamp
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Objects unearthed at the site of the courtyard of the Daming Palace

(excavated at the southeast shore of Lake Taiyechi)

Figure 2.9 Double-headed Bodhisattva
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made freely available via ORA for copyright
reasons.

Figure 2.10 Baluster with the carving of
a lion sitting on a lotus flower
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reasons.

Location of Palace No. 4 at the Qinglong Temple

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Fragments of a Tang *sancai* Buddha statue

(found at the site of the Qinglong Temple)

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Nara *sancai* deep dish with inscription (1)

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Front, HT: 7 cm, Diameter: 20.5 cm

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Bottom

Nara *sancal* deep dish with inscription (2)

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HT: 7 cm; Diameter: 20.5 cm

Nara sancai stupa

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HT: 17.2 cm

Liao sancai Luohan 羅漢

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HT: 130 cm

Jia Guo Yong An *cizhou* pillow

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Petal-shaped *cizhou* pillow

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HT: 17.3, Width: 28.3 cm, Depth: 30.3 cm

Green-glazed pillow from *changsha* kiln

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HT: 8 cm, Width: 14.8 cm, Depth: 9.5 cm

The Hanyuan Hall 含元殿

Layout

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Width: 67.03 metres, Depth: 28.22 metres

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Recovery picture of the Hanyuan Hall

The Linde Hall 麟德殿

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Width: 58.3 metres, Depth: 18.5 metres

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Recovery Picture of the Linde Hall

The Sanqing Hall 三清殿

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Layout, Width: 73.25 metres, Depth: 47.65 metres

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Recovery Picture of the Sanqing Hall

Shards of Tang *sancai* architectural material used in the Sanging Hall

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Tang *sancai* dragon-head gutter spout

(found at the Lianhua Bath, Huaqing Palace)

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Length: 32.8-36.9 cm, Width: 20-21.5 cm

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The figure originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA for copyright reasons.

Layout of the Lianhua Bath

Recovery Picture of the Lianhua Bath

Figure 2.25

Figure 2.26

Sancai architectural material unearthed at the Longquan Palace, Bohai State

Figure 2.25 Dragon-head

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Length: 39 cm

Figure 2.26 Tail of an owl, *chiwei* 鸱尾

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HT: 97 cm

Tang *sancai* double-fish jar

(excavated in Yangzhou)

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HT: 23 cm

Sancai wares found in the Belitung cargo

Figure 2.28 Pot and Cup

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Figure 2.29 Heavily Moulded objects

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Sancai dragon-headed ewer found in the Belitung cargo

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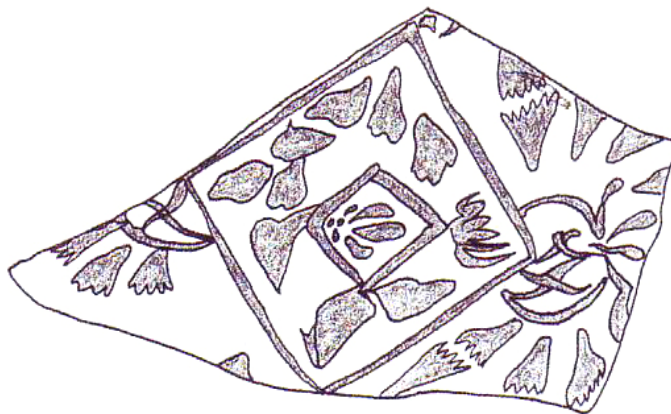
HT: 105.8 cm

Shard of cobalt blue-decorated ceramic

(excavated in Yangzhou)

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Length: 8.4 cm, Width: 7.6 cm, Thickness: 0.6 cm



Drawing

Cobalt decorated wares salvaged from the Belitung cargo

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Ø: 23.3 cm

Ø: 23.7 cm

The figure originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA for copyright reasons.

Ø: 17.5 cm

Shards of cobalt decorated wares found in Yangzhou

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Cobalt decorated wares unearthed at the Huangye kiln site, Gongxian

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Tang *sancai* Phoenix-headed ewer

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HT: 35.5 cm

Tang *sancai* ewers imitating silverware

Figure 2.36 Green-glazed phoenix-headed ewer
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be made freely available via ORA for
copyright reasons.

HT: 41.2 cm

Figure 2.37 Silver Ewer from the tomb of Li Xian 李賢

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freely available via ORA for copyright reasons.

HT : 37 cm

Horse in dancing posture

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HT: 47.3 cm

Silver incense burner

(unearthed at the Famen Temple site)

Figure 2.39 Silver incense burner
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freely available via ORA for copyright reasons.

HT: 21 cm, Diameter: 43 cm

Figure 2.40 Same silver incense burner placed
in front of holy relic shrine
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freely available via ORA for copyright reasons.

Figure 2.41

Figure 2.42

Tang *sancai* incense burner imitating silverware

Figure 2.41 Tang *sancai* incense burner
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cannot be made freely available via ORA
for copyright reasons.

HT: 22 cm

Figure 2.42 Tang silver incense burner
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made freely available via ORA for copyright
reasons.

Ø 21.3 cm, HT: 33.3 cm

Figure 2.43

Figure 2.44

Tang *sancai* oval-shaped container imitating silverware

Figure 2.43 Tang *sancai* oval-shaped container
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freely available via ORA for copyright reasons.

HT: 18.4 cm

Figure 2.44 Silver oval-shaped container
(unearthed in the Famen Temple)

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made freely available via ORA for copyright
reasons.

HT: 15 cm, L: 14.5 cm, W: 10.5 cm

Song *sancai* Buddha Holy Relic Box

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HT: 46.5 cm, Base: 28.5 x 28.5 cm

Song *sancai* stupa

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HT: 98.5 cm

Song sancai stupas

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The figure originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA for copyright reasons.

HT: 47.5 cm

HT: 51.5 cm

Layout of the Huangbao *sancai* workshop and *sancai* kilns

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Tang *sancai* workshop

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Chambers of the *sancai* workshop

Abandoned Huangbao *sancai* workshop

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Cross-draught kiln and *mantou* kiln

Cross-draught kiln

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Mantou kiln

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A well-preserved *sancai* kiln site at Huangbao

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1: Fire chamber 2: Kiln chamber 3: Chimney

Mati (horseshoe) chamber

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A well-preserved *sancai* kiln site at Huangye

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1: Fire chamber 2: Kiln chamber 3: Chimney

Kiln tools

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Coniform supports

Flat triangle supports

Saggers

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Coniform supports

Cylindrical supports

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Three-branched supports

Rectangular support

Flat and coniform support

Tang sancai utensil-shaped objects

Stem cup

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Tea set

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∅: 23.5 cm

HT: 11.5 cm

Dish

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Bowl

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∅: 28 cm

∅: 17.3 cm

Pot

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Ewer

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HT: 22.9 cm

HT: 35.6 cm

Tang *sancai* ritual vessels

Incense burner

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HT: 18.3 cm

Bottle

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HT: 24.4 cm

Tang *sancai* vessels with flying goose design imitating silverware

Figure 3.10 Tang *sancai* tripod dishes imitating silverware

A

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B

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C

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Ø 29.6 cm

Ø 28.5 cm

Ø 28.6 cm

Figure 3.11 Silver bowl

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Ø 15 cm, HT: 5.8 cm

Tang *sancai* incense burner imitating silverware

Figure 3.12 Tang *sancai* incense burner

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HT: 22 cm

Figure 3.13 Tang silver incense burner

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Ø 21.3 cm, HT: 33.3 cm

Figure 3.14

Figure 3.15

Tang *sancai* holy water bottles imitating silverware

Figure 3.14 Tang *sancai* water bottle
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HT: 24.2 cm

Figure 3.15 Tang bronze holy water bottle
The figure originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA for copyright reasons.

HT: 21.5 cm

Tang *sancai* table imitating wood table

Figure 3.16 Tang *sancai* table

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L: 26 cm, W: 19.2 cm, HT: 6.5 cm

Figure 3.17 Wood Table

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L: 50 cm, W: 42 cm, HT: 6.2 cm

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Side view

Lacquer tray

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L: 39 cm, W: 37 cm, HT: 10.1

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View from top

Figure 3.19

Figure 3.20

Tang sancai petal-shaped trays

Figure 3.19 Four-petalled tray

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W: 19 cm

Figure 3.20 Six-petalled tripod tray

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HT: 5.4 cm W: 28 cm

Figure 3.21

Figure 3.22

Figure 3.23

Tang *sancai* rhyton cups

Figure 3.21 Beast-headed green-glazed cup

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Figure 3.22 Dragon-headed cup

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HT: 9.2 cm

Mouth: 7.5cm, HT: 6.8cm

Figure 3.23 Beast-headed white-glazed cup

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L: 12.7 cm, HT: 9.3cm

Rhytons from ancient Persia

Pottery rhyton

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HT: 9.2 cm, Ø: 4.83 cm

Silver rhyton

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HT: 22.5 cm, Ø: 16.1 cm

Glass rhyton

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HT: 19.5 cm, Ø: 10 cm

Silver rhyton

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HT: 23 cm, Ø: 14.5 cm

Gold rhyton

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HT: 21.3 cm, Ø: 12.5 cm

Tang sancai bowls imitating silverware

Figure 3.25 Moulded four-petalled flower bowl

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Ø: 9.8 cm

Figure 3.26 Moulded four-petalled flower bowl

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Ø: 10.1 cm

Figure 3.27 Tang four-petalled flower silver bowl

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Ø: 10 cm, HT: 3.8 cm

Figure 3.28

Figure 3.29

Tang *sancai* three-legged tray imitating silverware

Figure 3.28 Tang *sancai* three-legged tray

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Ø 21.7 cm, HT: 6.5 cm

Figure 3.29 Three-legged silver tray

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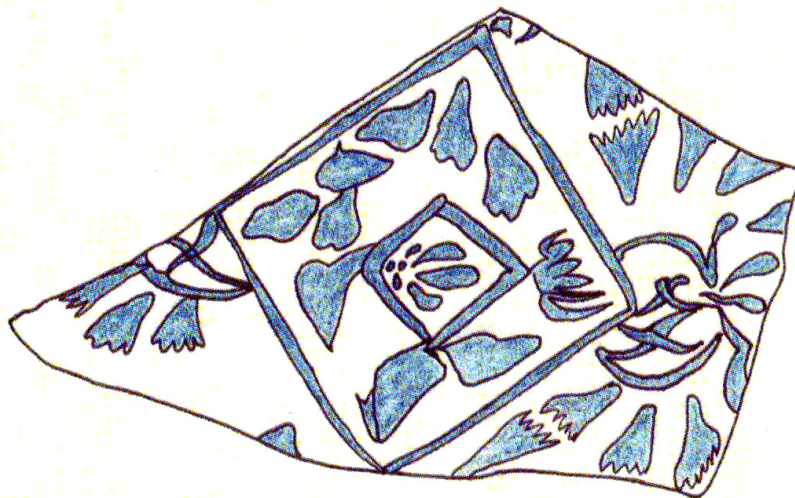
Ø 42 cm, HT: 10.8 cm

Cobalt blue-decorated shard with rhombic patterns

(found in Yangzhou)

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L: 8.4 cm, W: 7.5 cm wide



Drawing

Cobalt blue-decorated shards

(found in Yangzhou in the 1980s)

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Cobalt blue-decorated dishes

(found in the Belitung wreckage)

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Ø 23.3 cm

Ø 23.7 cm

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Ø 17.5 cm

Persian glass dish

(unearthed in Famensi)

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Ø: 23 cm

Cobalt glazed jar

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HT: 25.4 cm

Cobalt glazed stem dish

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Ø: 23.5 cm

Cobalt glazed miniature treasure box

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HT: 13.3 cm

Multi-coloured Tang *sancai* figure

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HT: 82 cm

Monochrome Tang *sancai* horse

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HT: 20 cm

Tang *sancai* decorated by the pouring technique

Blue-decorated jar

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HT: 11.7 cm

Ewer

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HT: 10.3 cm

Bottle

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HT: 25.7 cm

Jar with lid

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HT: 27 cm

Tang sancai decorated by the dripping technique

Ewer

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HT : 27.3cm

Bottle

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HT: 22.6 cm

Tang sancai decorated by the filling technique

Ewer

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HT: 22.1 cm

Dish

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Ø: 37.5 cm

Tang *sancai* decorated by the brushing technique

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HT: 31.5 cm

Tang *sancai* decorated by multi-technique

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Horse, HT: 68.6 cm

Tang *sancai* decorated by wax dyeing technique – *Laxie*

Jar

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HT: 26.8 cm

Laxie on textiles from the Northern dynasties

Laxie on wool

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Laxie on cotton

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Daoliantu 搗練圖, Court Ladies Preparing Newly-Woven Silk

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Detail

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Detail. Court girl wearing a dress with *jiaxie* technique pattern.

Tang textiles with *jiaxie* patterns

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From the collection in the British Museum

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From the collection in the Xijiang museum

Tang *sancai* decorated by wax dyeing technique – *Jiaxie*

Dish

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Ø: 35.8 cm

Marbled pattern Tang *sancai*

Figure 3.49 Dish

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Pillow

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Ø 21.6 cm, HT: 4.2 cm

HT: 11.2 cm, W: 22.1 cm, L: 13.2 cm

Figure 3.50 Shooting figure mounted on horse

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HT: 36.2cm

Tang *sancai* jar imitating a gilt silver tripod

Figure 3.51 Tang *sancai* jar

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HT: 16 cm

Figure 3.52 Gilt silver jar

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HT: 5 cm

Tang *sancai* horse equipped with finely moulded ornaments and saddle

White horse

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HT: 54.6 cm

Yellow horse

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HT: 73 cm

Inlaid wood box covers

A

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L: 30 cm, W: 21cm

B

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L : 33 cm, W : 23.5 cm

Tang *sancai* utensil-shaped objects decorated by the splashing technique

Dish

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Ø:10.8 cm HT: 2.2 cm

Double fish vase

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HT: 23.6 cm

Jar

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HT: 32.1 cm

Vase

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HT: 27 cm

Bowl from Persia decorated by splashing
(9th-10th century AD)

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ø: 19.5 cm, HT: 5.5 cm

Tang *sancai* shards unearthed at Samarra

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Group A

Group B

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Group C

NOTES

NOTES

Pages App.160 - App.172

Ci Gongchen Peilingdi Zhao 賜功臣陪陵地詔

Like the coordination between heaven and earth, which results in effortless achievements, monarch and officials also, as one entity, will govern in harmony. Taking a distant example, it is like a boat floating in a big river; or, as a comparison with a human form, it is like a head on a body with arms and legs. Hearts and minds shall remain together also after death, and so officials shall be buried in closeness. King Wen, in the Zhou dynasty¹ has established a rite of burials, where officials were to be buried in tombs adjoining the tomb of the Emperor. This rule has been re-emphasized by [Emperor] Wu of the Wei.² Qubing³, who assisted the ruler of the Han dynasty, was buried in an adjoining tomb in the Mao region.⁴

Being together, we will ultimately return together to Mount Niu [mountain site]. All previous sages showed the model of how the monarch and his officials should be buried, and left behind records of regulations and wishes, pointing to this duty and the high virtue of accomplishing it. Following an honest heart as one had in the past, the big idea from the beginning till the end will be the devotion to duty.

In the beginning of imperial times, it was on the occasion of the mourning for the deceased ruler that obstacles were removed towards the opening of new perspectives.

Strategists and military officials who entered the Yuan gate⁵ had made their contribution to the state in wartime, and were now making achievements of importance in the imperial palace. Likewise, civil servants of high virtue and exceptional talent gathering at the Wei que,⁶ who had assisted the ruler since the establishment of the state, were performing achievements as bright as the rising sun.

¹ King Wen, known as Zhou Wenwang 周文王, established the Western Zhou dynasty 西周 (1121BC-771BC), and is well known for his humanity and righteousness in ruling his state. *Shi Ji, Zhou Ben Ji*

² Emperor Wu of the Wei refers to Cao Cao 曹操 (AD155-AD220), who was the Emperor of the Wei Kingdom 魏國. The Wei Kingdom 魏國 together with the Shu Kingdom 蜀國 and the Wu Kingdom 吳國, were called the Three Kingdoms 三國 (AD220-AD280).

³ Qubing 去病 known as Huo Qubing 霍去病 (140BC-117BC), is a famous general of the Western Han dynasty 西漢(207BC-AD25). He showed his military talent at the age of eighteen and won many battles against Xiongnu 匈奴. He died at the age of twenty-four.

⁴ Mao region is Mao Ling 茂陵, the tomb of Emperor Wudi 武帝 (6BC-AD57) of the Western Han dynasty.

⁵ Yuanmen 轅門 is the gate of the official administration. This term comes from the Warring States dynasties (475-221BC).

⁶ Wei que 魏闕 is a term taken from *Zhuang Zi Rang Wang* 莊子·讓王, a classical text. It is the name of the watch tower at the gate of the palace where decrees were hung. In the later dynasties, Wei que became the term for imperial court.

Close family members and relatives of the Emperor, because of their past ethics, virtues and achievements for having followed the rules of the previous dynasties, were given special rewards on their death.

From the date on which the decree concerning burials is issued, the office responsible for burials is advised to allot to the family of the deceased a parcel of land on the left side of the Xianling tomb and to offer immediately the coffin and the burial objects, as well as to attend with great care and express profound condolences for the lost one...

The Eleventh month of the eleventh year of Zhenguan.

乾坤合德，爰著易簡之功；君臣一體，克成中和之治。遠取諸物，若舟楫之濟巨川；近取諸身，猶股肱之戴元首。同心葉契，在歿以之，故諸侯列葬，周文創陳其禮；大臣陪陵，魏武重申其制。去病佐漢，還奉茂鄉之塋；夷吾相齊，終托牛山之墓。斯蓋往聖垂範，前賢遺則，錄曩昔之宿心，篤終始之大義責也。皇運之初，時逢交喪，掃除多難，光啓鴻業。謀臣武將，竟進轅門之前，明德異材，爭趨魏闕之下。或雷雲伊始，功參締構；或光華在旦，績著弼諧。及密戚懿親，舊勳宿德，委質先朝，特蒙顧遇者。自今以後，身薨之日，所司宜即以聞。並於獻陵左側，賜以葬地，並給東園秘器，事從優厚。庶敦追遠之義，以申罔極之懷。貞觀十一年十一月。

Gongchen Peiling Zhao 功臣陪陵詔

King JiGong⁷ of the Zhou Dynasty was buried at Bimo⁸. Minister Xiao He⁹ of the Han dynasty was buried in an attendant tomb at Gaoyuan.

According to tradition, it is the Emperor, pursuing the system of previous dynasties, who allocates a parcel of land for the burial of the deceased.

All the relatives of the imperial families and ancestors of officials are like trunk and branch of the same tree; the first generation of officials and current governors are as arm and leg of the same body. From the beginning to the end, they are closely tied. Mourning and praise are of great importance.

According to tradition, we are to look towards the northern star. Common people shall be buried in weed land where birds fly, not near dirty waters, but next to rivers where fish live.

Under the decree, order is given to the office responsible for burials to mark a boundary around the allotted piece of land, in the south of Zhaoling, at the left and the right of the area, and to place a sign board indicating the burial territory assigned to the officials who have contributed with services to the state.

Descendants of persons buried in attendant tombs in an allotted land have the right, if they wish, to be buried in the same parcel.

周室姬公，陪於畢陌；漢庭蕭相，附彼高園。寵錫墳塋，聞諸上代，從窆陵邑，信有舊章。蓋以懿戚宗臣，類同本之枝幹；元功上宰，猶在身之股肱。哀榮之義實隆，始終之契斯允。今宜聿遵故實，取譬拱辰，庶在鳥耘之地，無污魚之水道。宜令所司，于昭陵南左右廂，封境取地，仍即標誌疆域，擬爲葬所，以賜功臣。其父祖陪陵，子孫欲來從葬者，亦宜聽許。貞觀二十年八月。

⁷ Ji Gong 姬公 is a respectful form of address for King Zhou Wenwang of the Western Zhou Dynasty.

⁸ Bimo 畢陌 is also called Biyuan 畢原.

⁹ Xiao He 蕭何(?-193 BC) is a famous Minister of the Han dynasty.

Classification of periods and status of Tang tomb structure, according to Subai¹⁰

In the absence of other evidence, we refer to Su Bai's 宿白 detailed classification of Tang tomb structures, which has become the scale to determine the rank of the tomb occupant. For tombs that contained Tang *sancai* but where the epitaph and other clues on the identity of the occupant are missing, I shall recourse to Su Bai's categorization, which I shall first introduce in the following paragraph.

On the basis of the tomb excavations in the area of Xi'an 西安, Shaanxi 陕西省 province, Su Bai demonstrates that there is a noticeable criterion of tomb structure in this region which applies, at least, to the areas from the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River. Su Bai categorized Tang tombs into three periods, in accordance with the changes of tomb structure, the materials used for coffins and the shapes of the coffins.¹¹

- The first period dates from Tang Emperor Gaozu 高祖 to Emperor Taizong 太宗, namely between AD 618 - AD649, which is the early part of the Tang dynasty 唐代 (AD 618-AD 907). The burial system of the Tang, the character of which was not yet formed, was similar to that of the Sui dynasty 隋代 (AD 581- AD 618);
- The second period dates from Emperor Gaozong 高宗 to Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗, namely between AD 650 and AD756, during which the character of Tang tombs was formed and developed. The second period can be also divided into two stages: the first stage covers the era of Emperor Gaozong and Empress Wu Zetian 武则天 till Emperor Ruizong 睿宗,¹² namely from AD 650 to AD 712. The second stage is the era of Emperor Xuanzong's era, between AD 712 and AD 756.

¹⁰ Subai 宿白, Xi'an diqu de Tang mu xingzhi, 西安地區的唐墓形制, *WW*,12, 1995, pp 41-50.

¹¹ Reference is made here to Subai's tomb structure categories, not to the description of the coffin, as it is incomplete. *WW*,12, 1995, pp 41-50.

¹² Emperor Ruizong 睿宗, whose reign lasted from AD 710 to AD 712.

- The third period dates from Emperor Xuanzong till the end of the Tang, namely from AD 756 till AD 907. Tombs from this period show the decline of the Tang.

Su Bai grouped Tang tombs into four types of tomb structures. Furthermore, he explained the development of these four types of tombs during the three periods.

- Type one is a tomb consisting of two chambers with brick walls. The shape of the chambers can be described, seen from a horizontal cross-cut, as a square, the lines of which are convex rather than straight. This type of tomb, such as that of Prince Yide 懿德太子, Prince Zhanghuai 章懷太子, Princess Yongtai 永泰公主 and Zheng Rentai 鄭仁泰, was used by the direct heirs of the emperor and some notables who had made a great contribution to the state.
- Type two is a tomb consisting of one chamber with brick walls. The shape of the chamber, as seen from a horizontal cross-cut, has either straight or convex walls, the straight wall being the mark of a tomb of a grade lower than that with convex-shaped walls. Type two tombs were those used for members of the First Rank till the Fifth Rank. However, a development seems to have taken place gradually in the use of the convex-shaped walls: during the first period, some of the officials who belonged to the First Rank, such as the Duke of Huaian 淮安王, Li Shou 李寿,¹³ had tombs the structure of which was not with convex walls; in the second period, the convex-walled type was used by the Third Rank; and in the third period, it was used by the Fourth Rank.
- Type three is a tomb formed by a square chamber dug out in the ground without any supporting wall. This type of tomb structure was used for officials who belonged to the Fifth Rank or lower.¹⁴

¹³ *WW*, 1974, 9, pp.71-88.

¹⁴ There is an over-lapping of the use of type two and type three tomb structures by the Fourth and Fifth Ranks.

- Type four is a tomb formed by a rectangular chamber dug out in the ground without any supporting wall. This type of tomb structure was used for common people.

Text on the sixth Buddha holy relics worshipping ceremony

“In the spring of the fourteenth year of Xiantong, in the third month Guiji, the Emperor ordered to welcome the Buddha Holy Relics. A horde of officials responded; someone even proposed to the Emperor Xianzong [that he would like] to be the conductor of the procession. The Emperor said: ‘See it while alive, no regret when dead’. Broadly built stupas, auspicious tents, perfumed pavilions, banners, fabric pillars and canopies were made to receive the Relics. All [the above mentioned material] was decorated with gold, jade, brocade and embroidery, pearls and jade. Along the three-hundred *li* from the city to the temple, were positioned the court military, soldiers in arms, official and private musicians; sky and earth were brightly illuminated, and crowds covered several scores of *li*. Spectacular Guards of honour were in much greater number compared to those attending outdoor sacrifice rites. This event was far greater than the Yuanhe¹⁵. Numerous buildings and narrow streets were all coloured and there was no place that was not covered. [It was] absolutely sumptuous.”

鹹通十四年春，三月癸巳，上遣敕使詣法門寺迎佛骨，群臣諫者甚眾，至有言憲宗迎佛骨駕者。上曰：‘生得見之，死亦無恨。’廣造浮圖、寶帳、香輿、幡、幢、蓋以迎之，皆飾以金玉、錦繡、珠翠。自京城至寺三百里間，導以禁軍、兵杖，公私音樂，沸天燭地，綿互數十裏。儀衛之盛，過於郊祀，元和之時不及遠矣。富室夾道爲彩樓及無遮會，竟爲侈靡。¹⁶

¹⁵ This refers to the sixth time of the worshipping event in AD 819 under the rule of Emperor Xianzong.

¹⁶ *Jizhi Tongjian* 資治通鑑, *juan.* 252.

Li Wa Zhuan 李娃轉, **The tale of Li Wa**

.....

Li Wa Zheng Yuanhe —鄭元和, a lost future scholar, was hired by a funeral parlour day by day to hold the muslin coffin-curtains. With the pay he received for this job, he could sustain himself. Over several months, he gradually returned to strength. But whenever he heard the mourning chants lamenting that the mourners were worse off than the dead were, he would sob and weep, quite unable to control himself. Back at home, he would imitate the chants. This young scholar was an intelligent man, and before long he had thoroughly mastered the mysteries of this art. In all Ch'ang-an there was none to compare with him.

Now there were two firms firing out funeral equipment in keen competition with one another. At the firm on the east side the carriages and hearses were all fine and splendid, hardly to be watched, but the dirge-singers were weaker. When the head of this east-side firm learned that the young scholar was an excellent performer he raised 20,000 cash and made a bid to engage him. The veteran members of his company pooled all their skills and secretly taught him new tunes, assisting him by joining their voices to his. And for several weeks no one knew anything about it.

The heads of the two firms now proposed this to one another: "Let us both hold a display in Gate-of-Heaven Street of the equipment we have for hire, to show up which is better. And shall we agree that the loser forfeits a sum of 50,000 cash to pay for the food and drink?" Both pledged their work, then they called for a two-part contract to be drawn up and had it signed by guarantors, before holding the display.

Men and women flocked together in a huge assembly, with numbers reaching tens of thousands. Upon which the ward officers notified the police service, which reported

the matter to the Metropolitan Prefect. People from all parts went rushing to the scene. 'There were no dwellers in the lanes.' The display began at dawn, and by noon the equipment-ceremonial carriages and processional insignia-had all been presented in turn. In each class the west-side firm was the loser, and the master looked abashed. He now set up couches in tiers at the south end [of the display ground], and there appeared a man with long whiskers who came forward clasping a bell, with several supporting guards. Then flourishing his whiskers and raising his eyebrow, clasping his wrist and inclining his head, he mounted the platform and sang the poem of the White Horse. Relying on his earlier superiority, he glanced about to left and right as if no-one felt that he stood in a class of his own among his contemporaries and could not be brought low.

In a while, the head of the east-side firm set out some couches in line at the north end. Up came a youth in a black cap, flanked by five or six attendants and holding a funeral banner. It was our young scholar. He put his clothing in order and, most deliberate in bearing, stretched out his throat and delivered a phrase of song, looking as though he could not win. Then he sang the verse 'Dew on the shallots'. His voice rose clear and penetrating, 'the echoes shook the forest trees'. Before the tune was finished his listeners were already sobbing and sniffing as they hid their tears.

The head of the west-side firm was jeered at by all and suffered even greater humiliation than before. He quietly put the sum he had lost in front [of his rival] and stole furtively from the scene. On all sides people were staring in amazement, for no one had guessed [what would happen].

.....

Translation after Glen Dudbridge, *The Tale of Li Wa: Study and critical edition of a Chinese story from the ninth century*, pp 141-153.

Details relating to seven worshipping ceremonies

In April 1987, during the construction work for the pagoda in the Famen Temple, a finger bone of Buddha Sakyamuni was unearthed. This became a Holy Relic which was placed in the sanctum of the pagoda and solemnly worshipped by the Tang emperors. During their reign, from AD 618 to AD 907, the Tang held seven worshipping ceremonies, each of which was considered a grand event and celebrated with pomp.¹⁷ From Emperor to ordinary people, everyone donated the best they could. As recorded in texts, jade, gold, silver, silk and money were the main articles offered by emperors and their officials.

With the exception of the first worshipping ceremony held in AD 631 during the reign of Emperor Taizong, and for which no text exists to describe the offerings, the other six ceremonies are all recorded, as briefly described hereunder:

- For the second worshipping ceremony and the preparation for the reception of the Holy Buddha Relic at the court, as recorded in *Fayuan Zhulin* 法苑珠林¹⁸ in AD 659, Emperor Gaozong 高宗 offered money 5000 as well as 50 *pi* 匹¹⁹ of silk; later on, he offered another 5000 *pi* of silk. When the Relic was escorted to Luoyang, the Eastern capital of the Tang, Empress Wu Zetian also offered 1000 *pi* of silk, and nine coffins made of gold and silver.
- For the third ceremony held in AD 704, Empress Wu Zetian gave the order to take out the Relic from the sanctum of the Famen Pagoda for a worshipping performance.²⁰ During this ceremony, even valuable gifts donated, such as gold

¹⁷ For more details, see Chen Jingfu, 1988. pp. 86-129.

¹⁸ *Fayuan Zhulin* 法苑珠林, consisting of a hundred volumes, was written by a monk, Shi Daoshi 釋道世 (AD?-AD 683). It represents an index of all the Buddhist scriptures.

¹⁹ *Pi* 匹 is a unit of measurement.

²⁰ According to the text *Ji shenzhou sanbao ganyong lu* 集神州三寶感通錄 written by Daoxuan 道宣(AD

and silver, were given little importance in the face of the sacrifice of many believers who were immolating themselves as offerings:

"People who are holding jars²¹ or burning fingers are in front, people who offer money or throw treasures stay shamefully behind. 頂缸指炬者爭先，舍財投寶者恥後。"

- The fourth worshipping ceremony was held in AD 761 by Emperor Suzong 肅宗 (AD 771-AD 761). The *Baota ming bing xu* 寶塔銘並序 (description and introduction of the pagoda), which carved on a stele in AD 778, records that:

An Imperial edict decreed that one good-looking [Buddha] statue, as well as objects made of gold and silver, be presented...詔賜瑟瑟像一鋪，□事金銀之具...

- The fifth ceremony was held in AD 790 during Emperor Dezong's 德宗 (AD 779-AD 805) reign. *Zizhi Tongjian* 資治通鑑 records:

"Empty the whole capital [to come for] worship, spend wealth in large amounts of wan 萬...傾都瞻仰，施財巨萬..."

- The sixth ceremony was held in AD 819 by Emperor Xianzong 憲宗 (AD 805-AD 820). Records in the *Zizhi Tongjian* are not clear. However, they describe scenes that explained that some offerings were beyond material things:

"Nobilities and ordinary people viewed [the Relic] with respect and made offerings with the fear that [their offerings] are less valuable than those of others. Some offered their entire properties; some burned incense on their heads and burned their arms as offering ...王公士民瞻奉舍施，惟恐不及。有竭產充施者，有燃香臂頂供養者...。"

596-AD 667), Zhangliang 張亮(AD?), Inspector of Qizhou 岐州刺史, a Buddhist follower, suggested to Emperor Taizong that the Holy Relic be exhibited to the nation once every thirty years and be sealed again in the sanctum after the worshipping performances. Emperor Taizong agreed. Since then, every few decades, Tang emperors held official worshipping ceremonies.

²¹ Holding jars is the literal translation of the Chinese word: Dinggang 頂缸, which is an expression for suffering for others.

- The seventh ceremony was held in AD 873 during the reign of Emperor Yizong 懿宗 (AD 859-AD 873). It was the last worshipping service of the Holy Buddha Relic before the end of the Tang dynasty in AD 917. This ceremony was even more spectacular than the previous ones. When the Holy Relic was unearthed in 1987, a stone was also found on which was carved, in AD 874, a list of the offerings from two emperors and one empress for the seventh worshipping ceremony.

Let us look at these last offerings as recorded in carving on this piece of stone which measures 68 cm high by 113 cm wide. These were objects that were offered for the Holy Buddha Relic ceremonies by Emperor Yizong 懿宗 (AD 859-AD 873), Emperor Xizong 僖宗 (AD 873-AD 888),²² Hui'an 惠安皇太后 (wife of Emperor Yizong and mother of Emperor Xizong), Lady Jin Guo 晉國夫人,²³ the emperor's Consort Zhao 昭儀, , and some officials.

"When the true body [relic of Sakyamuni Buddha] arrived in the [imperial] palace, it [the Holy Relic] continuously received offerings of one hundred and twenty-two articles: a pair of gold and silver flower boxes, of a total weight of sixty *liang* 兩;²⁴ one gold monk bowl weighing forty-four *liang* and three *qian* 錢,²⁵ ...seven *mise* 秘色 ceramic bowls and two [*mise* bowls] mounted with silver, *mise* dishes and plates totaling six pieces...

Newly offered [things] by [Emperor] have arrived [including] gold, silver, treasures, garments, beddings, hats, cloth, shoes and so forth, totally seven hundred and fifty-four articles... one gold and silver flowerpot weighing one hundred and fifty-five *liang*, two [silver] ball-shaped incense containers weighing fifteen *liang*

²² Emperor Yizong passed away before the Holy Relic was returned to the sanctum of Famen Pagoda. As his successor, Emperor Xizong also made offerings.

²³ There is no record in Tang texts on the statute of Lady Jinguo 晉國夫人.

²⁴ *Liang* 兩 is a unit of weight.

²⁵ *Qian* 錢 is a unit of weight.

and three *fen* 分,²⁶ one [silver] cage weighing sixteen and a half *liang*, one [silver] tortoise weighing twenty *liang*... one glass monk bowl, one set of glass tea cup and saucer, eleven glass plates...

真身到內後，相次賜到物一百二十二件：銀金花合二具共重六十兩，金鉢盂一枚重十四兩三錢... 瓷秘色碗七口內二口銀稜， 瓷秘色盤子、疊子共六枚，...

新 恩賜到金銀寶器、衣物、席褥、襪 *fu* 頭、巾子、 靴鞋等，共計七百五十四... 金銀花盆一口重一百五十五兩，香囊二枚重十五兩三分， 籠子一枚重十六兩半， 龜一枚重廿 *nian* 兩,... 琉璃鉢子一枚， 流利茶碗柘子一副， 琉璃疊子十一枚,...²⁷

There were one hundred and twenty-one gold and silver objects, including food containers, incense burners, tea grinders and Buddhist appliances, such as a Bodhisattva sculpture, coffins, lamps, vases, crosiers; a jade coffin, beads and ornaments; thirteen *mise* ware 秘色瓷,²⁸ including bowls, dishes, vases and two silver inlaid bowls; piles of sophisticated brocades and silk; natural crystal pillows and beads; some imported foreign-featured objects, such as twenty glass dishes, bowls, beads, tea cups and saucers; amber ornaments and so forth.²⁹

²⁶ *fen* 分 is a unit of weight.

²⁷ Famensi, 1994, pp. 95-97.

²⁸ The total *mise* wares, which were unearthed from the sanctum of the Famen Temple, are fourteen. One vase is not in the offering list carved in the stone.

²⁹ Han Jinke, pp. 44-288.

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<i>WW</i>	<i>Wenwu</i>	文物
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