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徐展堂中國藝術館
藏品選萃

DISCOVERING THE PAST

SELECTED TREASURES FROM T. T. TSUI GALLERY OF CHINESE ART



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目錄 CONTENTS

引言 INTRODUCTION	4
導覽圖 GUIDE MAP	6
飲食 FOOD AND DRINK	8
娛樂 ENTERTAINMENT	24
信仰 BELIEF	40
動物 ANIMALS	58
展品年代參照表 CHRONOLOGY OF EXHIBITS	76



古董就是歷史，可以從中學習到許多書本上學不到的知識。所謂鑑古知今，真是得益非淺，其樂無窮。

Antiquities are history, and provide knowledge that cannot be found in most books. Knowledge of the past serves as a mirror for the present, it has a silent transforming influence, cultivates happiness and contentment, confers enduring benefits and provides endless pleasure.

節錄自 1995 年《鏡報月刊》訪問徐展堂博士
Interview with Dr. T. T. Tsui in *The Mirror* (1995)

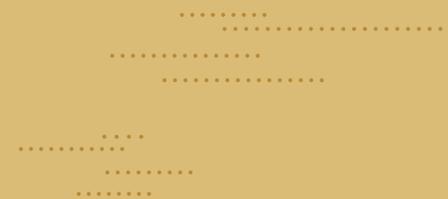


文物一般予人嚴肅和疏遠的感覺，難於欣賞和解讀。然而看似沉悶的文物，其實與古代先民的生活息息相關，是當時的生活寫照。

香港文化博物館設立徐展堂中國藝術館，藉以感謝徐展堂博士將其七百多件私人珍品捐贈予本館作永久收藏。館內長期展示其收藏的歷代陶瓷、陶塑和青銅器等文物，讓大眾可以藉此來了解中國源遠流長的歷史，發掘更多欣賞文物的樂趣。本小冊子從徐展堂中國藝術館常設展覽中揀選三十件藏品，從飲食、娛樂、信仰和動物四方面加以說明文物背後的故事，希望增加觀眾欣賞展品的趣味和更明瞭古人的生活。

Antique objects generally give a serious and distant feeling to visitors who find it hard to appreciate and understand them. In reality, these objects had been closely related to the lives of the ancient people, and they can tell stories of how the people lived and what they believed.

The T. T. Tsui Gallery of Chinese Art was established in gratitude for Dr. T. T. Tsui for donating over 700 pieces of his private collection to the Hong Kong Heritage Museum. Works of art and antiquities ranging from ceramics, pottery sculptures to bronzes are displayed long-term in the gallery for public appreciation. In order to bring visitors close to the exhibits, this booklet is designed to highlight 30 objects in the gallery, focusing on four aspects of life: Food and Drink, Entertainment, Belief, and Animals. Visitors can explore one or more themes and get insights into living in the past.



導覽圖
GUIDE MAP



夔龍紋鼎

DING FOOD VESSEL WITH KUI-DRAGON DESIGN

東周 (公元前770 – 前256)
Eastern Zhou (770 – 256BC)

鼎是早期先民發現以火煮食後出現的炊具，以火直接由下方加熱以烹煮食物。最初為陶器，後來貴族階層逐漸以青銅鼎取代。青銅鼎盛行於商周，並由純粹的煮食用具演變成祭祀的禮器。鼎有三足，主要用以煮肉食。陶灶發明後，鑊便取代鼎作為烹煮肉食的器具。所謂「鼎食」是古人在講究的祭祀或宴會中的飲食待遇，他們會先用鑊把肉煮熟，再盛入鼎中。

由於青銅在當時極為貴重，所鑄之重鼎為極大財富，只有統治者才有能力擁有。古文獻云：夏代鑄造九鼎，上刻山川百物，「九鼎」被奉為王權的象徵。

有學者認為，青銅器物上出現的各種紋飾，如饕餮紋、夔紋、雲紋和雷紋等，均是古人崇拜自然力量為神靈意識的體現。此鼎上鑄有夔紋，夔是古代傳說中的怪獸，只有一足，似龍和蛇。牠進出河海，不是帶來風雨便是大旱。在古代農業社會，氣候影響作物收成，關係生命存亡。古人把夔鑄刻在青銅器上作祭祀，也許就是懇求風調雨順的盼望。



The *ding*, or tripod, is a cooking utensil which came into popular use after people discovered the advantages of cooking with fire. To cook the food, fire was applied directly under the utensil. Tripods were initially made of pottery, but they were gradually replaced by bronze versions among the aristocrats. Bronze tripods were popular during the Shang and Zhou periods (ca. 1600 – 256BC), and gradually evolved from being utensils for cooking to objects of ritual use. It has three legs, and was mainly used for cooking meat until the *wok* came along after the invention of pottery stoves. But on formal occasions such as rituals or banquets, meat would be cooked in the *wok* first over fire, then transferred to the tripod to serve with pomp. That was how the term for extravagant dinners, *dingshi* (banquet with tripods lined up), came about.



Since bronze was extremely precious at that time, the making of a tripod involved sums so large that only the ruling class could afford it. The casting of nine tripods with landscape pattern during the Xia period (ca. 2100 – 1600BC) was recorded in ancient literature as a remarkable event. "Nine tripods" was a symbol of imperial power.

Some scholars believe that patterns of mythical beasts of *taotie* and *kui*, clouds and thunder on the bronze ware are all manifestations of the ancients' worship of the powers of nature. This tripod is cast with the *kui*. It has a body of a dragon or a snake, only one leg, and moves freely in and out of rivers and seas. Every time it appears, it would bring either rainstorms or severe droughts. In traditional agricultural society, the weather had serious impact on the harvest of crops, and people's lives could hang upon it if famine struck. The *kui* patterns that ancient people carved on bronzeware for ritual offerings are probably their supplication for good weather.

JUE WINE VESSEL WITH ANIMAL MASK DESIGN

周代 (約公元前 1100 – 前 256)

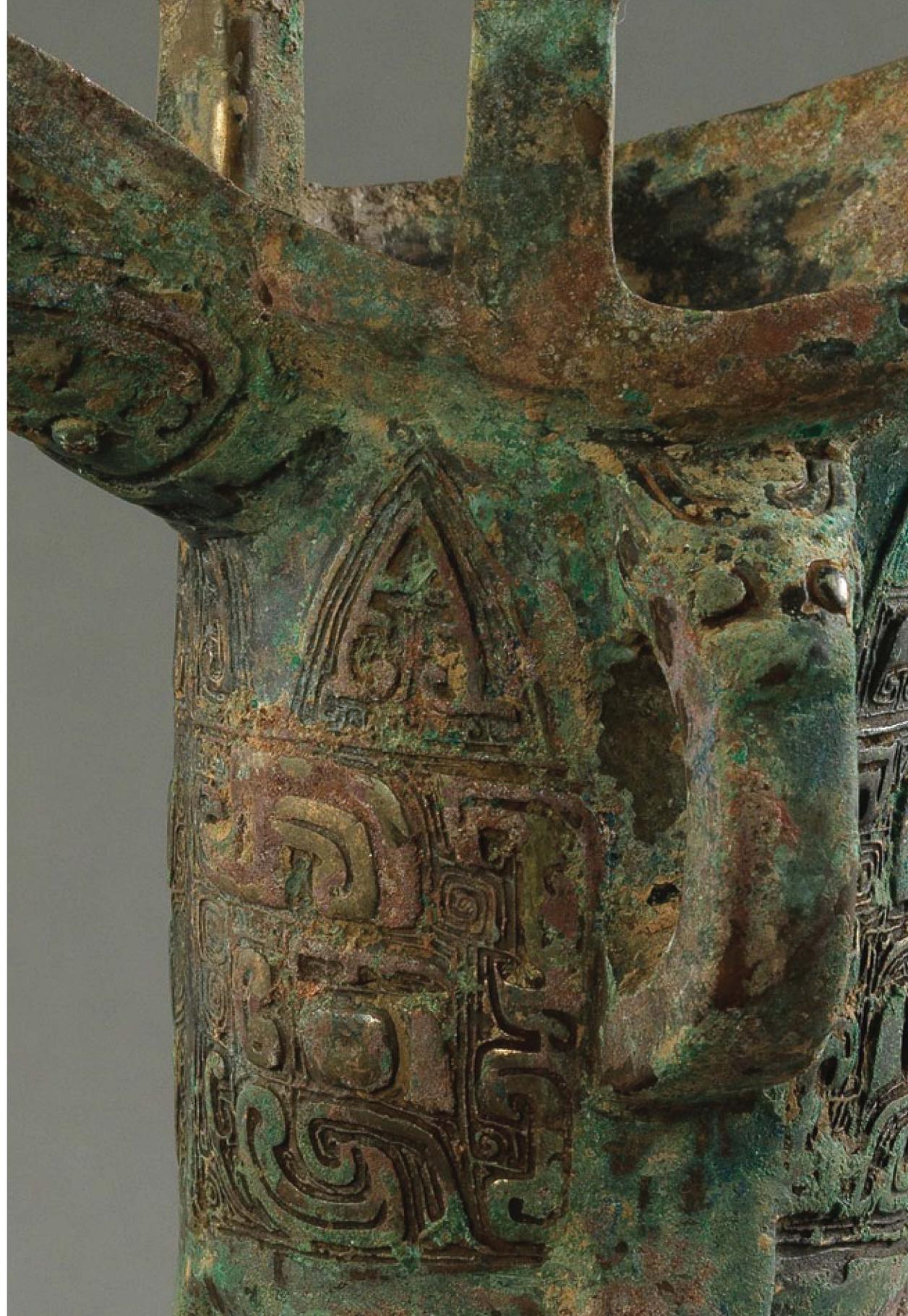
Zhou Dynasty (ca. 1100 – 256BC)

爵是流行於夏、商至西周的飲酒器。供飲用的位置稱流，另一端呈尖形稱尾，調好並且溫熱的酒會注入其中，供主人酬賓所用，是當時的貴族生活和禮儀祭祀活動中重要的器物之一。

夏商時期的墓葬重視酒器，常放於墓主頭部周圍，與食器只放於死者的腳下存有差別之分。這種先次選擇正好說明了當時的社會嗜酒成風，商紂王亦因嗜酒而亡國。至西周中期，酒器的數量才逐漸減少，而食器則有所增加，在墓葬中代表身份階級的酒禮器亦被食禮器所取代。基於此等現象，有學者認為這反映中國飲食文化從商代的以酒肉為主到及後以穀物為主、配以蔬果和肉的轉變。

The *jue* is a wine vessel commonly used during the Xia, Shang and Western Zhou periods (ca. 2100 – 771 BC). The spout of the vessel for drinking is called *liu* and the pointed end is called *wei*. Wine ready for drinking would be warmed and then poured into the vessel before serving. It was one of the most important signifiers of aristocratic living besides being used in rituals and worship.

This is reflected in the tomb burials of the Xia and Shang periods. Wine vessels were placed around the head of the master of the tomb, while food vessels were placed at his feet. This order of placement indicates that wine drinking was popular at the time, and in fact indulgence in alcohol cost King Zhou (1105 – 1046 BC) of Shang his kingdom. It was not until the mid-Western Zhou period that the number of wine vessels gradually decreased while that of food vessels continued on the rise. Even in burial objects, wine vessels, as a symbol of social class, were also overtaken by food vessels. Scholars believe that this phenomenon reflects a change in food preferences, from wine and meat as the staple in the Shang period, to grains, vegetables, fruits and meat in later times.



COVERED *DOU* STEM BOWL WITH
PAINTED DECORATION

戰國時代至漢代 (公元前 475 – 公元 220)

Warring States Period to Han Dynasty (475BC – AD220)

豆是中原常見的盛食器，用於祭祀或宴會，以高足支撐着盛盤，專門用來盛放醃菜和肉醬等調味品，用途相當於今天的果盤和菜盤，在青銅器和陶器類別中均有發現。

豆於商晚期經已在青銅禮器中出現。直至春秋戰國時期，製陶的工藝受到漆器和青銅器工藝所影響，有了明顯進步，其質量有所提高，出產數量亦有增多，並廣泛運用於一般平民百姓的飲食器具上。食器的形制不時會仿青銅器，而此彩繪蓋豆便是一例。

The *dou* is a vessel that was commonly used for serving food in the Central Plains of ancient China. Supported on a stand for serving condiments such as pickles and minced meat, with a function similar to the serving tray for fruit or food dishes today, they were used in rituals, worship and banquets. Artefacts of this kind can be found in both bronze and pottery versions.

The *dou* appeared as early as the last years of the Shang period (ca. 1600 – 1100BC) as bronzeware for rituals. By the Spring and Autumn period and Warring States period (770 – 221BC), pottery skills had been significantly improved following the sophistication of lacquerware and bronzeware. Pottery versions of the *dou* increased in both quantity and quality and became widely used among commoners. In the history of China, food utensils often imitated the form of bronzeware, and this painted *dou* with lid is a fine example.



綠釉灶 STOVE IN GREEN GLAZE

東漢 (25 – 220)

Eastern Han Dynasty (25 – 220)

漢代人崇尚厚葬，相信人死後的靈魂會在另一個世界生活，故要照顧死者的需要，必須「事死如事生」。隨葬明器包括日常必需品，漢代炊事主要用灶，為生養之本，故發現很多隨葬的陶灶明器。

此灶身為船形，前部開火門，上有大小兩個火眼，後有煙道，是西漢中後期的形制。至西漢晚期及東漢，火眼多達三至五個。此灶大火眼上有一套釜甑，在做飯的同時，利用餘熱將另一火眼鍋裡的水加熱，省時方便。灶面沿邊刻有菱形花紋，灶枱上有浮雕及雕刻，畫出各種食物及煮食工具如燒烤用的叉子等，造形樸素寫實，生活氣息濃厚，記錄了當時的飲食文化。從祈福文字中反映漢人相信先人於死後世界的生活好壞，能影響子孫富貴禍福。古人以信仰聯繫著兩個世界，以厚葬和明器寄哀思慰亡靈，更寄託了對後代繁榮昌盛的願望。



People of the Han period advocated rich burials, since they believed that the soul continued to live in another world after death and the social ethics required one to “serve the deceased as well as they were alive”. They would supply all sorts of daily necessities in the burial objects. Stoves were commonly used for cooking and regarded as one of the basic needs in everyday living, so pottery versions were placed in the tombs as well. Today, pottery stoves are often unearthed among burial objects.

This stove is in the shape of a boat. There is an opening at the front for fuel, two openings on top, one big and one small, called “fire eyes” as burners, and a chimney at the back. It conforms with the style of stoves used in the mid-to-late Western Han period (206BC – 25AD). Between the late Western Han and Eastern Han (25 – 220) period, stove models could have as many as three to five “fire eyes”. On the bigger burner of this stove is a set of cauldrons. The heat produced during cooking can also heat up the water in the utensil on the other, smaller burner. The stove top has edges decorated with diamond-shaped patterns. There are also decorations in the form of bas reliefs and carvings, showing various types of food and cooking tools such as the roasting fork. Though simple in design, this burial object shows the pragmatic functions intended, and is a good record of the everyday life and culinary traditions of the time. There is also an inscription that reflects the Han people’s belief that the quality of the afterlife of the deceased in the other world would impact the well-being and fortune of their descendants in the world of the living. Such a belief links the two worlds together; the elaborate funeral rites and rich supply of burial objects were not only for the benefit of the deceased but also a prayer for the prosperity of generations to come.



綠釉皮囊壺

PILGRIM FLASK IN GREEN GLAZE

遼代 (916 – 1125)

Liao Dynasty (916 – 1125)

綠釉皮囊壺為遼代獨特的生活用器。契丹族本是游牧民族，遼代皇帝為使農牧業得以同時發展，採取「因俗而治」的統治方式，以南北兩面官的兩院制，實行分治漢人和契丹人。生活方式也逐漸從純游牧走向部份定居，因此產生了以陶瓷仿製牧民用作儲存液體的皮囊壺。

皮囊壺又名雞冠壺，在遼代早期出現，彎曲度適合與馬身相貼，頂上有突出如雞冠的尖峰，多為一孔。此壺為其發展的中期，仿照兩大皮頁中加條幅縫合而成的皮囊形器。覆蓋面有仿皮壓花，並有嬰孩和菊花貼塑裝飾。冠峰變低並有雙孔，各有小猴攀附，設計便於馬上攜帶和捆紮。壺身趨扁，繫於馬上貼靠牢固，不易滾動。前後兩孔平衡靠近，受力均衡，結實耐用。整體造型粗獷豪放、樸素，反映契丹民族傳統文化和草原生活氣息。

This green glazed pilgrim flask is a utensil for everyday use, unique to the Liao period (916 – 1125). The Khitan people were originally nomads. Since the Liao emperor encouraged the development of agriculture and animal husbandry, and adopted the principle of ruling according to the customs

of the people, two separate administrative systems were used to rule the Han and the Khitan peoples. The life style of the latter gradually evolved from purely nomadic to partially settled. As a result, pottery vessels imitating animal skin pouches for water and wine used by the nomads were produced.

The original skin flasks, also known as “bagging pots” or “cockscorn flasks”, first appeared in the early Liao period. It has a curved form that fit the body of the horse, with a crest at the top standing out like a cockscorn, mostly with a single hole. This pottery version belongs to the mid-development period, and is an imitation of the skin flasks made with two leather sheets sewn together with a strip in between. The surface, like the leather original, also has embossed patterns, and bear appliqué decoration of a baby on one side and a chrysanthemum on the other. The levelled top has two holes, each decorated with a little monkey. The design facilitates carrying or tying the flask on a horse. The body is flat to make it stay close to the body of the horse and keeps it from rolling. The front and back holes are close to each other at the same level, such that the weight of the flask is equally distributed, making it more durable. The whole shape is rough and rustic, reflecting the traditional culture of the Khitan people, and life on the grassland.



褐釉酒壺 連溫酒碗

WINE EWER

AND WARMING BOWL

IN BROWN GLAZE

宋代 (960 – 1279)

Song Dynasty (960 – 1279)

中國很早就有釀酒術，盛酒的器具亦應運而生。先秦時期的青銅酒器因作為禮器而受到重視，至秦漢時期便慢慢流行使用漆器酒具。自東漢以後，造型各異的陶瓷酒器時有出現，注子，即酒壺，便是其一。古人喝酒要溫熱，除了因為天氣的問題（寒冬酒會凝固），也因養生、味道和氣氛等原因。曹操煮酒論英雄，關公溫酒斬華雄，均體現了這種喝熱酒的傳統習慣。

宋元時期流行使用酒注，並配備溫酒碗。溫酒的方法是把盛滿了酒的注子，放入灌了熱水的溫碗中，酒通過熱水間接加熱。酒壺及溫酒碗組合因而成套出現。它們曾在宋、遼、金和元代的墓葬壁畫，以及著名的五代顧闳中《韓熙載夜宴圖》中的飲宴場景出現。這套黑釉酒具的外形是宋代的典型例子，其酒壺為橢圓形，具曲柄、長流和鈕扣形蓋；而溫酒碗則深腹、圈足和呈蓮花形。當時景德鎮出產的酒具除了常見的影青釉，黑褐釉亦是其中之一。

The Chinese discovered wine-making techniques very early on, so wine vessels appeared soon afterwards out of need. Bronze wine vessels of the early Qin period were for ceremonial and ritual use. During the Qin and Han periods (221BC – 220AD), lacquer versions were already in popular use. Pottery wine vessels of all shapes and designs appeared after the Eastern Han period (25 – 220). *Zhuzi*, or wine ewer, was one of them. The ancient people preferred their wine warm, not only because wine froze in extremely cold weather, but also for reasons of health, taste and ambience. There are many descriptions in historical records and novels. For example, in *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, there was the famous testing of character and ambition of Liu Bei by Cao Cao. Aspiring to lord over all three kingdoms, Cao conducted the test over a wine-warming session. Then there was another incident in which the great warrior, Guan Yu, briskly killed his opponent Hua Xiong before his cup of warm wine got cold.



Wine ewers with warming bowls were commonly used during the Song and Yuan periods (960 – 1368). A ewer of wine would be placed in a bowl full of hot water to heat it indirectly as well as to keep it warm. Therefore, ewers and warming bowls often come in sets. They can be found on the murals in tombs of the Song, Liao, Jin and Yuan periods, and in the famous painting, *The Night Revels of Han Xizai* by the renowned painter Gu Hongzhong (910 – 980) of the Five Dynasties. The shape of this black glazed wine ewer is typical of the Song period, with its ovoid body, curved handle, long spout, button-shaped lid, and the deep, ring-footed, lotus-shaped warming bowl. Black-brown glaze ware was also among the wine vessels produced by Jingdezhen at the time, other than the commonly seen *yingqing* ware of bluish-white glaze.

黑釉兔毫盞一對

宋代 (960 – 1279)

Song Dynasty (960 – 1279)

飲茶文化在兩宋時期十分普及，茶葉是普通家庭中的生活必需品，而在當時社會濃厚的文人氣氛帶動下，飲茶同時成為了一項高尚的活動，上流社會的人士常常舉行茶會，以茶會友。

他們有兩種飲茶的方法，分別是煎茶和點茶。煎茶是將磨成粉末的茶投入滾水中煎煮，而點茶則是預先將茶末調成膏狀並置於盞中，然後用滾水沖點。

宋人對飲茶的要求十分講究，無論是沖茶的方法還是用具，均見其對完美的追求。此等風氣亦形成了鬥茶的出現，即各人各自煮水沏茶，然後根據茶色、茶香和茶味互相品評，從而比拼各人茶藝的高低。宋人在鬥茶時為了更容易襯托出茶湯的白色，特別鍾愛黑釉茶盞，此兔毫盞便是一例，其他還有鷓鴣斑盞和油滴盞等。



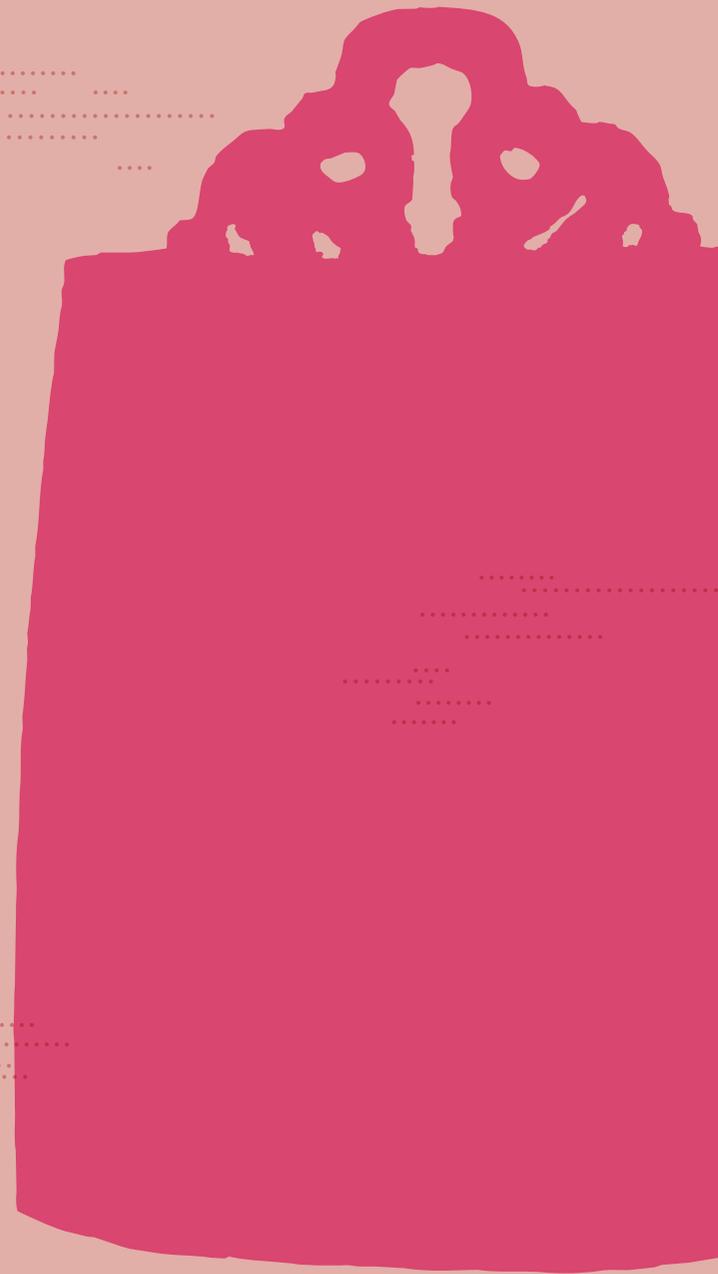
Tea drinking was popular during the Song dynasty (960 – 1279), so tea leaves were a daily necessity in regular households. The literati started the trend, and tea drinking became a social activity of good taste. The upper class people often organised tea gatherings as occasions for meeting friends.

There were two ways of making tea at the time: infusion, and whisking. The former was to place ground tea leaves into a pot of boiling water and heat over fire; and the latter was to whisk the tea powder into a paste, then put into a cup and pour boiling water in.

The people at that time were meticulous about their tea – whether it was the way of making tea or the utensils used. This also led to the trend of holding tea competitions. The contenders would make tea using their own choice of tea leaves, water and brewing process. Then each resultant bowl would be critiqued according to its colour, fragrance and taste by all those present to determine who had created the best tea. To make the colour of the tea stand out more, they preferred using tea bowls with streaked black-and-brown glaze, such as the hare's fur bowls, partridge feather mottled bowls and oil spot bowls.

娛樂

ENTERTAINMENT



鑄 BO BELL

戰國時代 (公元前 475 – 前 221)
Warring States Period (475 – 221BC)

鑄是古代的樂器之一，用於宮廷宴樂演奏和祭祀禮儀。它的造型與同時期的平口鈕鐘相似，始於商代末期，並盛行於春秋戰國時期。鑄的體型較大，多為單懸，並用木槌擊奏，但亦曾發現大小不一的編鑄組合。此鑄大多只能奏出一個音，其低音的特色使它能用於指揮樂隊節奏和合聲演奏。

The *bo* bell is one of the instruments used in musical performances during imperial banquets in ancient China. It is also played when sacrificial rites were performed. It first appeared in late Shang dynasty (ca. 1600 – 1100BC) and grew to be very popular during the Spring and Autumn period (770 – 475BC) and the Warring States period (475 – 221BC). Shaped like the level-lipped bossed bell, *niuzhong*, of the same period, the *bo* is larger in size, usually played hung up singly by striking with a wooden mallet. But sets of graduated sizes, like the *bianzhong*, have also been discovered. This *bo* has a deep, mellow sound, making it suitable for setting the rhythm for a musical ensemble and accompanying a musical performance.



青黃釉編鐘五件

SET OF FIVE *BIANZHONG* CHIME-BELLS IN YELLOWISH GREEN GLAZE

戰國時代 (公元前 475 – 前 221)

Warring States Period (475 – 221BC)



鐘是古代樂器中常見的一種，鐘體呈合瓦形，懸掛在架上，敲擊鐘身的中部和側部會發出兩個不同的音。從鐘的發展可知，當時的人們在生活實踐中已了解到物體的振動和發聲的高低之間有密切關係，熟練掌握了聲樂原理在青銅樂器上的應用，並可以演奏出音域廣闊多變的樂曲。鐘也會以大小相次排列成組懸掛，亦即編鐘，並以樂律的不同和演奏樂章的要求決定多少個鐘，屬先秦時期高級貴族用於祭祀祖先神靈和宴請賓客時的敲擊樂器。他們在宴客時不僅品嚐佳肴美食，還會欣賞悅耳的音樂。

此件青黃釉編鐘則屬當時的仿銅製品。戰國時代，按身份使用相配禮器的規條常被僭越，一些低級的官吏和平民也使用禮器陪葬，但礙於資源所限，因而使用灰陶進行仿製。當青銅禮器亦日漸衰落時，陶製禮器亦在王室貴族中流行起來。

The *zhong* bell was a common ancient musical instrument that having an elliptical cross-section. It had to be hung from a frame to facilitate striking. Two notes can be achieved from the bell: one by striking the bell on the outside at the central point of the lip, and the other by striking the corner. The history of development of the bronze bells shows that ancient people had learnt from experience that there is a close relation between the vibration of objects and the pitch of the sound made. They mastered the application of acoustic principles to the bronze musical instruments and were able to play melodies of a wide range. When lined up in order of magnitude to become a set, the *zhong* bells would form the *bianzhong*. The total number of bells used depended on the musical requirements and the pieces to be played. Such sets were used by the aristocracy in the Pre-Qin period (ca. two millennia before 221BC), during sacrificial rituals for ancestors and the gods, or at banquets where music was a complement to sumptuous food.

This pottery *bianzhong* set in yellowish green glaze was created as a replica of the bronze bell version. During the Warring States period, former protocols on the use of ritual vessels according to social hierarchical order were often breached, and even petty officials and commoners used ritual vessels as burial objects. But owing to the limited supply of bronzes, they resorted to using pottery replicas. When later the bronze vessels went into decline, the pottery versions came into popularity, even among the royals and nobles.





綠釉六博戲俑

SET OF FIGURES PLAYING LIUBO CHESS GAME IN GREEN GLAZE

東漢 (25 – 220)

Eastern Han Dynasty (25 – 220)

六博是一種歷史悠久的博戲，古稱「博」、「博局戲」或「陸博」，盛行於春秋戰國至秦漢時期，是當時人們日常生活中不可或缺的活動。從漢代的墓室磚石上的圖像可知，六博是貴族士大夫日常生活中的重要娛樂，是顯示貴族身份和修養的必備技能。

一套博具中共有六根箸，故名六博。如沒有箸，則以骰子代替。對博雙方各有六枚棋子，一大五小，分佈在博局上。大棋稱為「鼻棋」，而小棋則稱為「散棋」。博局上佈置各種曲道，行棋需根據投箸或擲骰結果決定棋步，並以殺死對方的「鼻棋」為勝。

秦漢時期以後，六博漸漸衰落，其行棋方法亦因而失傳。

Liubo (or "six stakes") is a game that dates back to many millennia ago, and is known by other names such as *bo*, game of *boju* or *lubo*. Popular from the Spring and Autumn period, Warring States period through to the Qin and Han dynasties (770BC – AD220), it was very much a part of the everyday life of the ancients. The murals in tombs and images on masonry and bricks of Han showed that *liubo* was an important pastime among the aristocrats and officials, and was considered by the elite class as a requisite skill, a status symbol and demonstration of personal accomplishments.

There were six sticks in a set of *liubo*, and hence its name. Failing the sticks, dice could also be used. The two opponents had six chess pieces each, one big and five small, spread across the chessboard. The big piece was called the head piece, while the small ones random pieces. Winding paths were set on the board, and moves were made according to the throw of the sticks or the dice. The one who could kill the opponent's head piece would be the winner.

Liubo went into decline after the Qin and Han dynasties, and the rules governing its moves were also lost.

彩繪 繪 奏樂 伎俑 及圓形 底座

唐代 (618 – 907)

Tang Dynasty (618 – 907)



「百戲」是各種技藝表演的統稱，包括音樂、舞蹈、雜技、魔術和角觥戲等。它的起源來自民間，是由古老的原始宗教祭祀典禮發展出來。自秦朝開始傳入宮廷，漢朝時期在漢武帝大力的倡導下，百戲盛極一時。隋唐時期的雜伎繼承了漢魏傳統，並吸收西域的技巧，在種類和技藝方面均較以前更為發展和創新，加入竿爬、走繩、踩球和舞馬等項目，形成隋唐社會中百戲豐富多采的景象。

這個時期的百戲為皇室貴族以至民間的宴樂提供娛樂，是當時極受歡迎的節目。每逢皇帝誕辰，朝廷更會召集各地優秀藝人到宮中表演百戲。

Baixi is a general term that refers to all forms of performing arts, including music, dance, acrobatics, conjuring and wrestling. Its origins came from the world of commoners, having first evolved from ancient primitive sacrificial rites and later found its way to the imperial court during the Qin dynasty (221 – 207 BC), and reached its peak under the patronage of Emperor Wu (156 – 87BC) in the Han dynasty (206BC – AD220). The *baixi* of the Sui and Tang dynasties (581 – 907) followed the Han and Wei traditions. By assimilating the skills of the Central Asian peoples, it became more diverse in content, more well-developed and more creative in terms of types and genres. The *baixi* during the Sui and Tang periods often featured challenging acrobatic skills. From pole-climbing, to rope-walking, balancing on balls and equestrianism, they are a vivid testimony to the variety and richness in content of this form of entertainment at the time.

It was a popular practice to have *baixi* entertainers perform at banquets, whether at the imperial court, noble residences, or common people's homes. On the emperor's birthday, outstanding entertainers from all over the country would be summoned to perform in the palace.

FOUR FEMALE MUSICIANS WITH PAINTED DECORATION

唐代 (618 – 907)

Tang Dynasty (618 – 907)

唐代墓葬常有樂舞俑作陪葬，反映出隋唐時期樂舞的興盛。由於舞蹈多配音樂，因此出現了這些跪坐並各執樂器為舞者伴奏的伎樂俑。在當時樂舞的鼎盛時期，社會各階層都對此十分重視。不論是皇宮和官僚貴族，還是民間，也可以看見樂舞的蹤影。它不只是一項表演，也是一種自娛的活動。

唐代社會的開放風氣使中外胡漢文化藝術交流頻繁，西域特色音樂歌舞大量融入中原。在當時流行的「十部樂」中，便有八部是來自西域或鄰近國家。從樂舞的發展可見，唐代社會到處都是歌舞昇平的景象，亦鼓勵了不同地方文化的融合。



Pottery figures of musicians and dancers were often used as burial objects during the Tang dynasty (618 – 907), a reflection of the popularity of music and dance at the time. As dance was often accompanied by music, figures in dance poses or seated with musical instruments in their hands were found. During its heyday, this form of entertainment was highly regarded by all social classes, and could be found in palaces, noble residences and venues of the common folks alike. It functioned not only as a performance but also as a pastime to amuse oneself.

The open social climate of the Tang dynasty also led to frequent artistic and cultural exchanges between China and countries in Central Asia and beyond. The music, songs and dance of the foreign ethnic groups were soon assimilated with that of the Central Plains. Out of the Ten Types of Music (*Shibuyue*) designated in the Tang official documents, eight had come from foreign cultures or neighbouring countries. The development of music and dance in the Tang dynasty shows that it was a period of prosperity and cultural integration of various regions.

青白釉褐斑奏樂俑四件

宋代 (960 – 1279)

Song Dynasty (960 – 1279)

唐代民間早已出現將樂曲融入說話之中的說唱表演。說唱藝人以邊講說、邊唱歌的形式將故事表達出來，並漸演變成宋代的雜劇。雜劇是宋代市民重要的娛樂項目之一，亦是中國傳統戲曲的雛形，結合歌唱、說白、舞蹈和武術等藝術為一體的表演項目。

宋代城市經濟不斷發展，民間娛樂活動漸變豐富，音樂亦逐漸走向市井，出現了「瓦舍」和「瓦子」等供藝人表演伎藝的固定場所。平民百姓均能欣賞各種不同的表演，而雜劇則是當時社會其中一項流行的表演。雜劇在宋人生活中具有一定的影響力。奏樂俑的出現，顯示戲曲表演深得人們喜愛。

As early as the Tang dynasty (618 – 907), there were already story-telling performances which incorporated singing and narration. The performer used spoken delivery and song to tell a story, and the format evolved into the *zaju* in the Song dynasty (960 – 1279). It had become one of the major forms of entertainment in the Song period which incorporated song, spoken lines, dance and martial arts – in other words, the prototype of traditional Chinese theatre.



With the rapid development in urban economy during Song dynasty, entertainment for the commoners grew in variety. Music also flourished and became more accessible to the commoners. This gave rise to the emergence of permanent venues for the entertainers called *washe* or *wazi* that allowed common folks to enjoy various types of performing arts, of which *zaju* was a popular choice. These pottery figurines of musicians are a reflection of the popularity and importance of *zaju* in people's life during the Song dynasty.

BOWL IN UNDERGLAZE BLUE DECORATION
OF LADIES IN GARDEN SCENE

明 萬曆 (1573 – 1620)

Ming Dynasty, Wanli Period (1573 – 1620)



此青花碗外壁以「琴棋書畫」為主題，繪有多組仕女闈秀於庭園間活動。她們彈撥古琴，或互相對弈，或閱讀書籍，或觀賞畫作。碗底雙圈內書青花「大明萬曆年製」雙行六字楷款。

琴、棋、書、畫，合稱「四藝」。明朝時期，這些項目均是文人雅士酬唱聚會的雅集中不可或缺的項目。它們雖為技藝，但備受士人重視，因而一直被視為修養身心的方法。古人透過參與這四種活動來達至精神哲理層面，並藉此完善個人的品格，此等風氣在明代宮女和貴族闈秀等仕女中亦同樣流行。

This bowl with underglaze blue is decorated by the four skills of playing the *guqin*, playing chess, calligraphy and painting. The exterior is painted with groups of ladies participating different activities in the garden, including playing the *guqin*, playing chess, reading book and appreciating painting. The base is written in underglaze blue with the six-character reign mark *Daming Wanlinianzhi* (Made in the Wanli reign of the Great Ming dynasty) in regular script arranged in double columns within double circles.

The Four Arts, namely *qin* (zither), *weiqi* (chess), calligraphy and painting, were essential in *Yaji* (elegant gathering) during the Ming dynasty (1368 – 1644), which was a form of literary gathering allowing scholars to entertain themselves through various literary activities. Although the Four Arts was skill in nature, they thrived among the scholars and were treated as cultivation of self-accomplishment and elegant taste. By participating in these four activities, the scholars reached the spiritual and philosophical level and thereby improved their personal qualities. These skills are also practiced by court ladies and female party members of the nobility and scholar officials.