



The Unity of Nature and Humanity

Chinese Mausoleum Stone Sculptures in the Tang Dynasty

Hong Yin | Yan Sun

Wang Shengli, Editor in Chief
Sanqin Publishers, Shaanxi Publishing Group

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Foreword

Wang Shengli, Professor and President of Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts

The Unity of Nature and Humanity — Chinese Mausoleum Stone Sculptures in the Tang Dynasty is an art history book that provides an understanding of Chinese art and culture through an in-depth, multi-aspect, and systematic analysis of Chinese Tang Dynasty mausoleum sculptural art. The main academic focus of this book is to analyze the unique artistic characteristics of ancient Chinese mausoleum sculptures. The book then delves into how these sculptures artistically display both the ancient Chinese worldview and the relationship between nature and human being. These are all infused in a discussion regarding Chinese philosophy, aesthetic ideal, burial customs, and historical events. It is very important for the general and dynastic study of art history.

Over the course of twenty years, Hong Yin and Yan Sun have traveled to the eighteen Tang Dynasty mausoleums many times in order to study the sculptural art. Even in the 1980s when transportation and food were inadequate, many difficulties had to be overcome to properly document these sites. Although the authors live in the United States of America today, they continue to study and pass on their knowledge of ancient Chinese art history in American universities. They have not only integrated these concepts to their curriculum, but have also organized several exhibitions. They remain close with ancient and contemporary Chinese art, especially the stone sculptures of the Han and Tang Dynasties. Even during museum visits in North America and Europe, their exhibits of focus are still those of Chinese ancient stone sculptures.

The uniqueness of this book is it is based on records from first-hand research; most of the photos were taken over the course of the field study, which lasted for more than two decades. Due to natural and human causes, many of the mausoleum sculptures of the Tang Dynasty have eroded, been destroyed, or no longer exist. Therefore, the information contained in this book is very valuable to the future study of stone mausoleum sculptures in the Tang Dynasty.

Both Yin Hong and Sun Yan were graduate students of Professor Wang Ziyun, focusing on Western art history and Chinese art history. They are now teaching at Muskingum University in the United States. They have put all their love of and respect to Professor Wang Ziyun and Professor He Zhenghuang in this book. I have personally visited the United States twice to conduct research in American education history and practice. During my time there, I witnessed Hong and Yan working in an American institute of higher education. I have been made fully aware of the fact that in a strong cultural environment, they are respected in the academic field due to their achievements in research and teaching. The publication of this book is not only an important project sponsored by the Scientific Research Fund of Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts, but also an achievement of the international academic exchange between Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts, China, and Muskingum University, USA. I hope this publication serves an excellent start of more achievements in academic research cooperation between our two institutions.

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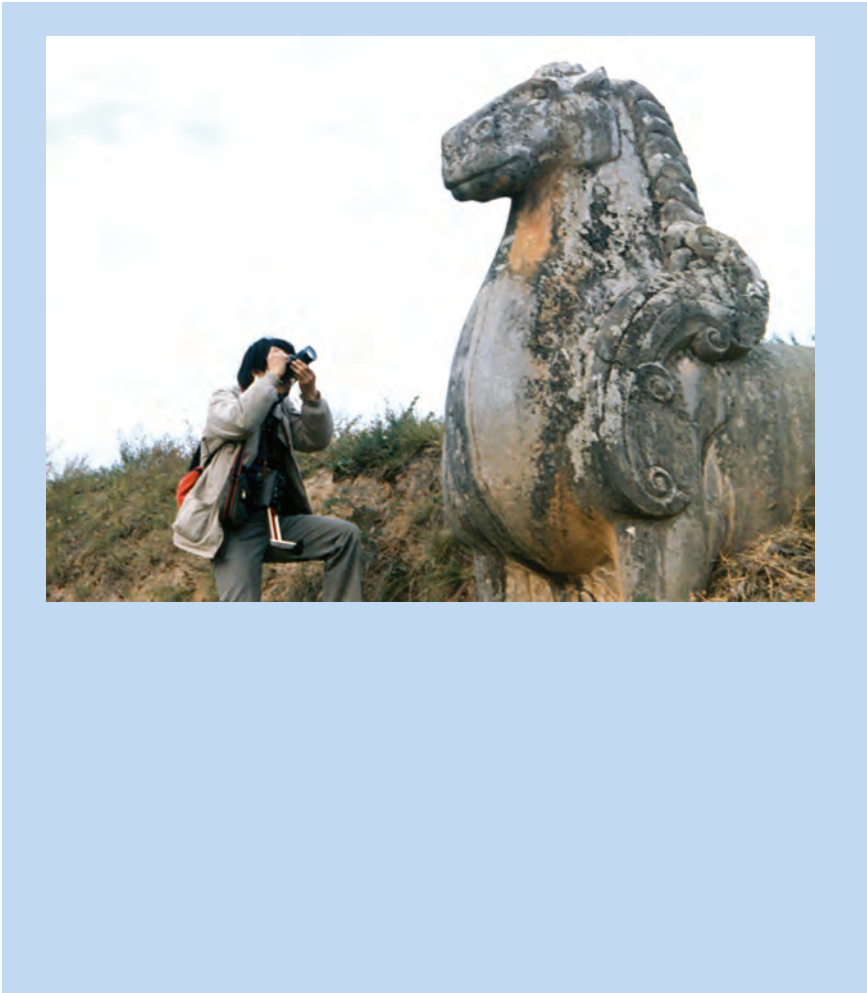
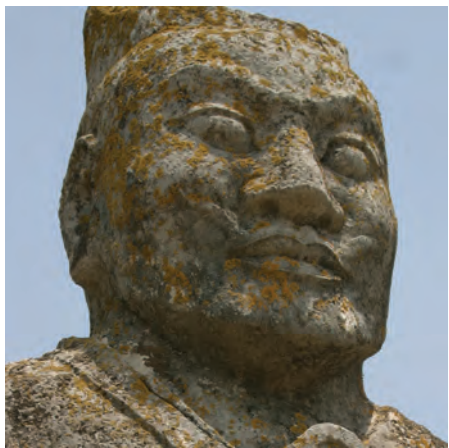
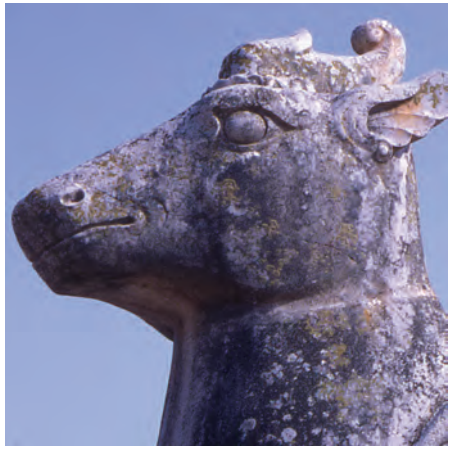
西安美术学院院长、教授 王胜利

《唐陵石刻艺术》是一部美术史论专著，是一部通过对中国唐代陵墓雕刻进行系统和多方面的深层次分析来认识中国艺术和中国文化的著作。本书的学术重点在于分析中国古代陵墓石刻独特的艺术性，以及它们如何艺术地表现了古老中国的宇宙观和自然与人的关系，并将此融汇在对中国古代哲学理念、审美理想、陵寝风俗和历史事件的阐述中。无论是对美术通史的研究，还是对断代史的研究，都有一定的参考和借鉴作用。

为深入研究唐陵雕刻艺术，二十多年里，作者殷泓和孙焱无数次前往唐十八陵踏察。尤其是在1980年代交通和食物都比较匮乏的情况下，克服了很多困难，获得了很多唐陵雕刻的图片资料。在考察北美和欧洲博物馆时，他们也特别专注于流失海外的中国古代石雕刻艺术。两位作者在美国高校继续讲授和研究中国古代艺术史，一如既往钟情于中国古代和当代艺术，特别是汉唐石雕刻艺术的研究，不但将这些内容结合到课程之中，而且还举办过多次展览。其故土情怀愈久愈深。

本书的特点在于它根据第一手研究资料和考察记录，绝大多数图片都是过去二十多年来作者在实地考察中拍摄的。由于自然和人为的各种因素，很多唐陵石雕已经不复存在或者正在侵蚀毁坏，此书对研究唐陵雕刻是弥足珍贵的。

殷泓和孙焱都是王子云先生的西方美术史和中国美术史研究生，现在都任教于美国玛斯金格姆大学。他们对导师王子云先生和何正璜先生的深情怀念都倾注在这本专著之中。我曾两次访问美国，考察了美国高等教育的历史和现状，亲眼目睹了他们在美国大学的研究和教学情况，感受到他们在那种良好的人文环境中在学术领域受到的尊崇完全建立于他们在科研和教学领域的成果，以及他们谦逊朴实、不事张扬的处事风格。本书的出版是西安美术学院科学研究基金资助的重要项目，也是中国西安美术学院和美国玛斯金格姆大学在国际学术交流合作方面的又一个成果。在此祝愿我们校际之间的科研合作能够以此为契机，不断取得新的成果。



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图书在版编目（CIP）数据

唐陵石刻艺术：英文 / 殷泓等著.
西安：三秦出版社，2011.11
ISBN 978-7-5518-0011-2

I. ①唐… II. ①殷… III. ①唐墓—石刻—研究—英文 IV. ①K877.4

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字(2011)第203813号

The Unity of Nature and Humanity
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Sanqin Publishers, Shaanxi Publishing Group

Editor in Chief: Wang Shengli (王胜利)

ISBN 978-7-5518-0011-2

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Cover and interior design by American Art & Culture Publication

唐陵石刻艺术

出版发行 陕西出版集团 三秦出版社

陕西新华发行集团有限责任公司

社址 西安市北大街147号

电话 (029) 87205121

邮政编码 710003

印刷 深圳雅昌彩色印刷有限公司

开本 8

印张 27.5

插页 48

字数 57千字

版次 2012年5月 第1版

2012年5月 第1次印刷

标准书号 ISBN 978-7-5518-0011-2

定价 398.00元

网址 <http://www.sqcbbs.com>

This book is dedicated to the memory of
Professors Wang Ziyun and He Zhenghuang,
our teachers, mentors and friends.
Their guidance and encouragement
have been extraordinary.

唐陵雕刻藝術精神

劉用集題

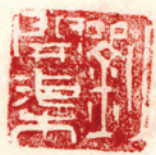


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Preface

The stone sculptures of Chinese imperial mausoleums in the Tang Dynasty (618–907) have a prominent place in the history of sculptural art due to their unique style of aesthetic expression. As glorious achievements of the splendid civilization of China, they express the principles, emotions, and spirit of their human creators. Viewing the Tang mausoleum stone sculptures in the outdoor museum in Central Shaanxi Plain, one is fascinated with the ceremonial columns, civil and military officials, as well as auspicious birds and animals that guard the mausoleums. When the imperial mausoleums were built, feudal political and ethical rules were the major concerns. The artistic values were of secondary importance. However, prescribed by imperial dictate, mausoleum sculptures expressed the aesthetic feelings of people living in the Tang Dynasty.

The Unity of Nature and Humanity - Chinese Mausoleum Stone Sculptures in the Tang Dynasty comes as a result of years of research and writing about the stone mausoleum sculptures of China, especially those of the Tang Dynasty. It is designed to help readers learn about Chinese sculptural art and Chinese culture through an analysis of Tang Dynasty

mausoleum sculptures in the context of Chinese philosophical ideas, aesthetic ideal, burial customs, and historic circumstances. Its focus is on how these sculptures, in their uniqueness, were able to artistically represent the ancient Chinese ideal of correspondence to the order of the universe and the relationship between nature and human being. It explores many questions. How did Chinese philosophical and aesthetic ideas determine the layout of mausoleum complexes? How did Chinese traditional thoughts such as feng-shui influence the selection of imperial mausoleum locations? Why were ceremonial stone sculptures created to guard the imperial mausoleums? What are the meanings of Chinese cultural symbols such as the dragon, phoenix, lion, qilin, and tianlu, etc.? Do mausoleum stone sculptures have aesthetic values?

Features of the Book

The Unity of Nature and Humanity—Chinese Mausoleum Stone Sculptures in the Tang Dynasty is valuable to the research of art history because it is based on first-hand research records and authentic photos from field studies. It can contribute to the study of Chinese art, particularly Chinese sculptures. It provides a new point of view in studying Chinese mausoleum art because it discusses mausoleum sculptures with regard to their artistic and aesthetic values in the cultural context. It analyzes the sculptures as one entity, exposing the humanistic expressions, including cultural, religious, and philosophical components.

This book is meant to reach out to art historians, Asian studies scholars, educators and students, as well as general readers. Information provided in this book can be well integrated into the courses of introduction to Chinese art, philosophy, and culture. One feature of this book is that it contains rich images and intensive explanations of Chinese cultural ideas and symbols.

The Unity of Nature and Humanity—Chinese Mausoleum Stone Sculptures in the Tang Dynasty contains rich photo illustrations. Upon the accomplishment of intensive field studies in 1980s, the authors took a large amount of photos and categorized them. And now, after what these sculptures have endured over the years, these photos are now priceless.



Hong Yin at the Qiaoling Mausoleum during a field study. 1986.

Contents of this book are presented in an approach such that it puts the mausoleum sculptures in a broad context of Chinese culture and its aesthetics. Chinese mausoleum sculptures are not only viewed in a historical perspective but are also analyzed with an awareness that transcends cultural boundaries. The six chapters discuss the Unity of Nature and Humanity, history of Chinese mausoleum sculptures, cultural symbols, and various stages of Chinese mausoleum sculpture development in the Tang Dynasty.

Chapter One provides an overview of the development of Chinese mausoleum ceremonial guardian sculptures from the Qin (221 B.C.–207 B.C.) to the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911). It is also geared toward the origin and essence of the philosophical idea about the Unity of Nature and Humanity based on which the overall mausoleum design and guardian sculptural art had established.

Chapter Two starts with an overview of the twenty-four imperial mausoleums of the Tang Dynasty. It centers on the aesthetics and cultural background of mausoleum guardian sculptures by analyzing various aspects of the unique artistic expression.

Chapter Three gives a vivid description of symbols in Chinese culture; especially the typical figures appearing in mausoleum sculptural art, such as bixie, tianlu, lion, dragon, winged horse, human being, and so forth. It defines them, traces their history, and discusses how they are pervasive in Chinese culture as they served as cultural symbols. It also includes a discussion of the particular art form of mausoleum guardian sculptures from the perspective of art and design.

Chapter Four focuses on the developing stage. Discussion of mausoleum guardian sculptures at six Tang mausoleums provides a logical picture that reflects the growth—how they began; how they showed a variety of characteristics; and how they artistically represented the Tang spirit typical of that time period. The Zhaoling Mausoleum, one that started the mountain-based design tradition, has been given special emphasis.

Chapter Five examines mausoleum guardian sculptures in their flourishing forms through an analysis of four major imperial mausoleums, with illustrative narratives and analysis. It also explores four additional mausoleums that also have typical characteristics of the flourishing form. While this chapter provides an extensive analysis of the mausoleum sculptures, it is far more concerned with conveying a cultural message to the audience.

Chapter Six attempts to establish a vision of special art projects in the declining age: a special time period in which social and economical downsides made a significant impact in mausoleum sculptural art. It includes an analysis of sculptural art of two major mausoleums and seven additional mausoleums dating from 806 to 888.



The authors examine a stone horse at General Huo Qubing's tomb. 1989.



Yan Sun poses with an auspicious animal, Tianlu, during his studies at the Shunling Mausoleum. 1986.



Yan Sun makes a special trip to the west gate of the Qianling Mausoleum to study the lions. 2006.



Hong Yin at the Zhuangling Mausoleum. 1986.

Dedication

We dedicate this book to Professor Wang Ziyun and his wife, Professor He Zhenghuang. We were greatly encouraged and generously guided in the research of mausoleum sculptural art of ancient China by these outstanding scholars.

Professor Wang Ziyun (1897–1990) was Professor of Art History at Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts. He was not only a renowned art educator, art historian and archaeologist but also a great painter and sculptor. A pioneer of archeological research in China and of Chinese contemporary art, Professor Wang Ziyun directed the Northwest China Art and Cultural Research Team in 1940s. During a period of over four years, Wang and his staff conducted research and rescued numerous Chinese art and cultural relics in many provinces, including Sichuan, Shaanxi, Henan, Gansu, and Qinghai. This is among his greatest contributions to Chinese archaeological and art fields. Professor Wang's books include *A History of Chinese Sculptural Art, From Chang'an to Athens*, *Sculptures of the Tang Dynasty*, and *Stone Sculptures of Ancient Shaanxi*.

Professor He Zhenghuang (1914–1994) was a senior curator, advisor, and researcher of the Stele Forest Museum in Shaanxi Province. She was a member of the Northwest China Art and Cultural Research Team and was responsible for field study records, documentation, and publication. Prior to becoming the senior curator of the Stele Forest Museum, Professor He taught at Chengdu Art College in Sichuan Province. Publications of Professor He include *Shaanxi Stone Carvings of the Eastern Han Dynasty* and *Journals of Archaeological Study*.

We had the honor and privilege of being graduate students under Professor Wang Ziyun at Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts. Professor Wang Ziyun led the committee of three advisors. The other two professors were Professor Wang Chongren of Chinese Art History and Professor Xu Feng of Western Art History. During that time, Professor Wang Ziyun was over eighty years of age and often lectured in his study at home. Therefore, we were blessed to also learn a lot from Professor He Zhenghuang. They became more than just teachers to us. They became our mentors and friends.

Professor Wang often emphasized the importance of mausoleum sculptural art of the Tang Dynasty during classes, and that gave Yan Sun great influence when he selected his research direction and topic for his master thesis. The mausoleum sculptural art of the Tang Dynasty gradually became a passion of Yan Sun. Sometimes, he would travel to conduct field studies at some of the mausoleums immediately after Professor Wang Ziyun's lecture. Hong Yin was also fascinated with this type of art and became involved in field studies and research.

To support our research of mausoleum sculptural art, Professor Wang Ziyun provided us with lot of valuable materials, including books, field study records, lecture notes, and photos. When we asked for Professor Wang's permission to use some of his photos in our research publications, Professor Wang and his daughter, Wang Qian, were graceful in granting us permission to reproduce photos from his published work. Original negatives were also offered in the event that the provided photos were not of the best quality. Photos provided by Professor Wang include those of the four steed relief panels of the Zhaoling Mausoleum: "Teqinpiao," "Qingzhui," "Shifachi," and "Baitiwu." Two other steed relief panels, "Saluzi" and "Quanmaogua," were transported to the United States of America in early 1910s. Unfortunately, even Professor Wang Ziyun did not get a chance to see them. Therefore, when Yan Sun came to the United States in 1989, he traveled from Chicago to Philadelphia primarily to see "Saluzi" and "Quanmaogua," – not just for himself, but also for Professor Wang Ziyun.

In 1988, when Professor Wang Ziyun's *A History of Chinese Sculptural Art* was published, he presented us with an autographed copy as a gift. This book covers Chinese sculptural art from prehistoric time to the Qing Dynasty and includes precious firsthand materials from field studies and research. Some of them had been obtained under extremely difficult situations. Many of the sculptures no longer exist as a result of either act of man or act of nature. Therefore, the photos, rubbings, plaster cast, and other research materials left by Professor Wang Ziyun become extremely valuable. The book that Professor Wang gave us not only has academic value but also carries a memorable past.



The authors and their advisor at Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts, Professor Wang Ziyun. 1986.

About the Field Studies

Since the 1980s, we have conducted many field studies at the Tang Dynasty imperial mausoleums and have analyzed the sculptures for their historical and aesthetic value. We traveled to the sites, including those that had been forgotten or ignored by many, even by researchers. Mountain-based design is one of the most important characteristics of imperial mausoleums in the Tang Dynasty. Therefore, field study and survey become very difficult. Modern transportation tools do not make nearly enough impact; many places do not even allow bicycle access. When we carried out field studies in the 1980s, buses only traveled to major towns. We transported ourselves by bicycle or had to hike the mountain passes, in rain, shine, or snow. During the winter weather, the windchill and surrounding conditions led to the dangerous possibility of even frostbite, making it difficult to operate the camera shutter and even harder to hand take notes. Memory served as one of our recording tools during these times. Through motivation, we had the courage to overcome all the difficulties during field study situations like this. We were especially inspired by the field studies conducted by the Northwest China Art and Cultural Research Team directed by Professor Wang Ziyun in 1940s.

The Northwest China Art and Cultural Research Team. Founded shortly after the Anti-Japanese War broke out, twelve scholars formed the team – Professor Wang Ziyun the team leader. The founding time was during the winter of 1939 and the team was sponsored by the government. This was remarkable in the Chinese history of archaeological and art research.

Professor Wang Ziyun was in France when the Anti-Japanese War broke out in 1937. He soon made the decision to return to his motherland, as many patriotic intellectuals did. He arrived in Chongqing in 1939 and suggested to the government to find ways to protect and rescue cultural treasures located in northwest China. The government granted his proposal and invited Professor Wang Ziyun to establish and lead a field study and research team, the Northwest China Art and Cultural Research Team. During a span of over four years, the Team went to Sichuan, Shaanxi, Henan, Gansu, and Qinghai provinces. At every location, they carried out field studies and surveys, took photos, made rubbings, and created plaster cast.¹ Professor Wang and his staff experienced unimaginable difficulties. They had to overcome the shortage of transportation and food; they also had to be prepared for the wild, which included attacks from wild animals in the mountains. Professor Wang Ziyun brought energy and determination to not only protect China's national heritage but also started a new era of archaeological and art research.



In the winter of 1988, Yan Sun conducts a field study at the Xingningling Mausoleum.



Yan Sun at the Qiaoling Mausoleum. 1986.



Hong Yin takes notes at the Zhuangling Mausoleum. 1986.



Yan Sun takes photos at the Chongling Mausoleum (left) and the Zhenling Mausoleum (far left). 1989.

Thirty-seven year later, in the summer of 1986, another research team started their journey to conduct field studies on imperial mausoleum sculptural art of the Tang Dynasty.

The Research Team of Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts. In 1986, Professor Wang Ziyun initially proposed for Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts to conduct field studies of Tang Dynasty mausoleum sculptural art. His advocacy for the mausoleum sculptural art and his scholarly leadership brought great successes of the project. The field studies in 1986 became fundamental to our current book. Professor Wang Ziyun was already eighty-nine years old. Therefore, our other advisor, Professor Wang Chongren guided the research team. The research team of Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts was sponsored by the Academy and was supported by the Cultural Relic Bureau of Shaanxi Province. It consisted of ten members, including professors and Chinese art history graduate students. Hong Yin was the only team member who majored in Western art and her focus was to provide a comparative view of the research.

Before we started the field study trip, Professor Wang Ziyun and Professor Wang Chongren had worked very hard in designing the itinerary, preparing study materials, and analyzing the most important aspects. During the classes, Professor Wang Ziyun discussed the main characteristics of Tang Dynasty mausoleum sculptural art, compared it with those of the other dynasties, especially the Han Dynasty, and analyzed different stages of its development. He also lectured about research methods. In order to help us learn more about the place we would go, Professor Wang Ziyun not only showed us maps and charts that he drew when he conducted field studies but also displayed photos that he treasured for almost forty years. He emphasized that the layout of a mausoleum is the key to start studying a mausoleum. Therefore, he reminded us that upon arriving at a mausoleum location, we would need to draw a map, pinpoint the location and distances of the sculptures, as well as record the characteristics and sizes of the sculptures.

The Team went to Pucheng County, Fuping County, Sanyuan County, and Xianyang City to study many mausoleums, including the Qiaoling Mausoleum, Tailing Mausoleum, Xianling Mausoleum, Zhuangling Mausoleum, Guangling Mausoleum, Jingling Mausoleum, and Jianling Mausoleum. We had spent an exciting and unforgettable summer with other members on the research team.



Yan Sun measures a stone line at the Jingling Mausoleum. 1986.



The Research Team of Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts working at the Dingling Mausoleum. 1986.



As a member of the Research Team of the Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts, Hong Yin poses with a winged horse at the Jianling Mausoleum. 1986.



Professor Wang Chongren guides the Research Team of the Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts. 1986.



Hong Yin takes notes at the Jingling Mausoleum. 1986.



President of Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts, Professor Wang Shengli, and the authors at the Jiānlǐng Mausoleum during a field study in 2011 (top). Professor Wang and Yan Sun posing with a Buddhist stele of the Tang Dynasty (right) at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2010. Chinese sculptures treasured in the Museum were part of their special focus for this trip.



Acknowledgements

Many wonderful individuals helped us prepare this book and we would like to take this opportunity to thank them. Without their contributions, the reality of this project would not have been possible.

First and foremost, we are especially appreciative of Professor Wang Shengli, President of the Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts, who is the chief editor of this book. He has brought his vision and academic aptitude which were essential to make this project a reality.

Special thanks and recognition are presented to our son, Xiao Mark Sun, who has supported this book from beginning to completion by contributing his outstanding work.

We would like to express our gratitude to our advisor at Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts, Professor Xu Feng, for his encouragement and support.

A sincere expression of appreciation is extended to distinguished environmental sculptural artists Wang Sheng and Li Hong. They have generously helped a great deal during our field studies and deserves special recognition.

We gratefully acknowledge Mrs. Wang Qian, a researcher of the Stele Forest Museum and daughter of Professor Wang Ziyun and Professor He Zhenghuang, for her friendship and support.

We acknowledge with gratitude Mr. Li Lanke, who shared his insights on mausoleum sculptural art in the Tang Dynasty.

Many thanks to Professor of Art History at Nanjing Arts Institute and one of the experts who were on the thesis defense committee of Yan Sun, Professor Lin Shuzhong for his encouragement and guidance.

Our thanks are also due to many Museums in the United States of America and Museums in the People's Republic of China. Their support has been extremely valuable.



During field studies, the authors are pictured with their son, Xiao Mark Sun at the Qianling Mausoleum in 2006 (far left) and with artist Wang Sheng at the Shunling Mausoleum in 1987 (left).



Professor Wang Chongren leads the Research Team of Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts in 1986. Pictured here are the authors and Professor Wang at the Shunling Mausoleum.



Hong Yin and Professor Xu Feng at the Temple of Heaven, Beijing. 1984.



Hong Yin and Professor Liu Ruli, Professor Wang Ziyun, and Professor Wang Chongren after her thesis defense in 1987.

In Memoriam

We would like to offer a word of remembrance for Professor Wang Chongren (1931–2009), our advisor, Professor of Chinese Art History, and Chair of Academic Administration at Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts.

Professor Liu Kaiqu (1904–1993), Director of the National Art Museum of China from 1963 to 1993, encouraged our study about mausoleum sculptures. In May of 1988, he wrote “The Spirit of Stone Sculptures of the Tang Dynasty” for us in Chinese calligraphy, which we have been treasured until now.

Professor Liu Ruli (1910–1988) was a remarkable teacher. Hong Yin is grateful having him on her thesis defense committee. He spoke highly of Hong Yin's thesis regarding the Symbolism of the 19th century and encouraged her study of Chinese art.

Figure 3.39 A ceremonial column of the Changling Mausoleum. Ming Dynasty. Beijing.

Figure 3.40 Detail of the ceremonial column in Figure 3.39.



In the Ming and Qing Dynasties, ceremonial columns typically have a magnificent look, with relief dragon and cloud patterns, a cloud panel, and a squatting mythological animal (Figures 3.39 and 3.40).

The overall design of Chinese mausoleums had been based on the thought that the deceased emperors should be served as if they were still alive. Putting ceremonial columns in front of the mausoleums proclaimed the eternal life. The design of the columns

normally favored the square column base and round column head. And its essence was ancient Chinese understanding about the universe, that is, the heaven was round and the earth was square. The common style of the column bodies was octahedral, and they reflect the eight directions of the "Ba-Gua Octagon:" Qian, Kun, Zhen, Xun, Kan, Li, Gen, and Dui. It is a meaningful form that is typically Chinese.

Tang Dynasty artists emphasized emotional expression. They were interested in the visual harmony made possible through romantic ideas and realist methods. And the sculpture, as a whole, had intense spirituality infused in its mass and contour, and it encompassed a wide range of spiritual qualities. Its ultimate goal was to achieve an artistic atmosphere of "riding on clouds with flying dragons for his team, roams beyond the limits of mortality."²⁰ The creativity and imaginative thought of mausoleum sculptural art and its abstract idea and realistic method make it one of the most distinguished art form of Chinese art. A desire for inner working and expression inspired the viewers to recreate imaginatively in their minds, therefore largely intensify its meaning.



Figure 3.41 The stone tablet at the Xianling Mausoleum. Qing Dynasty. Sanyuan County, Shaanxi Province.

The pair of stone lions at Xingningling still exists, though the bottom parts of them are buried in earth (Figures 4.11 and 4.12). The lions' muscular figures combine an imposing verve and a plain character with a simple but weighty artistic style, which was typical of early Tang. The images are in every way sculptural, as we can tell from the treatment of head, chest, and back. This kind of simplicity can also be observed in the mane and hair; they apparently do not bear any similarities with the elaborated mane and hair coils of prosperous Tang sculptures. The artistic method here is centered on the inherent beauty of the stone.

The Xianling Mausoleum — An Amazing Design by the Yan Brothers

“Prosperity of Zhenguan” in the Tang Dynasty made it possible for a new era in sculptural art to flourish; the stone guardian sculptures at Emperor Gaozu's Xianling Mausoleum and the six steeds relief panels at Emperor Taizong's Zhaoling Mausoleum are representative of this time period.

The Xianling Mausoleum is an ode to the first emperor of Tang, Li Yuan (566–635), Emperor Gaozu. It is located in Sanyuan County of Shaanxi Province, only 13 miles north of downtown Sanyuan. Emperor Gaozu was born to a noble family in Chang'an. He was only seven when he succeeded the rank of nobility and gradually built his successful political and military career. Emperor Gaozu achieved success and won recognition of his contribution to another historic unity of China, something that had not happened since the Qin Dynasty.

When Li Yuan died in 635, his son Li Shimin, then Emperor Taizong, issued an imperial edict, ordering that the mausoleum of his father should be built matching the height of the Changling Mausoleum of Western Han.



Figure 4.13 The Xianling Mausoleum. Tang Dynasty. Sanyuan County, Shaanxi Province.



Figure 4.14 Head of the east ceremonial column of the Xianling Mausoleum. Tang Dynasty. Sanyuan County, Shaanxi Province.

The mausoleum eventually was finished at a smaller size due to suggestions from imperial ministers. The trapezoid, heaped burial mound was built according to the tradition that valued the square shape in the Han Dynasty because ancient Chinese had long believed that the sky or the heaven was round and the earth was square. Each side of the Xianling Mausoleum tomb mound is over three-hundred feet long and the height of the mound is about forty-two feet (Figure 4.13).

To praise his father's merits and achievements, Emperor Taizong arranged an unprecedented size and quantity of stone guardian sculptures for the Xianling Mausoleum. Although only a few survived through the ages, viewers are still fascinated with the master hand and grandiosity of sculptures of the Xianling Mausoleum. According to the number and placement of remaining sculptures, there were supposed to be four pairs of stone tigers, one pair of stone rhinoceroses, a pair of ceremonial columns, and a grand stone tablet. The long distance between the ceremonial column and the stone tiger suggests the possibility of other stone sculptures in between, in addition to the stone rhinoceroses.



Figure 95 Detail of the west winged horse of the Jiānlíng Mausoleum in Color Figure 39.

The superb high relief ostrich panels echo those of the Qianling Mausoleum and Tailing Mausoleum (Color Figures 40 and 41). The ostriches look back elegantly on a background of mountains. These are highly decorative characteristics compared with other sculptures of the period.

Experiencing different degrees of damage, only two ceremonial horses

among the five pairs remain in sound condition (Color Figures 42 and 43). They are decorated with round and peach-shape bells at their chests and buttocks. Each of the horses also has a bell around the neck. Unfortunately, the horsemen that accompanied the horses were all damaged.



The authors at the Qianling Mausoleum. 1987.

About the Authors



Hong Yin received her Doctor of Education degree and Master of Science degree at Texas A&M University-Commerce. Hong Yin was awarded a Master of Arts degree with a major in Western art history from Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts and a Bachelor's degree in the Fine Arts from Northwest China Normal University. She was named "Alumni Ambassador" of Texas A&M University-Commerce in 2006.

From 1987 to 1993, Hong Yin was a faculty member of the Department of Art History and Art Theory at Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts, teaching Western art history. In the United States of America, her professional area extended to visual communications. She teaches art history and graphic design at Muskingum University, USA.

Hong Yin's research interests focus on 19th century European art, contemporary art, Chinese mausoleum sculpture, and graphic design. She has authored or coauthored several published books in art history, graphic design, and educational technology, including *The Old Silk Road*, *Contemporary Chinese Painting* (coauthor with Yan Sun) and *An Exploration into Graphic Design*. She is also the translator of two published books of art history: *Primitivism in Modern Art* and *Movements in Art since 1945*.

She has published a series of articles on mausoleum sculptures, such as *Imperial Guardian Statuary of the Qianling Mausoleum in the Tang Dynasty*, *The Six Steeds of the Zhaoqing Mausoleum in the Tang Dynasty*, *Heavenly Horse Sculptures of the Tailing Mausoleum*, *Shunling Mausoleum Stone Lions in the Tang Dynasty*, *Auspicious Animal Sculptures of the Southern Dynasty*, and *The Outdoor Sculpture Museum – Song Dynasty Mausoleum in Gongxian, Henan Province*.



Yan Sun received his Master of Fine Arts degree from Texas A&M University-Commerce, his Master of Arts degree of Art History from Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts, and his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Northwest China Normal University. He was named "Alumni Ambassador" of Texas A&M University-Commerce in 2006.

The Ruth Dorsey Neptune Distinguished Professor of Fine Arts and Director of Art Gallery at Muskingum University, USA, Yan Sun is a recipient of Muskingum University's *The William Oxley Thompson Award for Excellence in Teaching* and *The William Rainey Harper Award for Outstanding Scholarship*.

Yan Sun is also a published and exhibited artist who has shown his paintings nationally and internationally. His artworks appear in books such as *Yan Sun – Cross Culture · Cross Century* and *Life · Time · Space – Yan Sun's Paintings* published by Hayden Museum of American Art.

Yan Sun is the author and coauthor of published art books, including *The Old Silk Road*, *Contemporary Chinese Painting* (coauthored with Hong Yin). His research papers about Tang Dynasty mausoleum sculptures have appeared in research journals, magazines, and newspapers in China and Hong Kong since 1986, including *Northwest Art* (Art research journal of Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts), *Northwest Normal University Research Journal*, and *Artist* (Hong Kong). In 1989, he was invited by Dr. Donald Ruthenberg, president of Columbia College, Columbia, Missouri, to present his paper, *The Vigorous Growth of the Aesthetic of Imagery – The Artistic Characteristics of Chinese Mausoleum Sculptures*, at the Asian Pacific Conference on Arts Education.