

Arts of Asia Lecture Series Fall 2012
The Culture and Arts of China: From the Neolithic Age Through the Tang Dynasty
Sponsored by The Society for Asian Art

Balancing Acts: Arts of the Early to High Tang Period

November 16, 2012

De-nin Lee, Emerson College

Tang Dynasty (618-906)

Important rulers of the Early to High Tang Period (618-756)

Gaozu 高祖, r. 618-26

Taizong 太宗, r. 626-49

Gaozong 高宗, r. 649-83

Wu Zetian 武則天, consort to Gaozong, and “Emperor” of her own declared Zhou dynasty, 690-705

Xuanzong 玄宗 (also known as Minghuang 明皇), r. 712-56

Yang Guifei 楊貴妃, 719-56

An Lushan 安祿山, 703?-57

Key individuals

Zhang Yanyuan (ca. 815-after 875), author of *Lidai minghua ji*, 847

Xuanzong, traveled to India from 629-45

Images

**Tomb Guardian, Lokapala*, one of a pair, glazed low-fired ceramic, Tang dynasty

**Head of a Buddhist Deity*, mural fragment, Tang dynasty, approx. 600-700 (Xinjiang)

Yan Liben (d. 673), attributed, *Emperor Taizong Gives and Audience to Ludongzan, Ambassador of Tibet*, ink and colors on silk, Palace Museum, Beijing

Taizong, *Writing on a Screen: Conversations between Rulers and Ministers of the Past*, rubbing, former Crawford Collection

Vairocana Buddha, Fengxian Temple at Longmen, Cave 19, 672-75

Han Gan (fl. 742-56), *Night-shining White*, ink on paper, Metropolitan Museum of Art

**Dancer*, Xiuging Temple, Henan

**Tomb Sculpture of a Civil Official*, Tang dynasty

Tang officials and foreign emissaries from Tomb of Prince Zhanghuai, ca. 706-11

map of Chang'an (detail from Cave 85, Dunhuang, map of Nara)

plectrum guard showing musicians on an elephant, 8th c., Shoso-in

Yan Liben (d. 673), attributed, *The Thirteen Emperors*, ink and colors on silk, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Wang Xizhi, *Orchid Pavilion Preface*, later copy

Yan Liben, attributed, *Xiao Yi Obtaining the Lanting Preface through Deception*, National Palace Museum

Horse and Groom, relief from Taizong's tomb, University of Pennsylvania

Lady Playing Weiqi, Astana cemetery, Turfan, 8th c.

Female Figure, Tang dynasty

Zhou Fang, attributed, *Ladies Wearing Flowers in Their Hair*, late Tang/Five Dynasties

Emperor Huizong, attributed, *Ladies Beating Newly Woven Silk after Zhang Xuan*, Song dynasty

Court Attendants, mural, Tomb of Princess Yongtai, 706

Li Zhaodao, attributed, *Emperor Minghuang's Flight to Shu*, National Palace Museum

**Dancer*, probably 618-700

**A woman disguised as a man holding a parrot*, Tang dynasty

Female polo player, Musee Guimet
Polo players, mural, tomb of Prince Zhanghuai
 **Seated Musicians, set of four*, approx. 700-750
 **Lady holding an incense-burner*, probably 618-700
 **Incense burner*, porcelain, 600-700
 **Camel*, ca. 690-750
 **Amphora* and **Bird-headed ewer*
 **Cup with a Hunting Scene*, 700-800
 **Mirror with Hunting Scene*, 700-800 (B60B547) [compare to 2010.161]
 •*Elephant and Lion*, molded clay tiles, Tang
 **Pair of Guardians*, 690-750
 **A Buddha, probably Maitreya, flanked by bodhisattvas and attendants*, approx. 650-750
 **Torso of a bodhisattva*, approx. 700-750
Map of Mount Wutai Temples, Cave 61, Dunhuang
Facade of Cave 96, sponsored by Empress Wu
The Western Paradise, Cave 217
Buddha Ensemble, Cave 328
Guanyin, painted banner
Diamond Sutra, woodblock print
 Wang Wei, *Wang Chuan Villa*, rubbing

* denotes in the AAM collection

Readings

Michael Sullivan, "The Sui and Tang Dynasties," in *The Arts of China*, 5th ed. (Berkeley: University of California, 2008).
 Patricia Ebrey, "A Cosmopolitan Empires," in *Cambridge Illustrated History: China*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2010).

Suggested readings

Charles Benn, *Daily Life in Traditional China: The Tang Dynasty* (Westport, Conn.: The Greenwood Press, 2002).
 Craig Clunas, *Art in China*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University, 2009).
 Mark Lewis, *China's Cosmopolitan Empire: The Tang Dynasty* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2009).
 Robert Thorp and Richard Vinograd, "A New Imperial State: Sui and Tang," in *Chinese Art & Culture* (New York: Abrams, 2001).
 Edward H. Schafer, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand: A Study of T'ang Exotics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963).
 Roderick Whitfield and Anne Farrer, *Caves of the Thousand Buddhas: Chinese Art from the Silk Route* (New York: George Braziller, 1990).