Sources of Han Décor

Foreign Influence on the Han Dynasty Chinese Iconography of Paradise (206 BC-AD 220)

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Abbreviations

BMFEA Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities
KG Kaogu 考古
KGXB Kaogu xuebao 考古学报
KGXJK Kaoguxue jikan 考古学集刊
KGYWW Kaogu yu wenwu 考古與文物
M mu 墓 / mogila tomb
NMGWWKG Neimenggu wenwu kao gu 内蒙古文物考古
WW Wenwu 文物
WWZLCK Wenwu ziliao congkan 文物资料丛刊

Chronologies

Early China

Late Shang: c. 14th-mid-eleventh centuries BC
Western Zhou: c. 1050/1040-772 BC
   Early Western Zhou: c. 1050/1040-951 BC
   Middle Western Zhou: c. 950-851 BC
   Late Western Zhou: c. 850-772 BC
Eastern Zhou: c. 771-222 BC
   Springs and Autumns: c. 771-476 BC
      Early Springs and Autumns: c. 771-671 BC
      Middle Springs and Autumns: c. 670-571 BC
      Late Springs and Autumns: c. 570-476 BC
   Warring States: c. 475-222 BC
      Early Warring States: c. 475-391 BC
      Middle Warring States: c. 390-311 BC
      Late Warring States: c. 310-222 BC
Qin: 221-207 BC
Han: 206 BC-AD 220
Western Han: 206 BC-AD 8
  Early\textsuperscript{1} Western Han: c. 206-134 BC
  Middle Western Han: c. 134-62 BC
  Late Western Han: c. 62 BC-8 AD
Wang Mang: AD 9-24
Eastern Han: AD 25-220
  Early Eastern Han: c. 25-89 AD
  Middle Eastern Han: c. 90-154 AD
  Late Eastern Han: c. 155-220 AD

Egypt\textsuperscript{2}
Predynastic: prior to c. 3100 BC
Early Dynastic (Dynasties 1-2): c. 3100-2686 BC
Old Kingdom (Dynasties 3-6): c. 2649-2150 BC
First Intermediate Period (Dynasties 7-11 [partial]): c. 2150-2030 BC
Middle Kingdom (Dynasties 11 [partial]-13): c. 2030-1640 BC
Second Intermediate Period (Dynasties 14-16): c. 1640-1550 BC
New Kingdom (Dynasties 17-19): c. 1550-1070 BC
Third Intermediate Period (Dynasties 19-24): c. 1070-712 BC
Late Period (Kushite Period, Dynasty 25; Saite Period, Dynasty 26; Persian Period, Dynasty 27; assorted, Dynasties 28-30): c. 712-332 BC
Ptolemaic Period: c. 332-30 BC
Roman Rule: c. 30 BC-395 AD

\textsuperscript{1} It is more common to divide according to the reigns of emperors. For the present discussion, however, the identity of the emperor is not relevant; I have therefore divided time into approximately equal periods.
**Mesopotamia (Key Dates)**

Ur Royal Cemetery (Sumer): c. 2600-2100 BC (City-state occupied from c. 5500-400 BC)

Old Assyrian Period: c. 1813-1781 BC

Middle Assyrian Period: c. 1365-1056 BC

Neo-Assyrian Period: c. 883-609 BC

Achaemenid: c. 559/550-330 BC

**Greece (art historical)**

Geometric Period: c. 900-700 BC

Archaic: c. 700-480 BC

Classical: c. 480-323 BC

Hellenistic: c. 323-31 BC

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Chinese Vessel Names*

Bianhu 扁壺 flat hu, similar in form to a circular flask
Ding 鼎 round-bodied tripod
Dui 敦 bowl-shaped vessel for serving grain
Dou 豆 a footed cup-like form with a wide mouth and shallow body, used for serving food
Fanghu 方壺 a hu with a body square in cross-section
Fou 區 a pot to contain alcohol, similar to a lei
Guan 罐 (generic) pot (large body, little or no neck)
Gui 簋 pot-shaped vessel for serving grain
He 盒 box
He 盅 a teapot-like vessel for pouring alcohol
Hu 壺 vase-like form (relatively small body and long neck), commonly for storage of liquid
Jia 父 elongated pouring vessel, usually without a spout (typically, with two knobbed stem-like attachments on the rim)
Lei 瘐 typically, a broad-bodied vessel with a relatively narrow mouth, lidded, for the storage of alcohol
Pan 盤 platter/basin
Xuan 鍅 basin
Yan 煎 steamer
You 午 a lidded container for alcohol
Yu 孟 a basin or broad pot
Zhong 鍾 vase (broader belly than the hu)
Zun 尊 of various forms, but often a broad, flaring-mouthed vessel for alcohol; sometimes identified as for heating alcohol
Zun-pan 尊盤 a zun set inside a basin

* Various guides are available in other works; see also Jean Lefeuvre, Récipients de bronze, d’après les inscriptions sur os et sur bronze, <chinesereferenceshelf.brillonline.com/grand-ricci/files/recipients-bronze.pdf>, accessed June 2017.
Introduction

The Han 漢 dynasty (206 BC-AD 220) stands at an historical juncture as the first unified dynasty to withstand succession between generations of rulers. Culturally poised between the Bronze Age (broadly, c. 1600-221 BC) and what I have termed the Age of Ceramics, it represents an era of transformation and innovation, building to varying extents on the developments of dynastic Qin 秦 (221-206 BC) and the Warring States (c. 475-221 BC). The relationship between Han social and political organization to Qin practices, retraceable through the comparison of received and excavated texts, has been recognized. Much less has been done to examine Han art in an historical context. This may, in part, be due to the paucity of obvious links with earlier Chinese tradition. The few Eastern Zhou (c. 771-221 BC) motifs that may readily be identified (principally the meander/tendril or ‘cloud’ pattern), although widely used during the Han (cf., Figures 1, 13, 28), constitute only a relatively minor aspect of Han art as a whole. Dynastic Qin offers evidence important for an understanding of the transition away from Bronze Age norms, a process continued during the Han, but this evidence is highly fragmentary. In this context, Han art gives the impression of emerging largely ex nihilo. This is true in terms of the dominant media (clay and stone, rather than bronze), the dominant type of objects chosen for the most innovative and complex decoration (walls, rather than vessels), and especially the dominant subject matter: human activity and representations of deities, rather than largely abstract design (with some animal motifs).

Han use of bronze for utilitarian vessels or luxury items, rather than the bronze ritual vessels central in pre-imperial Chinese society to political legitimation and social status, is the expected result of social changes largely completed before the Han. Accordingly, the end of the social dominance of the bronze ritual vessel led to other expressions of affluence, as well as freeing décor from the limits of vessel tradition. The strength of later Bronze Age vessel norms nonetheless persists throughout the Han in terms of the basic categories of vessel forms (hu 壺 vases and ding 鼎 tripods) and the basic compositional tenets of décor (horizontal banding around the body of the vessel – visible on Figure 10 – or the application of pushou 鋪首 animal masks on the side of vessels). At the same time, Han artisans, unlike their predecessors, clearly focused on the development of ceramic vessel production, with innovation in form, thickness

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1 E.g., Loewe 2010.
2 Absent an inscription, it is difficult to ascertain the purpose for which the vessels found in Han graves were made. I assume that undecorated pots whose shapes are unrelated to earlier ritual ware are simply utilitarian. In some cases, the bottom of excavated pots (both bronze and earthenware) is marked with soot, indicating that they were used, presumably more than once. This suggests to me that such pieces were intended for practical purposes, rather than for ritual connected with the burial in which they were found. See Psarras 2015: 34, 76-77; see also Lin (ed.) 2012: 316-317, No. 190.
4 For the dominance of ritual bronzes on vessel forms and décors, see Falkenhausen 2006. Little early data in perishable media has survived, but examples of the application of bronze décor to other types of objects in other media include: Houjiazhuang 候家莊 (Anyang 安陽, Henan) HPKM1001 (c. 13th-12th centuries BC) and Lijiazui 李家嘴 (Panlongcheng 盤龍城, [Huangpi 黃陂, Wuhan 武漢, Hubei] M2 (c. 16th-14th centuries BC), both wood coffins (Beijing 1979: Pl. 27, Lijiazui M2 coffin imprint shown, top; comparative bronze décor from M1, bottom); Pl. 28, Houjiazhuang); Shangcunling 上村嶺 (Sanmenxia 三門峽, Henan) M2118 and 2119 coffin banners, c. 9th-early 8th centuries BC (Henan 1999b, Vol. 2; Col. Pl. 43, M2118; Col. Pl. 44, M2119); Xiadu 下都 (Yi 雲, xian 縣, Hebei: inter alia, Hebei 1996, Vol. 2: Pl. 12-14, Laoyemiaotai 老爺廟臺 habitation site V, c. 4th century BC; Pl. 16:4-6, Laoyemiaotai habitation site V, c. 3rd century BC; Pl. 17:3-4, Laoyemiaotai habitation site 25, c. 4th century BC).
of the walls, and surface treatment (such as glazes). More importantly, vessel décor no longer dominated the décor of objects in other media.

The most obvious Han innovation – often taken as defining Han art – is the development of figural or narrative art, most frequently known to us from tomb murals executed as stone bas reliefs and stamped bricks (paintings are more rare). Attempts to understand the development of this aspect of Han art are complicated not only by the paucity of earlier figural elements, but by the overwhelming association of composition and context: so strong is the association of Han narrative art and the tomb that the subject matter, as well as the use of murals, is often assumed to be ritual in character. Subject matter and the context in which it is displayed thus become largely inseparable. In this way, despite obvious differences in context and media, a certain equivalence between the Bronze Age ritual vessel and the Han tomb mural tends to emerge. Han figural or narrative art thus tends to be viewed as a sociological concern, emphasizing the meaning of the images (or the reason they were used), rather than their derivation. This pursuit in turn largely depends on connecting images to passages in transmitted texts, which, in fact, offer remarkably little relevant information. Even the mythological geography of the *Shanhaijing* is difficult to place in context; certainly, it does not furnish a description of religious beliefs. This dearth of objective points of reference for Han dynasty interpretations of images applies all the more so to the Eastern Zhou era – and to the cultures beyond China through whom the images were transmitted. Furthermore, although connected at various stages in their history and combined into a harmonious whole by the Han, we have no reason to view the images as a single, set unit throughout their history, in all of the cultures where variants appear. Their likely transmission to China through multiple cultures suggests the reverse. It would therefore be a mistake to interpret their diffusion as paralleling that of Buddhism, whose adoption in China exceeds the scope of the present work. Here, I propose to examine only questions surrounding the emergence of these images in China, a problem that can only be addressed archaeologically, leaving analysis of image meaning to other scholars. Indeed, archaeologically-based conclusions may ultimately modify the way the transmission and further development of image meaning will be seen.

In these terms, the Han tomb mural can be broken down into three components: context (the tomb), form (the mural), and subject matter. Each of these three components has a separate

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5 In ceramics, this is particularly visible in broad experimentation with surface treatment, as well as with the production of highly-finished variants of standard forms and experimentation with elaborate new structures, such as the multi-juan pot (miniature pots attached to the main vessel). Examples of highly-finished forms, fine clay bodies, or fine glazes include: Zhongguo taoci 2000: Pl. 123, Shaoxing porcelain (jiangxi), stoneware/porcelain (ci) hu or zhong: Pl. 141, Shanghai Museum; 142, Zaijiadun 鄒家墩 (Hanjiang 邗江, Yangzhou 楊州, Jiangsu); Pl. 144, Shangyu 上虞 (Zhejiang) Cultural Relics Management Committee, stoneware/porcelain, light-colored glaze.


7 Powers 1991 suggests an association between political views and use of specific images; however, the images he cites may be found elsewhere in China, executed in different styles. For discussion, see Psarras 2015: 34-59.

8 Hsing I-tien 2005 is a fine exception; Nickel 2012, 2013, in general terms.

9 For annotations and discussion, see Mathieu 1983.
derivation. Although in this research I shall focus on elements of subject matter – specifically, on individual images that recur frequently in different compositions, a brief introduction to the problems of context and form helps to clarify the narrower analysis.

While the use of murals in tombs became popular during the Han, fragmentary evidence from the excavations of Qin palaces at Xianyang (Shaanxi)\(^\text{10}\) indicates that murals (paintings and stamped bricks) were used at least during the dynastic Qin in living architecture. Although they provide only limited information about composition, the Qin fragments provide a prototype for the mural as a form, as well as for the use of narrative imagery, to which we will return. We have no evidence as to the possible use of murals in the pre-imperial period; in contrast, narrative scenes applied to other substrates do occasionally occur. Further, although again we lack evidence, the Qin fragments, which include figural décor, suggest that murals were also featured in Han dynasty palaces and (by extension) aristocratic residences. Indeed, some use of ornamented brick or stone in Han living architecture is confirmed by the stamped brick flooring in the Han city at Chongan (Fujian),\(^\text{11}\) with a geometric décor closely related to Bronze Age ornamental patterns.

The earliest Han murals now known are the figural paintings on silk which lined the wood box burial chamber of Mawangdui (Changsha, Hunan) M3 (168 BC).\(^\text{12}\) Given the fragility of the fabric and the pigments used in painting, such work may not have survived in other tombs. In addition, the high social rank of the deceased in Mawangdui M3, believed to be a son of the Marquis of Dai (Mawangdui M1), raises the question of how widely such paintings may have been distributed in Han society. The widespread adoption of tomb murals attested later in the archaeological record appears to result from a decision to use more durable materials for such décor. This seems to have resulted in a broader range of quality, with documented examples of stones and bricks with a décor ranging from simply-drawn, single motifs (geometric or figural) to complex scenes sustained over several panels (read as representations of paradise or the residence of the deceased – or the two combined). Such variation suggests the availability of artisans of differing technical abilities, presumably at differing levels of cost. Although it is difficult to assess the social status of most decorated tombs (many, if not most, have been thoroughly robbed), the sheer number of murals known today leads me to conclude that such work must have become accessible to a broader cross-section of society than paintings on silk like those in Mawangdui M3.

The production of stone and brick murals seems to have emerged in connection with the development during the Han of what I have called architectonic tombs in stone and brick, a distinctive form approximating in many respects a miniaturized house. Although so strongly identified with the Han, architectonic tombs coexisted with the flat-topped, compartmented wood box tombs characteristic of Bronze Age aristocratic burials not only in the early Western, but through the early Eastern Han (c. late 3rd century BC-2nd century AD).\(^\text{13}\) They vary in size and in complexity of layout (the number of rooms, the use of connecting hallways), as well as in the treatment of the roof. If the body of these tombs may be related to Han living architecture, this architecture, as we understand it primarily from the models and drawings of buildings

\(^{10}\) Ma Jianxi 1990; Shaanxi 2004.

\(^{11}\) Fujian 1990: 355, Fig. 13, building 1 (T7[3]:31).

\(^{12}\) Zhang Zhenglang, Fu Juyou, and Chen Songchang 1992: 26-34.

\(^{13}\) For a discussion of Han tomb structures, see Psarras 2015. For steppe influence on the Han aristocratic use of the burial mound, see Rawson 1999.
in many tombs, offers no parallel for the use of the curved archways, vaulting, and domes characteristic of the architectonic tomb. Even more than Han art, the architectonic tomb seems a new invention, without Chinese precedent. This lack of precedent suggests to me the self-conscious development of new structures; the apparent lack of Chinese prototype for the roofing, in particular, convinces me that these tombs reflect the selective assimilation of foreign influence. The development of Han art may have been less self-conscious, but the role of foreign influence is at least equally significant and more readily traceable.

Eastern Zhou yields scattered examples of narrative or figural décor: hunting and other animal scenes featuring humanoid – rather than human – creatures (as in Figures 4, 5, 7, 10), people engaged in presumably ritual activities against an architectural background, animals interacting with other animals, and, even more rarely, a host of floral motifs (primarily represented on embroidered silks from Mashan 馬山 [Jiangling 江陵, Jingzhou 荆州 Municipality, Hubei]14; see Figures 63, 64, 65). All of these constitute a sharp, intrusive departure from the norms of Chinese Bronze Age ornamentation. Direct carryover into the Han appears largely limited to more narrative depiction of animals (especially animal predation – as in Figures 6, 32, 38, in which a feline or other animal predator attacks a hooved animal such as a goat or horse) and, rarely, of humanoid figures assumed from their attributes (thunderbolts, for example) to represent deities (cf., Figure 1). The latter appear in an Eastern Zhou style in a mural fragment from the Qin dynasty palace site (Xianyang Municipality, Shaanxi) and again on a silk manuscript Mawangdui (Changsha Municipality, Hunan) M3.15

The animal-based images have been widely recognized as steppe-derived;16 the floral motifs have, as far as I know, not attracted scholarly attention. No convincing origin has been proposed for the other elements. Close examination of Eastern Zhou figural work does, in fact, yield connections with Han narrative art. How this is so becomes evident only when both Eastern Zhou and Han art are broken down into discrete compositional elements that may be seen to have been used repeatedly in different contexts. As in the problem of identifying Eastern Zhou narrative elements in Han art, the question of the origin of these elements may be further obscured by the clearly Chinese context in which they are sometimes placed: in the depictions of people, for instance, the garments worn and the buildings shown are all identifiable as Chinese by comparison to depictions and three-dimensional models found in Eastern Zhou and Han tombs.17 It is important, however, not to confuse the Chinese context applied to the scenes with the origin of specific components or, indeed, the composition as a whole.

14 Hubei 1985.
15 Shaanxi 2004: 220, Fig. 201, Qin palace find; Zhang Zhenglang, Fu Juyou, and Chen Songchang 1992: 35, Mawangdui (Changsha Municipality, Hunan).
16 As recognized by Institute of Archaeology of Shanxi Province 1996: 16-17, 83-84, which also acknowledges in passing the possibility of iconographic influence from Egypt, the Near East, and Central Asia. Weber 1968 reviews then-available Eastern Zhou material, minimizing the potential for foreign influence. Bunker 1983-1985 and Jacobson 1988, for example, reprise aspects of the question of sino-steppe exchange. For steppe influence on the Han, including art, see Pirazzoli-t’Serstevens 1994, 2008; Rawson 2012.
17 For three-dimensional models, for the Warring States, see Hebei 1996, Vol. 2: Col. Pl. 51, find from the Xiadu site, state of Yan 燕 (Yixian, Hebei), 64G043, bronze figure; Col. Pl. 52-53, Xiadu find 67DG0160, bronze fittings in the form of buildings; for the Han, see Hong Kong 2015: 82, Mawangdui (Changsha Municipality, Hunan) M1, painted wood figures; 83-85, Yangling 陽陵 site (Xianyang Municipality, Shaanxi), unnumbered tomb, earthenware figures with engobe décor; 102-103, Daiwangxiang 立舉乡 (Jiaozuo 焦作 Municipality, Henan), earthenware architectural model with engobe décor; 104, Hongqiling 紅旗嶺 (Hepu 合浦, Guangxi) M2, earthenware model house; 105, Tielu 新村 (Guigang 貴港 Municipality, Guangxi) M3, earthenware model residence; 125, Mawangdui (Changsha Municipality, Hunan) M1, painted wood figures.
The most important of these elements are animal predation, typically a feline attacking a hooved animal (Figure 32); the animal master, a humanoid creature flanked or surrounded by animals (Figure 3); and the tree of life, a tree or tree-like shape, likewise flanked or surrounded by animals (Figure 25). In addition, a substantial number of floral or vegetal motifs also recur. Together, these form the core of one of the most fundamental of Han iconographies: the depiction of paradise. Although Chinese prototypes are lacking, these image components are readily recognizable in the context of the ancient Near East, Egypt, and the Mediterranean, as early as the 3rd millennium BC, followed later by the steppe. In these regions, the animal master, tree of life, and animal predation serve as central iconographies, remaining in use over millennia, recast in different ways, with different meanings attached at various times. In Han hands, these motifs again assume central iconographic importance, with a single image often being adapted in numerous ways: the animal master becomes not only the Queen Mother of the West (西王母 xī wáng mǔ), sovereign deity of the western paradise, but simultaneously her consort, the King Father of the East (東王公 dōng wáng gōng) (Figure 14), as well as the various genii (to use the Western term) that inhabit the meanders of the Mawangdui (Changsha Municipality, Hunan) M1 black lacquered (outer) coffin (Figure 1) and the Mancheng (Hebei) M1:5182 gilded bronze boshanlu 博山爐 mountain-shaped incense burner. Thus, even though these creatures are not identical in Chinese terms, all represent adaptations of the image of the animal master. The tree of life, in turn, becomes, in sculptural form, the branching ‘money trees’, while animal predation (together with related animal images) becomes the subordinate of both the animal master and the tree of life.

To these central elements, Han artisans add a variety of motifs – primarily animal and plant forms – which, outside of China, occupy a more purely ornamental status. Some are as old and as widely-adopted in the ancient world outside of China as the animal master; others emerged in the Hellenistic world (c. 323-31 BC). (Steppe art rarely makes use of floral forms.) Some, again like the animal master, first appear in Chinese work during the Eastern Zhou, but only rarely, becoming widespread during the Han. Indeed, Han development of these décors suggests that foreign motifs first adopted by Eastern Zhou artisans may well have been subsequently reintroduced, perhaps repeatedly. In this context, it is therefore likely that Chinese contact with foreign cultures, over an extended period and extended distances, was the norm, not the exception.

International contact remains little studied in the context of Bronze Age and early imperial China, apart from the advent of Buddhism and obviously-foreign imports, neither of which will be examined here. In contrast, international exchange of various kinds has been intensely explored in recent decades for the Near East, Mediterranean, and adjacent territories. In these areas, long-distance trade in raw materials has been well documented, as has cultural

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18 As on the Wu family shrines (Jiaxiang 嘉祥, Shandong): Liu Xingzhen and Yue Fengxia 1991: 16, Queen Mother of the West; 32, King Father of the East, both Wu Liang 武梁 shrine; 67, Queen Mother of the West (? image unclear); 55, King Father, both Front shrine; 92-93, King Father, Left shrine.
21 For multiple images (and a different approach), see Erickson 1995.
22 Recent studies of note include Zhao Deyun 2016, Hong Quan 2012, Li Ling 2014, Li Jaang 2011, Liu Yang 2013. Such research is more common in the study of early Xinjiang (Li Shuicheng 1999; Wu 2009; Lin Meicun 2015), but of course Xinjiang was not Chinese.
influence transmitted by the flow of objects and artisans. To cite only one example of trade, lapis lazuli, mined in Afghanistan as early as the early 3rd millennium BC, was exported as a raw material to Egypt, Mesopotamia (Iraq-Syria), as well as to Sistan (eastern Iran), where it was processed and subsequently exported in the form of finished goods. The development of the animal master, tree of life, and animal predation, more complex than trade in raw materials or finished goods, covered similar distances. In the more familiar period of the Achaemenid (550-330 BC) and Alexander the Great (reigned 336-323 BC), if not before, Greek and Persian influence permeated northern India and parts of Central Asia, including Bactria (northern Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan), and extended into the Altaian culture of Pazyryk (c. 5th-3rd centuries BC) and the Xiongnu (c. 4th century BC-3rd century AD) of the Far Eastern steppe (primarily Inner Mongolia, Mongolia, south Siberia). I shall not attempt to summarize here the complexities of these exchanges, but refer interested readers to readily-available scholarship.

The extent of these interregional exchanges, both geographically and chronologically, should raise parallel questions for China, all the more so given that territories contiguous to China (as in those of the Xiongnu and, indeed, Xinjiang) were part of the western equation. How can we assume that China did not have significant contact with, for instance, Central Asia long before Zhang Qian’s 張騫 assignment (c. 138 BC) to the Western Regions (xiyu 西域, essentially modern Xinjiang) or with India long before the introduction of Buddhism into China (traditionally, c. 1st century AD)? Certainly, Zhang’s reports changed Han diplomacy, bringing a more detailed awareness of foreign cultures to the attention of the court (and, thus, the historian), but this change may well have affected primarily the central government and its immediate circles, not what might be termed private experience and private enterprise. Unfortunately, the current archaeological record in and immediately around China rarely allows narrow identification of the paths of intercultural contact. As more field work and more analysis are completed, we may hope that greater precision becomes possible. Nonetheless, the effects of such contact are already clearly visible and awaiting examination.

23 Moorey 1999: 86; see also Francfort 1993.
24 E.g., at Shahr-i-Sokhta: Weiss (ed.) 1985: 153-154, No. 54 (entry by K. Kohlmeyer). Kohlmeyer also notes Afghanistan as a source of the carnelian exported as a raw material to Mesopotamia, where it was subsequently worked; and on p. 165, No. 71 and 166, No. 72, trade in steatite vessels from southern Iran, where evidence has been found of mines and workshops, with the vessels subsequently traded throughout Iran, Mesopotamia, and the Persian Gulf. All of these examples date to c. 2900-2500 BC. Other sources on the subject include (inter alia) Aruz, Benzel, and Evans (eds) 2008, Aruz, Graff, and Rakic (eds) 2013, Aruz, Graff, and Takic (eds) 2014, Collon 1987, 1995, Moorey 1999, Muscarella 1988.
25 Substantial literature is readily available on these questions, including Sideris 2008; Bernard 1987.
26 Rudenko 1970 emphasizes Achaemenid cultural influence on Pazyryk, primarily as a means of dating the site; cf., Curtis and Tallis 2005: 47-48; Boardman 2000: 200-202. It must be noted that the dating of Pazyryk remains highly controversial, with multiple new runs of radiocarbon analyses: consensus now seems to be c. 300-250 BC for the Pazyryk kurgans, with related Altaian sites presumably earlier (Parzinger et al. 2008: 15).
27 For the Xiongnu, see Psarras forthcoming.
29 Since most extant figural data from the Eastern Zhou often occurs as vessel décor on pieces found in excavated tombs, dating is often possible by inscriptions on the vessel (subject to problems of interpretation) or, more frequently, through cross-dating established by other objects in the same tomb. In contrast, most Han murals occur in tombs which cannot be dated unless the structure has been inscribed with the date of the death or burial of the occupant, or the date of construction of the tomb. Most figured tombs are not date-inscribed and, thoroughly robbed over time, no longer yield objects which may provide a date. Thus, questions such as whether certain regions of China were more open to certain influences cannot now be answered.
The terminology I have adopted is commonly used in Western languages, particularly with reference to early versions of these images, before they became recognizably associated with specific gods, kings, heroes, or landscapes. Such terminology thus allows for identification of the images with minimal cultural association. My use of the term “paradise” is similarly neutral, without reference to any school of thought, simply indicating the place where supernatural or fantastic beings and creatures may be found, whatever their relationship to the human world.

In this work, I offer analysis of the development of key images in Han figural art. Most of these reflect foreign influence, whether received in China during the Eastern Zhou, the Qin, or during the Han. Ideally, this discussion would be fully illustrated to allow easy comparison of relevant objects. Alas, this is impossible, not only because of the volume of illustrations required, but because of the high cost of reproducing images from some museums (the British Museum, for instance, considers scholarly publications to be commercial and therefore not exempt from fees) and publishers (particularly Wenwu). I am grateful to the J. Paul Getty Museum (Malibu, CA) and The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York), whose open access programs allow reproduction of photographs published online of specified objects in their collections. Research for this article was begun with a Summer Stipend grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities under grant no. FT-40420 (1994), gratefully acknowledged, and continued with the incalculable, unwavering support of my mother, the late Mrs. Mary E. Psarras. My thanks are also due to the editors and reviewers whose generous comments were most helpful as I prepared this manuscript for publication. As always, any errors are naturally my own.

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30 For questions of the meaning of these iconographies in the Near East, cf., Collon 1987; and, in the steppe, cf., Dumézil 1978.

31 British Museum, terms of use of site images <https://www.britishmuseum.org/about_this_site/terms_of_use/copyright_and_permissions.aspx>, viewed June 2016; no waiver is allowed (personal communication, 14 June 2016).