

*The  
Rodnay A. Horne  
Collection  
of  
Chinese Art*

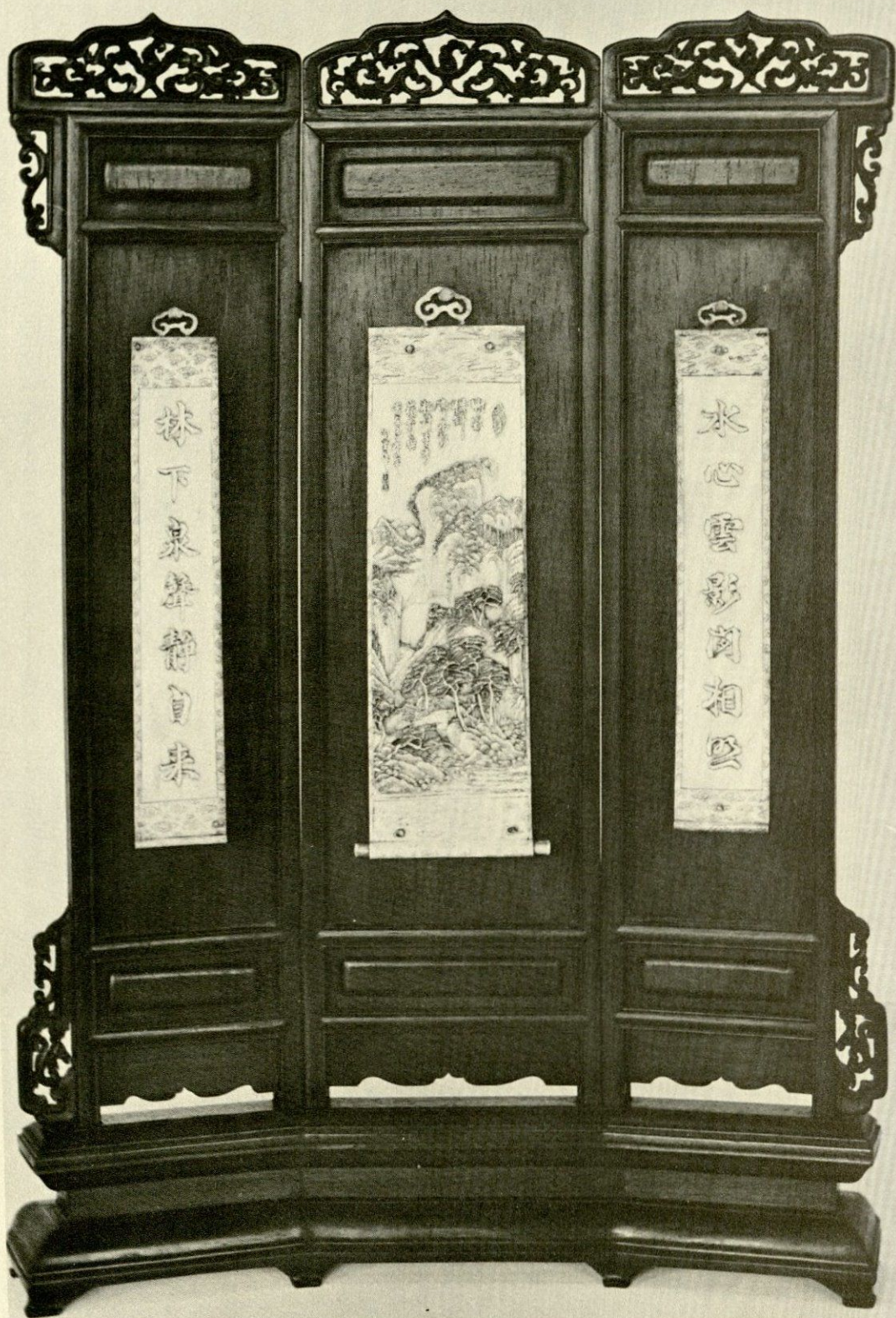












I. TRIPTYCH (#2)



*The Rodney A. Horne Collection  
of  
Chinese Art*

September 12 to October 13, 1968







## FOREWORD

The Rodnay A. Horne Collection of Chinese Art is a bequest to the University Art Gallery of the State University of New York at Binghamton by Mrs. Caroline M. Horne in memory of her late husband.

The Rev. Mr. Horne gathered these pieces when he was living in Shanghai in the 1930's. Born in Windsor, Ontario, in 1902, Mr. Horne went to the Orient in 1932. In 1939 he was called to the Royal Navy and served for two years in British Naval Intelligence. In 1941 when Britain declared war on Japan, he was imprisoned, but after a year was exchanged and repatriated to Britain. His collection was preserved by a Portuguese friend until after the war and eventually forwarded to him through diplomatic channels.

Mr. and Mrs. Horne first met in Shanghai, where Mrs. Horne was employed as a laboratory technician at St. Elizabeth's Hospital. They were married in 1943. Mr. Horne was ordained to the Episcopal ministry in 1947. He served as rector of parishes in Wallace, Idaho, and Lexington, North Carolina. He died in 1963.

Mrs. Horne is the sister of the late Marjorie L. Pitcher, wife of Dr. Seymour M. Pitcher, Professor of English at SUNY-Binghamton. After the death of her husband she was employed as a laboratory technician at Packer Memorial Hospital in Sayre, Pennsylvania, and is now serving in that capacity at the Presbyterian Hospital in Charlotte, North Carolina.

The Horne Bequest was the first major gift presented through the University Arts Committee, a committee which was established by President Bruce Dearing shortly after he took office.

Michael Milkovich  
Director, University Art Gallery

Kenneth Lindsay  
Chairman, University Arts Committee  
1966-68



## INTRODUCTION

The Rodnay A. Horne Collection of Chinese Art can be generally described as an assemblage of decorative arts, objects that would have been found in temples and the houses of the Chinese upper class. The Collection covers a wide range of media: ivory carving; ceramics; wood carving; bronzes; textiles. It includes objects dating from the 7th or 8th to the 20th century, originating from Tibet, Mongolia and Manchuria, as well as China Proper.

The earliest works in the Collection, and among the most important, are the T'ang Dynasty ceramics (cat. no.'s 14-17). This period (618-907) is significant for the vitality of its political, economic and social development, a climate in which the arts flourished. The confidence and vigor of style characteristic of the T'ang period is reflected in the Horne Collection pieces, which are made of earthenware and painted with the famous *sans' ai*, or three-color, glazes. These ceramics are comparable in quality to similar works in major museums in this country.

The greater part of the Horne Collection dates from the late Ming and Ch'ing Dynasties. The Ming period (1368-1644) followed an era of foreign domination by the Mongols (Yuan Dynasty, 1280-1368); it was marked by a revival of native power and strong centralization. There was generous patronage for the arts, which included the building of an Imperial kiln, important in the production of porcelains throughout the Ming and Ch'ing periods. Under the Ch'ing Dynasty (1644-1912) China was ruled by the Manchus of Manchuria. They were likewise sponsors of the arts and preserved a continuity with the creative atmosphere of the preceding era.

Artists applied their aesthetic concepts and superb technical virtuosity to all manner of objects. Simple ink sticks (cat. no. 22) become a painted screen of peonies and foliage; the ink stone is shaped to form a peach (cat. no. 23). Medical balls for arthritic fingers (cat. no. 4) are molded from elaborate scenes carved from a single piece of ivory.

The complex development of court ranks that occurred under the Manchus was accompanied by an emphasis on official costume, and, as a result, the art of embroidery flourished. There are several tapestries in the Horne Collection to reflect this achievement (cat. no.'s 29-39).

As the Horne Collection works were intended for domestic or decorative uses, they provide important insight into the aspirations of those people for whom they were made. The decoration of the objects abounds in symbolism of a good life: the bat for good fortune; the peony for affection and feminine beauty; the butterfly for conjugal felicity. The round symbol of longevity appears frequently, for example on the table screen (cat. no. 1) and the marriage or theatrical dress (cat. no. 39). The chimera (cat. no.'s 10 and 11) is a traditional Chinese symbol of ideal marriage and fertility.



Religious elements are also prominent in the symbolism of the Horne Collection pieces; indeed, some were specifically intended for temple use, as the Buddhist altar valance (cat. no. 30) and baldachin (cat. no. 31), probably used together in a Buddhist Imperial temple. Alongside the objects associated with Buddhism, which was imported into China from India in the First Century, A. D., and reached its culmination during the T'ang Dynasty, are works decorated with symbols of the native Chinese Taoism, such as the brass mirror (cat. no. 12) and the table valance illustrating the Taoist "hundred antiquities" (cat. no. 33). A third religious element represented is Lamaism, a form of Buddhism practiced in Tibet and later in Mongolia. With the Mongol conquest of China during the Yuan Dynasty, it was followed extensively in Peking. The Manchus of the Ch'ing Dynasty also practiced Lamaism. As a result, Lamaist objects were common in Peking. The Horne Collection includes three: the ritual tea bowl (cat. no. 7), the ceremonial daggers (cat. no. 8), and the Lamaist temple hanging (cat. no. 29).

On the following pages the thirty-nine objects that comprise the Horne Collection of Chinese Art are described in some detail. The catalogue is based upon the excellent notes on the Collection prepared by Prof. Chu-tsing Li of the University of Kansas Department of the History of Art. Acknowledgment is also made to the information provided by Mr. Frank Caro of New York City, and to the text of Sherman E. Lee, *A History of Far Eastern Art*, New York, 1964, for various historical references on the preceding pages.

Mary R. Webster







## CATALOGUE

### 1. TABLE SCREEN

Early 20th century  
Blackwood and red lacquer  
Ht. 16 1/2 inches; diam. of roundel, 6 3/4 inches.

Screens of this kind were common decorative pieces in Chinese homes of the recent past. They were generally used as the centerpiece of a high table facing the main entrance to the house, against the back wall of the living room.

The screen is rich in the symbolism of a happy life. The red lacquered roundel is carved in relief and depicts several children posed, adultlike, in a landscape. The scene could have reference to the good and the quiet life, with idyllic connotations, and simultaneously symbolize the good fortune of having many male offspring.

The blackwood screen is carved with floral motifs, related to the idea of longevity, the round symbol of which appears in the center of the base of the stand.

### 2. TRIPTYCH

Plate I

19th century  
Ivory and rosewood  
16 3/4 x 11 3/4 inches

The form of the triptych, consisting of a large painting, flanked on each side by a calligraphic scroll, is typical of Chinese domestic decoration. It is hung on the main wall of the living room, usually facing the entrance. The Horne Collection screen, with its carved ivory scrolls, is representative of this idea in miniature; it reflects the taste of the literati in China.

The central landscape, executed in high relief, is derived from the orthodox school of the early Ch'ing period, perhaps the work of Wang Hui (1632-1717), which drew its own inspiration from Yuan Dynasty artists of the late 14th century.

The characters on the screen read as follows:

right scroll: "Leisurely cloud-reflections illumine each other in the heart of water."

center scroll: (Seal) "Literary enjoyment."

"Criss-crossing each other, bamboo shadows stir outside the pavilion.

Green and luxuriant, pine needles hang down in front of the mountain.



In the year *chi-mo* (1819 or 1879)  
By Jun-sheng." Seal: "Shih-chung."

left scroll: "Quietly the sound of the spring comes solitarily under the woods."

These inscriptions are good examples of *tui* or "parallels," a classic Chinese literary form, in which two poetic lines have not only the same number of characters, but also exactly parallel constructions and images, or ideas. This parallelism can easily be discovered in the two lines of the central panel, as well as in the two scrolls of calligraphy.

### 3. THE FOUR SEASONS

19th century  
Ivory  
Ht. 8 inches

The Four Seasons is a standard theme in Chinese decorative arts. The seasons are denoted by the flowers that the maidens hold: prunus for Spring; lotus for Summer; chrysanthemum for Autumn; and bamboo for Winter.

The figures are finely carved of ivory, a special art of the Canton region because of its accessibility to Southeast Asia and India from whence the ivory must be obtained. The four figures stand independent of each other, while at the same time they are united in a graceful composition by the complementary rhythms in the lines of their robes and sashes, their hands and the flowers they carry.

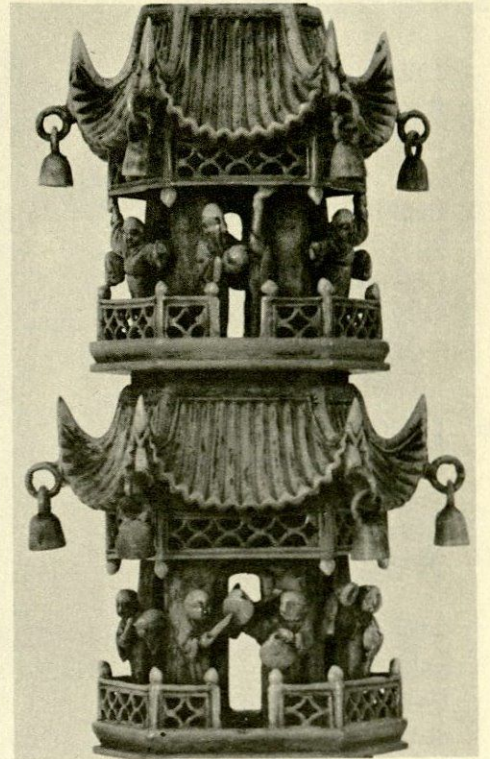
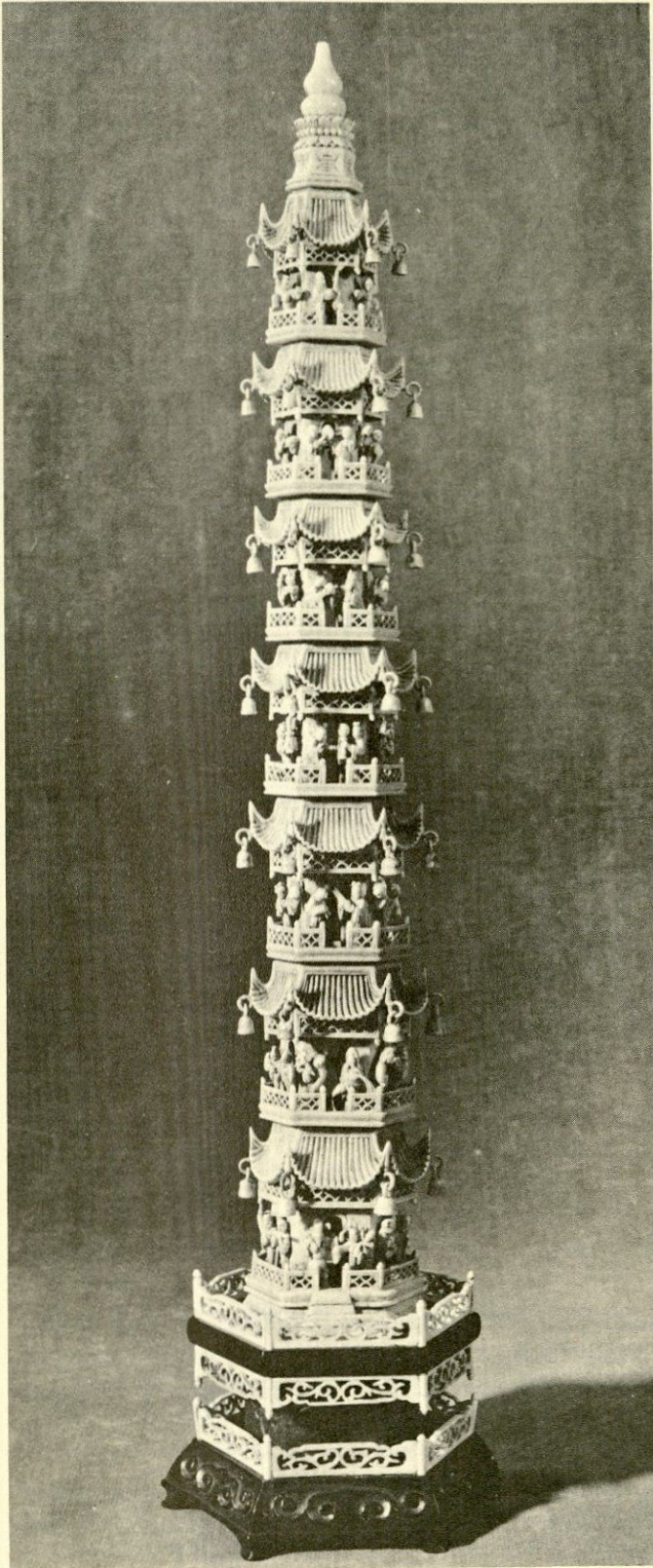
### 4. MEDICAL BALLS

18th century  
Ivory  
Diam. 2 1/2 inches

Carved from a single piece of ivory, each of these balls contains a scene of children gamboling in a shaded garden. They play on a lotus leaf; the rounded form of the base of the leaf is continued in the abstracted shapes of the landscape and tree to complete the circumference of the ball.

They are medical balls, used to exercise arthritic fingers, and the symbolism of the depicted scenes has reference to good fortune and longevity. The round longevity symbol can be found at the base of the lotus leaf.





II. PAGODA (#6) with detail



## 5. TRAVELLING KIT

19th century  
Ivory  
L. 14 inches

Possibly Mongolian or Manchurian in origin, this travelling kit originally contained two sets of knife and chopsticks, only one of which remains. It was carried at the side by means of a ring attached at the back of the case. The ivory case and knife hilt are incised with various floral motifs.

## 6. PAGODA

Plate II

18th century  
Ivory  
Ht. 17 inches

The pagoda, a Chinese Buddhist structure derived from the Indian stupa, was absorbed into Chinese Taoist symbolism as part of the syncretic tendency of Chinese religions during the Ming and Ch'ing Dynasties. The number seven, very important in Buddhist symbolism, is also commonly used for the number of stories in pagodas.

Each of the seven tiers of the Horne Collection pagoda is packed with figures, and loosely hanging bells decorate the finials of the seven roofs. The figures appear to represent Taoist immortals, playing musical instruments or holding flowers and other symbols embodying the delights and pleasures of the Taoist Paradise. The Buddhist Kuan Yin (see cat. no. 13) seems to be seated among them on the second story.

## 7. RITUAL TEA BOWL

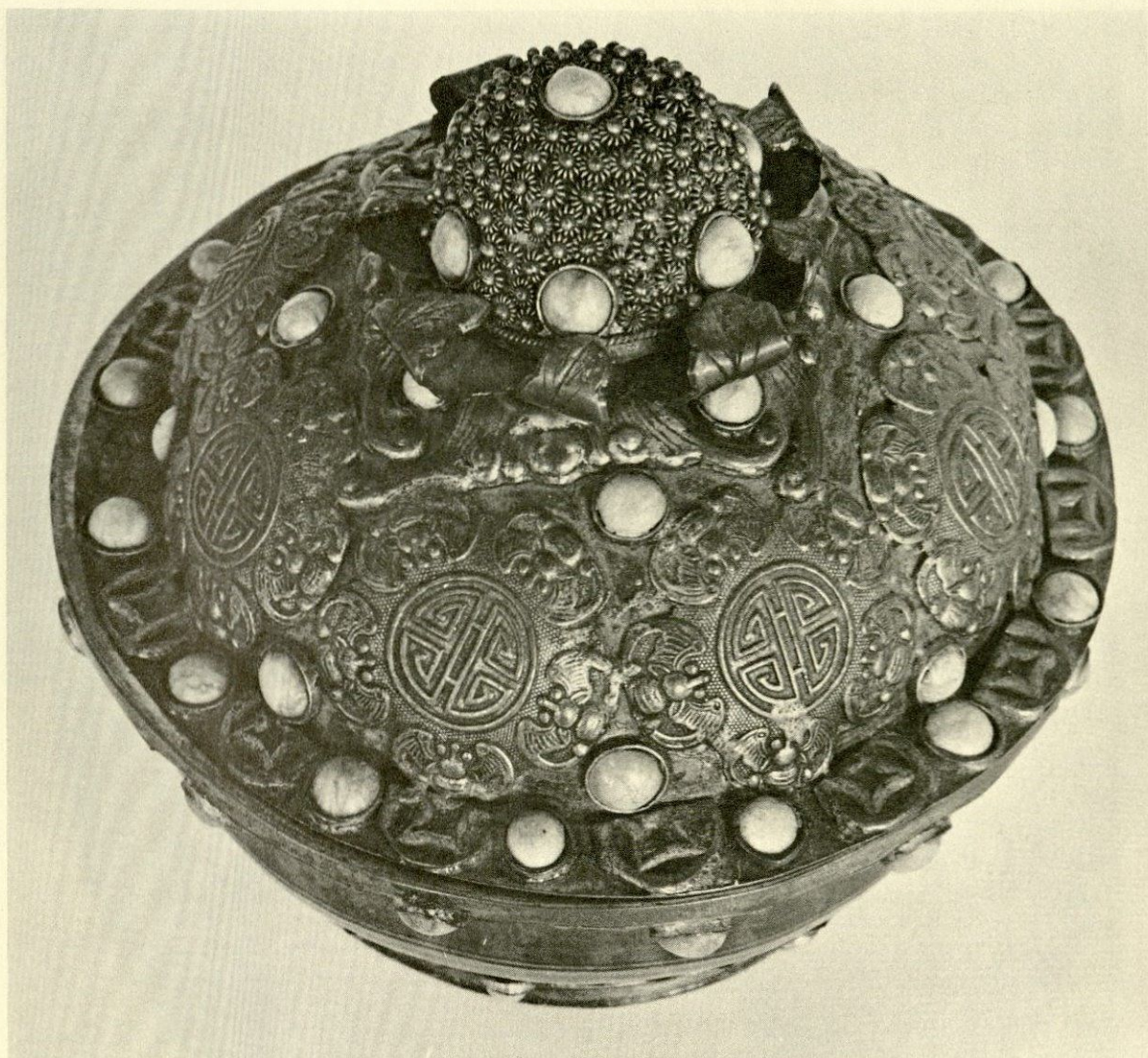
Plate III

18th century  
Copper and walnut  
Ht. 2 3/4 inches; diam. 5 inches

Bowls of this character were often used in Mongolian or Tibetan Lamaist temples for serving buttered tea. The medallions adorning the domed lid symbolize longevity, and they are encircled by stylized bats, a typical symbol of good fortune in the Ming and Ch'ing periods.

The bowl is burl walnut, and the decoration is made of copper that has been silverized and inlaid with turquoise-colored glass beads. The inner side of the cover is porcelain glazed in brilliant blue.





III. RITUAL TEA BOWL (#7)

# 8. CEREMONIAL DAGGERS

Plate IV

Late 19th century

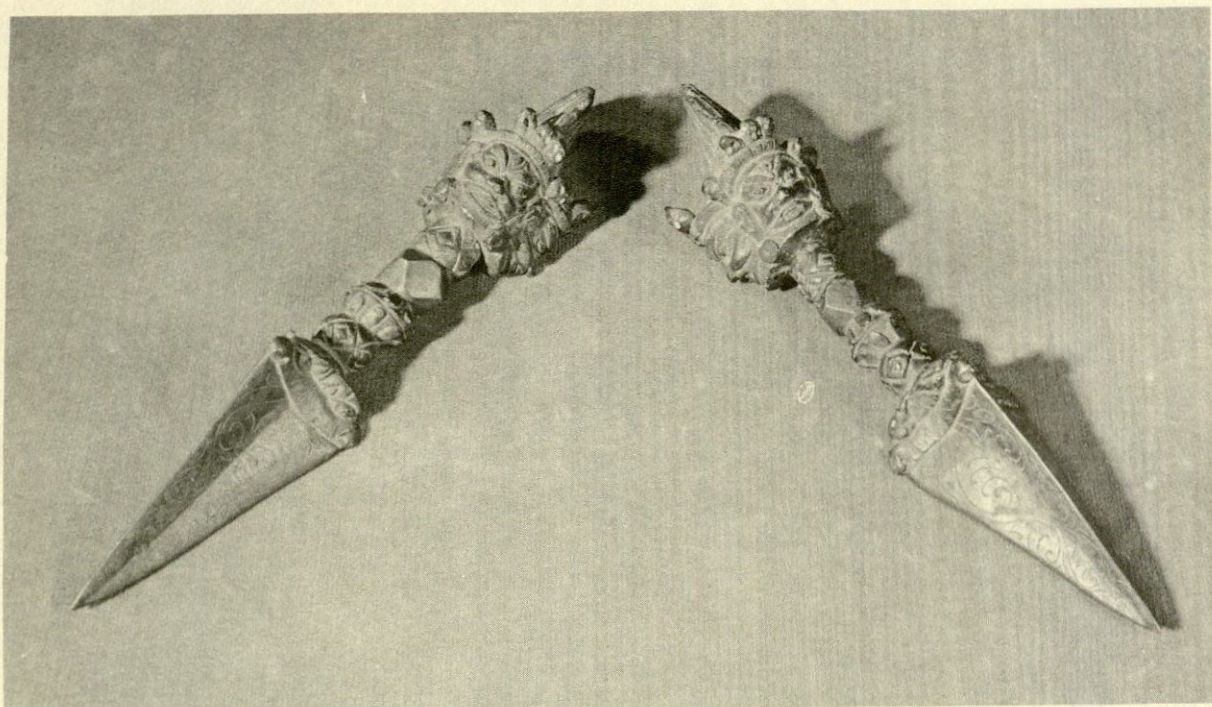
Bronze

L. 8 3/4 inches

Tibetan Lamaist ritual employed daggers of this kind. These were probably used to ward off evil spirits, as the three crowned heads that form the pommel finial may be those of Yama, the three-eyed King of the Demons.

The daggers are identical; their blades are triangular and incised with floral motifs, and the handles are carved with an ornate pattern.





#### IV. CEREMONIAL DAGGERS (#8)

#### 9. PAIR OF ELEPHANTS

17th or 18th century

Bronze

Ht. 2 1/2 inches; L. 4 inches

The depiction of animals has a long history in the decorative arts of China. These elephants are molded with extremely naturalistic features, especially apparent in the area of the head and trunk. The design of the harnesses is based upon motifs from early Chinese animal bronzes of the Shang-Chou Dynasties (1523-256 B.C.). Such an archaistic interest was typical of artists in the late Ming and Ch'ing periods.

#### 10. PAIR OF CHIMERAS

19th century

Steatite (soapstone)

Ht. 4 1/2 inches; base 3 1/2 inches sq.

The chimera, or lion, is a traditional symbol in Chinese art. The male and female are often shown as a pair to represent ideal marriage. The male is





V. MIRROR (#12)



accompanied by a ball, symbol of championship, and the female by one or several pups, indicating fertility.

Our chimeras, each of which is surrounded by pups, rest on square bases, with frolicking horses carved in relief on the four sides. They are thought to have been originally customs seals, from which the seals themselves have been removed.

#### 11. PAIR OF CHIMERAS

18th century

Bronze

Ht. 2 1/4 inches; L. 3 1/2 inches

This pair of chimeras has the same symbolism as cat. no. 10, although the ball and the puppies are absent.

#### 12. MIRROR

Plate V

16th or 17th century

Brass

Diam. 5 3/4 inches

The back of this brass mirror is decorated with Taoist symbols in relief. The Taoist immortals, the gods, the coins and other symbols that are carved here are typical of the late Ming period. The mirror was probably made during the reign of Wan Li (1573-1619).

#### 13. KUAN YIN

17th or 18th century

Bronze

Ht. 4 inches

Kuan Yin is the most popular of all bodhisattvas of Chinese Buddhism and can be found, under other names, in Indian and Japanese Buddhism as well. Originally a male diety, she only began to acquire female characteristics in the 11th or 12th century. She appears again in the Horne Collection seated among Taoist dieties in the ivory pagoda (cat. no. 6).

The bronze figure depicts her seated, wearing a high top-knot and wrapped in a long garment, her hands hidden in her wide sleeves.





VI. POTTERY TRAY WITH SIX WINE CUPS (#14) and POTTERY WINE EWER (#16)

14. POTTERY TRAY WITH SIX WINE CUPS

Plate VI

T'ang Dynasty (618-907)

Earthenware

Diam. of tray, 9 inches; of cups, 2 inches

The several objects from the T'ang Dynasty gathered in the Horne Collection (cat. no's. 14-17) are typical in their shapes and glazes of the earthenware ceramics created by T'ang artists, primarily as tomb furniture. They were placed in the burial chamber, along with other objects in animal, human and utilitarian shapes, predominantly secular rather than Buddhist, for the convenience of the deceased in afterlife.



This pottery tray and its six wine cups are decorated with the lively *san ts'ai*, or three-color, glazes (brown, green, and yellow), applied with vigorous splashes that leave portions of the raw clay exposed.

Although there were originally eight wine cups belonging to this tray, indicated by the marks of the cups left on the tray after firing, it is rare to find even as many as six in a set still together.

#### 15. POTTERY TRAY WITH THREE WINE CUPS

T'ang Dynasty (618-907)

Earthenware

Diam. of tray, 9 inches; of cups, 2 inches

This tray and its three remaining wine cups are coated with slightly variant shades of the brown, yellow and green *san ts'ai* glazes that decorate cat. no. 14. The bright colors of these glazes and the direct manner in which they were applied reflect the vitality that penetrated so many aspects of T'ang Dynasty culture.

#### 16. POTTERY WINE EWER

Plate VI

T'ang Dynasty (618-907)

Earthenware

Ht. 6 1/2 inches

The brilliant blue splashes that accompany the *san ts'ai* glazes in the decoration of this wine ewer are also characteristic of T'ang period earthenware. This color, however, was used more rarely than the familiar brown, yellow and green, and thus adds value as well as beauty to the piece.

#### 17. POTTERY JAR AND LID

T'ang Dynasty (618-907)

Earthenware

Ht. 2 3/4 inches; diam. 3 1/5 inches

This small jar, partially coated with *san ts'ai* glazes, has a rounded foot base and globular body. Its slightly domed lid is surmounted by a small finial.



## 18. TEA BOWL

Kuang Hsu period (1875-1908)

Porcelain

Ht. 3 3/8 inches; diam. 4 1/2 inches

This tea bowl is accompanied by a base and a cover, the latter of which also serves as a shallow saucer for the tea leaves. The flowers and foliage which decorate the porcelain are painted with *famille rose* enamels on a yellow ground.

## 19. PAIR OF JARS

Late 19th century

Porcelain

Ht. 4 3/8 inches

The style of these small jars is derived from the porcelain of the Ch'ien Lung period (1736-1795). Their ovoid bodies stand on high foot rings, and their broad necks are surmounted by everted top rings. They are decorated with deeply incised floral motifs and coated with a yellow glaze.

## 20. PAIR OF VASES

Late 19th century

Porcelain

Ht. 4 7/8 inches

Like the preceding jars (cat. no. 19), this pair of vases attempts to recapture the style of the Chinese Imperial ware. They, again, have incised floral decoration and yellow glaze. Their more globular-shaped bodies rise into a tall slim neck.

## 21. DISHES

19th century

Porcelain

5 1/2 inches sq.

These square porcelain dishes are decorated with stylized dragons painted in cobalt blue on a white background. They were used to hold sweetmeats or Chinese delicacies.





VII. INK STICKS AND BOX (#22)

## 22. INK STICKS AND BOX

Plate VII

Ch'ien Lung period (1736-1795)  
Lacquered rosewood and stick ink  
Box 4 1/2 x 5 1/2 inches

The design of this box of ink sticks makes a decorative object of a utilitarian one. A screen of peonies and foliage is painted in gold, blue and green across the black surface formed by the five sticks as they lie in their box. Behind they are covered with calligraphy. The black lacquered box that holds them is painted in gold with the inscription "Enjoyment of wealth, nobility and longevity." The several characters on the screen decoration read similarly, and it is by them that the box can be dated.



23. INK STONE AND BOX

19th century  
Rosewood  
5 1/2 x 3 1/2 inches

This inkstone and its box are made in the shape of a stylized peach, the two halves of which reveal themselves as the box is opened. The theme is further reflected in the oval well form and the foliage in relief on the stone itself.

24. BRUSH WASHER

19th century  
Porcelain  
Diam. 3 3/4 inches

This brush washer, coated with blue flambe glaze, is shaped like a bucket, with mock handles at the sides.

25. COIN

Hsien Feng period (1851-1862)  
Bronze  
Diam. 2 inches

This round coin is molded with Chinese characters in relief on front and back.

26. SILVER BAR

19th century  
1 3/4 x 1 1/4 inches

This silver bar is divided into four sections and is undecorated. The value of the bar is determined by the weight of the silver.

27. AMBER NECKLACE

18th century

Both this necklace and its companion (cat. no. 28) are composed of beads taken from necklaces worn by Mandarin officials during the Empire. The various colors of the beads represent position within the nine Mandarin classes. This necklace, made of finely-cut amber, was originally of greater length and included other objects symbolic of the rank of the wearer.





VIII. LAMAIST TEMPLE HANGING (#29)



## 28. NECKLACE

18th century  
Precious stones

Turquoise, aquamarine, yellow tourmaline, agate, amber and amethyst stones of high quality were used to make the Mandarin beads now combined in this Horne Collection necklace. As indicated previously (cat. no. 27), these beads were originally parts of separate necklaces, and have been combined in this manner at some later date.

## 29. LAMAIST TEMPLE HANGING

Plate VIII

19th century  
Embroidered fabric  
43 x 20 inches

Manchurian in origin, this tapestry expresses the theme of salvation in terms of Lamaism. In the center a Buddha sits on rocks, holding in his left hand the ambrosia bottle with clouds of vapor enveloping the sacred jewel, an important symbol of the salvation theme. Above him a monk of Lamaism sits surrounded by worshippers and the Buddhas of the past. The Lama serves as the intermediary between the Buddha and the Buddhas of the past on the one hand, and the worshippers, who are the saved ones, on the other. Below the Buddha are more worshippers.

The tapestry is embroidered in Japanese and Manchurian needlepoints. Gold metallic threads are used to create the embroidered background and for outlining and accents on color. The garments of the Buddha are depicted in red, green, buff, black and blue, hues used throughout the design, as in the variously colored robes of the Buddhas of the past.

## 30. ALTAR VALANCE

19th century  
Embroidered fabric  
30 1/2 x 35 inches

This Buddhist valance for an altar is decorated with dragons floating amid waves and surrounded by the eight Buddhist symbols. The background is orange, the threads metallic gold and polychrome. Butterfly and melon motifs are embroidered on the blue ground of the border.



The five-toed dragons are generally restricted to Imperial use. As an inscription on the back of the fabric reads, "For temple worship," it is likely that this valance was used in a temple connected with Imperial worship.

### 31. ALTAR BALDACHIN

19th century  
Embroidered fabric  
35 x 35 inches

The composition of this Buddhist altar baldachin is similar to that of cat. no. 30, and it is possible that they were used in the same temple. Here four Buddhist symbols are combined with writhing dragons. They are surrounded by tumultuous waves, stylized clouds and flying bats.

Shades of red and rose predominate on the now faded ground. The red is continued in the ground of the border, decorated with details of prunus and bamboo.

### 32. HANGING

18th century  
Embroidered fabric and metal  
34 x 54 1/2 inches

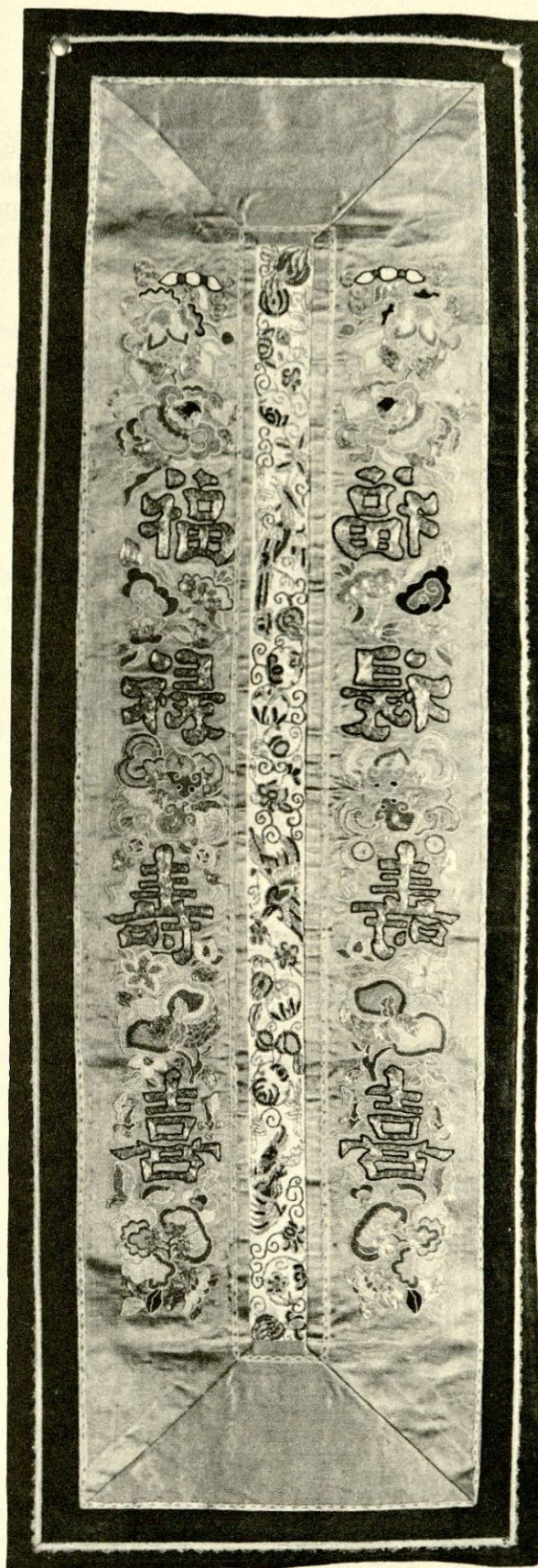
The many small metal mirrors applied on the surface of this hanging suggest that its purpose may have been theatrical. On the once brilliant coral background are embroidered six medallions of stylized curled dragons and six medallions of good omen characters. They are sewn with gold metallic and some polychrome threads. The hanging is framed with a wide border of gourds and floral forms, executed in blue and brown threads.

### 33. TABLE VALANCE

19th century  
Embroidered fabric  
31 x 38 inches

The theme of this embroidered table valance is the "hundred antiquities," a standard subject of Taoist symbolism. It includes a wide range of objects from antique nature to embody the ideas of good fortune and long life.





IX. SLEEVE BAND (#36)



In contrast to the symmetrical arrangements and crowded spacing of the Buddhist altar coverings in the Horne Collection (see cat. no's. 30 and 31) the composition here is freer and allows large areas of open space. The colorful threads that delineate the "hundred antiquities" are sewn on a brilliant royal blue ground made of loosely woven material.

#### 34. TABLE RUNNER

19th century  
Embroidered fabric  
12 7/8 x 24 inches

This short runner is decorated with fanciful butterflies, peonies and other floral motifs, delineated in blue and white threads. The original coral color of the ground can still be seen in the center of the fabric.

Butterflies are symbols of conjugal felicity and joy, which came to be used frequently during the reign of Empress Dowager Tz'u-hsi toward the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.

#### 35. TABLE RUNNER

19th century  
Embroidered fabric  
10 3/4 x 17 3/4 inches (excluding tassels)

This small folk embroidery is adorned with three symbols: the peach embodies longevity; the bat stands for fortune; and the mask is a symbol of survival.

The muted colors are sewn on a grey, embroidered background and are surrounded by a black border. Tassels of many colors extend from either end of the runner.

#### 36. SLEEVE BAND

Plate IX

19th century  
Embroidered fabric  
10 x 29 1/4 inches

The inscription reads "Fortune, prosperity, longevity, happiness," on this sleeve band that once adorned the robe of a Chinese official. The symbols and characters are Taoist; phoenix birds can be seen in the narrow center strip. The polychrome threads are sewn on a blue field, and the border is black.



37. OFFICIAL ROBE (lower section)

19th century  
Embroidered fabric  
10 x 45 inches

Symbols of good fortune decorate this long strip of fabric that once formed the lower part of a Chinese official robe. The two dragons face each other amid clouds and waves, and there are flying bats and peach sprays above them. The composition is symmetrical and is sewn in shades of blue, yellow and brown on a black ground; the border is coral.

38. SLEEVE BAND

19th century  
Embroidered fabric  
14 1/2 x 47 1/2 inches

This sleeve band is decorated with two panels containing a peony motif. The peony is the symbol of love, affection and feminine beauty, and thus embodies good fortune for ladies.

The design is sewn on a blue ground with muted polychrome threads in Peking and Soochou stitches.

39. DRESS

19th century  
Embroidered fabric  
L. 53 inches

This brilliantly colored robe befits a lady, for it is adorned with the round longevity symbol and orchid sprays, the symbol of love and beauty. It was perhaps a wedding dress or a theatrical costume.

The dress is made of a red fabric, embroidered with gold and turquoise and bordered in black; the lining is a contrasting green.











