

Chinese Art III

Textiles * Glass and Painting on Glass * Carvings in Ivory
and Rhinoceros Horn * Carvings in Hardstones
Snuff Bottles * Inkcakes and Inkstones

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Preface and revisions to the second edition by William Watson

RIZZOLI
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them is a small ivory head and two ivory figures which came to the British Museum from the Sloane Collection in 1753. This head²⁰ which, because of its place in the Sloane Register seems likely to have been acquired before 1725, has a hollow on the top and a ring of holes extending from the top of the head to the ears on both sides, which suggest that it once had a wig. Other holes in the lobes of the ears show that it once possessed earrings. I believe it may have been made for an eighteenth century doll.

William Hickey, visiting Canton as early as 1769, saw there "the painters on glass, the fan-makers, the workers in ivory, the japanners, the jewellers and all the various artificers of Canton". Among these Cantonese carvings were ivory fans, brushes, glove boxes, tea-caddies, and the counters for gambling so beloved of our Regency ancestors. An interesting offshoot of this export trade was the little ecclesiastical ivory figures made by the Chinese of Macao and the Philippines for the churches of Portugal and Spain, some of which may go back to the sixteenth century. Two ivory figures of the archangel Michael of late seventeenth century date, Chinese work in the Mexican baroque style, were shown at an exhibition of Mexican Art in London in 1953²¹.

Two fine examples of export pieces are in the collection of the late Mrs. Ionides. The first of these is an ivory casket (plate 100), carved in relief with a design of figures on the lid and flowers on the sides, tinted with colour, with silver feet added in Europe, and containing two silver tea-caddies bearing the London hallmark of 1742. The second is another pierced and carved casket, containing two cut-glass tea-caddies added in Europe. Both pieces are of the eighteenth century, as is the comparable casket belonging to Lord Fairhaven (plate 131). It was of these and such other carved ivory trifles that John Barrow, private secretary to Lord Macartney on his mission to the Emperor Ch'ien Lung in 1792, wrote in his memoirs, published in 1806: "of all the mechanical arts, that in which they seem to have attained the highest degree of perfection is the cutting of ivory. In this branch they stand unrivalled, even at Birmingham, that great nursery of the arts and manufactures ... Nothing can be more exquisitely beautiful than the fine open-work displayed in a Chinese fan, the sticks of which would seem to be singly cut by the hand; for whatever pattern may be required, or a shield with coat of arms, or a cypher, the article will be finished according to the drawing at the shortest notice"²². The fan illustrated on plate 132 is typical of the delicate ivory work which earned rhapsodical praise in Europe.

RHINOCEROS HORN

Judging from ancient Chinese illustrations both the one-horned and the two-horned varieties of the rhinoceros appear to have once existed in China. One was probably allied to the one-horned Javan rhinoceros and the other to the two-horned Sumatran rhinoceros. H. T. Chang probably presents the last word on the subject of the Chinese rhinoceros in his article entitled: "*On the question of the existence of*

elephant and rhinoceros in North China in historical times"²³ in which he writes: "From Hsia to the end of Chou, elephant and rhinoceros were not inhabitants of the Northern region. In late Chou, those which existed must have been confined to south of the Yang-tze", which was to all purposes the boundary of Southern China in Shang-Yin times. He goes on to say that, although traces of numerous species of rhinoceros are recorded from the China of Pleistocene times, no traces of rhinoceros bones have been found on Neolithic sites. But he thinks that it is just possible that rhinoceros still existed in the Ch'ü state in the latter part of the Chou period. This was the southernmost part of China at the time and extended in a pocket over and below the Yang-tze valley. But even these statements must be accepted with caution.

Whatever happened in the North, where the consensus of opinion seems to be that the rhinoceros may have lived on into Chou times, it would appear to have survived in the South in parts of Szechwan, Kwangsi, Yunnan and Honan, into the late T'ang and early Sung. In remote places it may have lingered on still later. Indeed Li Shi-chen, writing in the sixteenth century, still assigned it to the Southern portion of Yunnan, and there is a startling reference in Du Halde who, when writing his "*Description of the Empire of China in Chinese Tartary*" in 1738, says of the neighbourhood of Wenchow in Kiangsi, "one meets here the rhinoceros"²⁴, but one feels he must have been mistaken. It is certain, however, that by A.D. 2 it was an animal of sufficient rarity and interest to be sent as tribute; for one arrived that year as a present from the Huangchih²⁵. At least seven other references occur to rhinoceros sent as tribute between the Han and T'ang from Szechuan, Tonking, Arabia, Java and Annam²⁶. It is amusing in passing to remember that the first rhinoceros or *ganda* to reach Europe since the time of Pliny was sent by Muzaffar, King of Gujrat (Cambay) to King Manuel of Portugal and landed in Lisbon on May 20th, 1515,²⁷ in the tenth year of the reign of the Emperor Chêng Tê. It was made even more famous by being drawn in ink by Dürer, from a sketch supplied by a Portuguese artist, and from Dürer's drawing, which came into the British Museum in the Sloane Collection, eight editions of woodcuts were made. Later this unfortunate *ganda* was sent by King Manuel as a present to the Pope, Leo X, in a harness on a gilt iron chain, with a green velvet collar round its neck, studded with gilt roses and carnations; but the vessel carrying the gift was caught in a storm in the Gulf of Genoa at the end of January, or beginning of February 1516, and was lost with all aboard.

Representations of the one-horned rhinoceros appear on a Chinese bronze kettle in the *Po ku t' u lu* attributed to the Shang period, but by far the most important evidence that the Shang people knew the rhinoceros is provided by the famous bronze *hsi tsun*, in the Brundage Collection. This magnificent bronze modelled in the form of a two-horned rhinoceros is said to have been obtained with six other bronze vessels from a grave at the foothills of Liang shan, at Shou Chang in Shantung.

But the role of the rhinoceros motif in Chinese art is limited and it seems likely that the chief interest the early Chinese took in the beast lay in its hide, which they used for armour plates; the use of its horn for making girdles, amulets and cups is probably a later development. The horn is a solid mass of agglutinated hair, not attached directly to the skull. When freshly cut and polished it is of a yellowish

colour with grey streaks not unlike bullock horn, but of an entirely different consistency. There is a great variety in the streaking and mottling of the horn, but the golden brown colour acquired by the Chinese rhinoceros horn cups is the result of staining and polishing. From at least as early as T'ang times the horn has been endowed by the Chinese with magical properties. It seems that these virtues find their original source²⁸ in the Chinese Taoist writings of the fourth century A.D. Although very curious ideas were current in India and the Near East, where absurd legends sprang up²⁹, associating the rhinoceros with the unicorn, it is probably safe to assume that the belief in the qualities of the horn all go back to Chinese sources, which were imported into the Western world and the Near East when Roman and Arabian traders exported the horn to Chinese markets. Worst of all for the animal, the horn acquired a reputation in China as an aphrodisiac, for which purpose it is still held in great esteem by the Chinese. It is the Chinese demand for the horn, more than any other, which has led to the animal's destruction, both in Asia and Africa.

According to Hirth, objects carved in rhinoceros horn were traded to China from the Roman Orient and India as early as the fifth century A.D. The Arab, Suleyman, to whom is attributed one of the earliest narratives concerning the Chinese trade, gives rhinoceros horn as one of the chief imports of Canton, and Mas'udi, a native of Bagdad, who died in 956, the author of a work entitled *The Meadows of Gold* says that, in his time, there was a great trade in rhinoceros horn with China from Ralima in India, which was probably Dacca or Arakan³⁰; while in the annals of the Sung dynasty it is mentioned in a list as among the principal articles of trade in or about 999.

Chau Ju-kua, Commissioner for foreign trade in Ch'üan Chou, Fukien, in 1226, in his *Chu Fan Chi*, written in 1228, which throws a most valuable light on the trade in the Far East in medieval times, presents us with a picture of the localities which supplied the horn to China in the thirteenth century. He says it was the product of Tonking, Annam, Java, Sumatra, India; but that the largest horns came from the Berbera coast of Africa³¹.

It is difficult to discover, as in the case of ivory, exactly when the African trade with China in rhinoceros horn began. But it was probably not until the early years of the Ming dynasty when the Chinese junks began to visit the coasts of Africa, and to trade directly with that continent and not through the Arab intermediaries, that it reached China on an extensive scale. It would be interesting to know whether, as I suspect, the bulk of Ming and Ch'ing rhinoceros horn cups were made of African and not Asiatic horn, and whether the Chinese preferred the African to the Asiatic horn. For the Chinese certainly believed in the superiority of African over Asiatic ivory as early as the Sung period, and the bulk of Chinese ivory carvings of the Ming and Ch'ing were almost certainly of African origin. Unfortunately it is impossible to distinguish the one ivory from the other once the tusks have been barked and carved. This, I am told, also applies to rhinoceros horn, except when the outline of the original horn has been preserved, as in the case of the giant cornucopias, covered in open work with Taoist designs, deeply undercut, which because of their size can only have come from the great white rhinoceros of Africa. These pieces are of nineteenth century Cantonese craftsmanship and were made for export.

Some of these African horns may run to four feet in length, and weigh as much as 25 lbs. The Asiatic horns are small and unlikely to weigh more than 3 or 4 lbs., and in their original state are "ribbed" upwards from the base. African horns can also be small, so that size alone does not provide any guide nor do texture or colour. Today, however, all three Asiatic species have become so rare that their horns cannot play any part in the traffic in this commodity.

In the *P'ei wên yün fu* will be found a host of references to objects made from rhinoceros horn and hide in Chinese classical literature and poetry. Many of these are difficult to identify, owing to the rather vague literary descriptions, sometimes of an allegorical nature. Among them are references to armour, shields and even boots of rhinoceros hide. Rhinoceros horn toilet boxes, hairpins, combs, writing brush handles, beads (for rosaries), bracelets and the top of a cap, are all mentioned. There are other references to a rhinoceros horn vase, a rhinoceros horn sceptre (?), scroll ends, paper weights, weights for curtains, box covers, flagpoles, cart handles (tips for the shafts of a cart?), a tablet, and even to rhinoceros horn cash, with the emblems of a tree upon it, which according to the poet Su Tung-p'o, was used as currency inside the palace in the Sung period.

According to Ssŭ-ma Ch'ien, author of the *Shih chi* in the Han period, Chou Hsin, the dissolute and extravagant last Emperor of the Shang Yin dynasty, had a jade bed with rhinoceros horn ornaments. This was probably a bed inlaid with jade, and we do not know whether the rhinoceros ornaments were inlay or, as is more probable, weights to the bed curtains, which are so frequently referred to at a later date. From another source we hear that the great reformer Shih Huang Ti (221-209 B.C.) of Ch'in who burnt the books and built the Great Wall of China decreed that treasured things used as objects made of rhinoceros horn should not be kept in his house! From the *Han Shu*, we learn that Wang Mang (B.C. 33 - A.D. 23) went to worship at Taoist temples and "that in the Palace were all sorts of things, together with bones of storks, tortoiseshell and rhinoceros horn, well polished, which were used as offerings to the Immortals, following the tradition of the Yellow Emperor". We are told by the same source that the Hsiung Nu (the Huns) used gold belts with rhinoceros horn buckles; while in the *Fei yen wei chüan* there is a reference to the Emperor Ch'êng Ti (B.C. 46 - A.D. 5) of the Han dynasty drawing a rhinoceros ornament (from his hair?) and beating time with it on a jade bowl, while the famous beauty Fei Yên (the Flying Swallow) danced before him. There are references in early literature to the use of rhinoceros horn for making beads, curtain weights, combs, the handles of writing brushes and belts. The Emperor Hsüan Tsung (A.D. 1217-1222) gave a rhinoceros horn belt to a favourite minister, of which it is said (rather obscurely) that it 'communicated with the sky'. Another of the Sung emperors owned such a belt with a design of 'a stork in the clouds' and which when he wore it, 'parted the waters'.

As with so much else of the products of Chinese craft described in this book, the earliest documented rhinoceros horn objects which now survive are preserved in the Shōsō-in, a repository of the Tōdaiji temple in Nara, Japan. The Shōsō-in contains the possessions of the Emperor Shōmu, which were dedicated to the Great Buddha of the Tōdaiji in A.D. 752. Among the objects in the Shōsō-in are the

remains of two rhinoceros horn belts. The most complete of these, on the upper floor of the North section, is five fragments of a moleskin girdle, which belonged to the Emperor Shōmu, with rhinoceros horn plaques affixed to the leather by means of gilt nails. The leather of the girdle is lacquered black and it was fastened with a silver buckle. According to the deed of gift, six *tōsu* (knives) and a brocaded medicine bag were once attached to this girdle, but now only two *tōsu* remain. Three other spotted rhinoceros horn fragments, described as the remains of ornaments on a girdle, and presumably part of a second belt, are preserved in the Middle section of the lower floor. These two girdles must have been originally examples of the rhinoceros horn girdles worn in China in the T'ang period.

Other rhinoceros horn objects in the Shōsō-in include *gōsu* (small containers used as pendant ornaments). One is in the shape of a miniature rhinoceros horn, with a *shitan* wood lid carved in floral design and two are square with lids. The original silk cord for suspending them from the belt exists. There is also in the same section a pair of fish-shaped pendants of rhinoceros horn, the scales of which are picked out in gold, and the head pierced with a silver ring in the corner of the mouth. These were almost certainly suspended from the sash, although I should like to think they were carried in the mouth in the hope that their owner might pass through or under water! These ornaments were probably among the rhinoceros amulets mentioned by at least two Arab writers; one of whom states that the inhabitants of Sandabil (Kanchou in Kansu) "wear extraordinary precious necklaces of rhinoceros horn" and the other that "the Kings of China hang it upon themselves against evil things"³².

Rhinoceros horn was also used by the Chinese for the handles which, like the walrus ivory handles of India, were supposed to become moist and agitated in the presence of poison; and beautifully polished pieces of the horn were used for the hilts of Egyptian swords as late as the nineteenth century. In the Shōsō-in there are four pairs, and four single *tōsu* (small knives to stick to the girdle), either with rhinoceros horn hilts or rhinoceros horn sheaths. There is also a rhinoceros horn footrule apparently used as a measuring stick and divided into sections, five of which are divided into halves, and each of the other five divided into ten sub-divisions. And on the upper floor of the South section of the Shōsō-in are four *ju-i* (a form of Buddhist sceptre, which looks like a large back scratcher) in part of rhinoceros horn, one with a handle shaped like a bamboo shoot. One of these is inset with glass and crystal balls in gold, the handle carved with the word Tōdaiji filled in in red; one is decorated with painting, in gold and silver with a *shitan* wood handle and another, the most elaborate of all, has an ivory handle stained vermilion and blue, carved in the *bachiru* style and set with coloured glass balls and pierced work of birds and flowers in ivory on both sides.

But by far the most important objects made in rhinoceros horn in the T'ang period and under subsequent Chinese dynasties are the rhinoceros horn cups which are probably in origin sacrificial vessels esteemed because of their antidotal qualities and magical powers, and for that reason often decorated with Taoist scenes or emblems suggesting immortality. There are four of these cups in the Shōsō-in, all undecorated; unfortunately three of them do not appear to tally with the descriptions in the (*kenmotsuchō*) deed of gift of 752. But one cup, a curved horn, tapering to a blunt point, with a shallow bowl

and a ridge sloping down towards the bottom from the apex of the leaf-shaped mouth, is evidently the piece described in the deed (plate 134a). Two other rhinoceros horn cups described as "yellowish brown with wormholes" are on the upper floor of the North section (plate 134b). One of them, with a target-shaped mouth, is much wider than the other, which has a lobed mouth and ribbed sides, but neither of these cups corresponds in colour or weight to the two cups mentioned in the deed of gift, as contained in this cabinet, one of which was white and the other black, both of which were removed on January 7th, 814. Another rhinoceros horn cup or dish described as a medicine vessel, very flat and shallow in appearance, is on the lower floor of the North section. Its shape is similar to one of the Ch'ang Sha lacquer dishes called *pei*, which are shallow bowls with ears, but it lacks the ears. This piece is inscribed in ink "examined on the 17th day of the ninth month of the 2nd year of Kōnin (October 7th, 811); (weight)–12 ryō. 2 bu". But the cup recorded in this cabinet in *kenmotsuchō* was much lighter, weighing 9 ryō. 2 bu. Yet the inscription on the cup which remains should date it to the T'ang period, even if it is not the original one deposited in this part of the repository at its inauguration.

These rhinoceros horn cups were made by the Chinese craftsmen from the T'ang dynasty right up to modern times. Large numbers of them have survived, but the greater part of them are of late date and unmarked, or if they are marked, inscribed with the name of a studio or individual unknown to us. Quite a number of pieces exactly dated with cyclical year marks have survived from the reign of Wan Li (1573–1620) and it is to this reign that most of the oldest pieces in European collections belong, although dated pieces are exceptions to the general rule (see plates 137, 144). Without question these cups were highly valued by the Chinese, for several examples are included in the Chinese Palace Collections. Among them were two exhibited in London in 1936; one of them carved with crawling dragons in high relief which is inscribed on the base with the four Chinese characters *tzū sun yung pao*. The second shows Chang Ch'ien, a poet of the T'ang dynasty who graduated in 727, but ultimately retired to the mountains to live as a hermit, drifting down the Yangtze in his hollow tree, engraved with a poem from the hand of the Emperor Ch'ien Lung (plate 143). Yet another carving from the Palace Collection depicting Chang Ch'ien in his rustic craft, signed *Yü Tung* is illustrated in the *Ku kung*³³. This seems to be a very favourite motif for carvings in rhinoceros horn, for there are no less than three of these pieces of that subject in the Chester Beatty Collection. It also appears in buffalo horn. A third cup, decorated with the eight immortals engaged in a drinking bout under pine trees and signed by the unknown craftsman Wen Shu is also illustrated in the *Ku kung*³⁴. Yet another palace cup is reproduced by Ferguson³⁵.

I cannot, unfortunately, reproduce an entirely reliable example of rhinoceros horn carving of the Sung dynasty, though a plain cup in the Fogg Art Museum which has the mark of the Hsüan Ho period (1119–1126) may belong to this reign. The cup of plate 135, which has a surface imitating tree-bark, has the same mark, though without the usual "made in the year of –". Nor has any piece been attributed to the Yüan dynasty, despite the fact that the Yüan History records the establishment of an atelier for carving in rhinoceros horn and ivory. This workshop seems to have made couches, implements and girdle ornaments for the royal household, either entirely of the horn or inlaid with it. It should be men-

tioned in passing that while the silver representation of Chang Ch'ien on his log boat (see our first volume on the Minor Arts, plate 35) is attributed by some authorities to the Yüan period, it has not been suggested that either of two existing rhinoceros horn versions of this subject in the Palace Collection is earlier than Ming. The earliest dated Ming piece of rhinoceros horn, which has come to my notice is the boat-shaped cup with a Hsüan Tê mark in the Menasce Collection (plate 136). There seems to be every reason to accept this piece as of the period of its mark until some good reason appears to disprove it. It stands quite apart both in shape and carving from any of the other dated Ming cups I have encountered. Sir Percival David, I believe, had a rhinoceros horn bell, with some claim to be of early Ming date, and there are in the Nicholas Brown Collection in the Fogg Art Museum two rhinoceros horn stem cups, one with a cover which may have been added later which looks fifteenth century in shape. Among the many surviving rhinoceros horn carvings dated with cyclical year marks of the Wan Li period, perhaps the best known is a cup belonging to Madame Wannieck of Paris, which is dated by an inscription to 1580 (plate 137)³⁶. It has dragon handles. Another cup dated to the same year is in the Museum voor Land en Volkenkunde in Rotterdam, while a rhinoceros horn figure of Kuan Yin seated on a rock in the Fogg Art Museum is inscribed as a gift by "The disciple Mi Wan-chung joyfully offered to the Chin Kang Tung (a temple) in Chiu Hua Shan on the 12th day of the 3rd month of the *chi hai* year of Wan Li" which corresponds to 1599 (plate 144). Mi Wan-chung was a well-known painter of the late Ming period, who died in 1628.

A large number of rhinoceros horn cups found their way to Europe in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, many of them probably belonging to the Wan Li period, although few are marked and none is documented. Amongst the earliest of them must be the cups in the Hapsburg Collections, part of which were brought together by the Archduke Ferdinand of Tyrol (1520-1595) and the Emperor Rudolf II (1522-1612), both of whom collected exotic objects for their "curiosity cabinets", the former in the Castle Ambras in the Tyrol, and the latter at Hradcany in Prague. Among the inventories of these cabinets are several references to rhinoceros horn cups, but the descriptions are so vague that it is impossible to identify most of them. The greater part of both these collections has passed into the keeping of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. The collection originally included five rhinoceros horn cups³⁷. One of these, still at Ambras, is possibly to be identified with a cup in an inventory of 1596. It has a silver European gilt cover chased in relief with birds and beasts on a background planted with vines. A recumbent lion, soldered onto the top as a finial, has been added later.

The second of the Vienna cups has a silver gilt base of European workmanship of the sixteenth or seventeenth century bearing a mark which has not yet been identified. The carved exterior of this cup represents a landscape with water birds and flowering trees which is not uncommon among these cups, and is almost certainly Taoist in origin, possibly representing one of the Isles of the Blessed. Representations of immortals and the Taoist islands of immortality are common motifs on rhinoceros horn cups. The three imaginary islands P'êng-lai Shan; Fan Ch'ang and Ying Chou, were supposed to be situated in the eastern seas off the coast of Kiangsu. They were said to be inhabited by immortals, who fed on

the gems scattered along their shores and drank from a fountain of life, which sprang from a jade rock. The sacred fungus or *ling chih*, the emblem of immortality, grew there in abundance and the long-haired tortoise and the crane lived there, which were other emblems of longevity.

Of the other three rhinoceros horn cups in the Hapsburg Collections, one has a silver filigree foot of seventeenth century European workmanship and the body is decorated with a vine in relief³⁸; another is octagonal in shape with a shallow carved diaper ground. The last cup, of translucent colour with irregular dark brown spots, is lacquered and painted in red and green with a design of cypresses and big leaves and medallions in gold. This cup is probably of Indian, or possibly Persian workmanship. The only other rhinoceros horn cup of Indian origin which I have seen is the boat-shaped rhinoceros cup, almost certainly of Imperial Mogul craftsmanship, now in the Sloane Collection in the British Museum. In this piece an Indian origin is self-evident. One wonders whether this cup has any connection with the boat-shaped rhinoceros horn cup³⁹ described in the Memoirs of Babur, Emperor of Hindustan, the great Turkish conqueror of Northern India at the beginning of the sixteenth century, as being in his possession. It is cut very thin, thinner than any Chinese cup I have encountered, and the shape might be easily found in a Mogul jade cup. The dappled colour of the horn gives it the appearance of tortoiseshell when held to the light. It is mysterious when there are so many references to the value of the horn in Indian literature that no other Indian cup of this kind is known.

Rhinoceros horn cups of European craftsmanship are not unknown. One of these, in the shape of a classical vase decorated with swags of grapes carved in relief appeared in Sotheby's sale room on the 17th of February 1956, Lot. 74 "Curiosities"; this vase is probably of German or Italian workmanship and either late eighteenth or early nineteenth century in date. It is now in the collection of Mr. Raymond Johnes.

Besides the boat-shaped Indian cup there are three other rhinoceros cups in the Sloane Collection⁴⁰, all of which must date to earlier than 1753 (plate 139). One of these is not unlike one of the Hapsburg cups, for it is also decorated with dragons and a dragon handle, and a lozenge pattern on the body, which has in this case been gilded (plate 139). Another of the Chinese rhinoceros cups in the Sloane Collection is quite simple in shape, but not so carefully or elegantly carved as the piece in the Shōsō-in, which is of about the same size. It is extremely difficult to date this piece because of the simple shape and lack of decoration, but the other two Sloane cups might well date to the Wan Li period.

Another rhinoceros horn cup with a history attached to it is in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (plate 138). It comes from the Tradescant Collection, from a "closet of vanities" formed by John Tradescant the Elder, which was presented to the University by Elias Ashmole in 1683. As John Tradescant died in 1632, this cup might well belong to the reign of T'ien Ch'i (1621-27) or Ch'ung Chêng (1628 to 1643), for it is rather more roughly carved and freer in design than the dated Wan Li pieces, which I have discussed. The outside is carved with hibiscus blossom in relief. A not dissimilar cup, with a genuine but rather poor Augsburg mount, was once in my own collection. There must have been other cups in England in this period. There is, for instance, the manuscript catalogue of an "*Inventory of the*

King's goods and Furniture sold by the rebels in 1649" under the heading *The Tower Upper Jewell House*, which has the following entry:

"178. A Rhinoceros horn cup, graven with figures with a golden foot, weighing 8 ounces, valued at 10 £.0.0. Sold Ann Lacy 24th Dec. 1649 for 12 £."

A large collection of these rhinoceros cups was in the hands of Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria; both these and some others displayed in the Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde in Munich seem to have belonged to Ludwig I (1786-1868) and so far as I can discover no great history is attached to them, although the owner does not wish them to be published. Yet another two are in the Pitti Palace in Florence. It is possible too that rhinoceros horn cups of the early seventeenth century are preserved in collections in Spain and Portugal.

Of the more modern European collections there are seventy-seven of these cups in the possession of the Museum voor Land en Volkenkunde in Rotterdam, four of them inscribed. Among them is one dated to 1580; another signed *Po Hung* and a third inscribed "*made by Hu Hsing-yüeb*". The fourth cup is inscribed "*Hao Ming precious collection*". In the same collection a most interesting rhinoceros horn carving of a palace set among rocks, probably again the Taoist Islands of the Blest, is inscribed on the base "*the eighteenth year of Ming Ming*", the *nien hao* of Yüan Fa-k'iao, the second king of the Ming dynasty in Annam, the date corresponding to 1839.

In America there is a large collection of these rhinoceros cups in the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, which came from John T. Mitchel in 1923. Only two of them are inscribed, Mr. Kenneth Starr informs me, one with the name of a maker which is difficult to read and the other, shaped like a bronze *chiueb*, has engraved on it "*the ninth autumn of Ch'ien Lung (1744)*" and the words "*liang kuang chen pao*", which can be translated "bright and splendid precious pearl".

An even larger collection was bequeathed by Mrs. John Nicholas Brown to the Fogg Art Museum. Among these, besides the figure of Kuan Yin dated to 1599, is a cup inscribed "*Handed down by Tu Ch'uang*" which is the *hao* of Wu Ch'ien (1733-1813), a bibliophile and poet and friend of the collector Hung P'ei-lieh. He came from Haining in Chekiang. Another cup is inscribed "*Cloud goblet ball*". Two other cups are inscribed respectively "*made by Cheng Fu-kung*" and "*by the Ssü Nung Liu*". Ssü Nung is the title of an official of the Ministry of Revenue, who in this case was presumably the commissioner of the cup. Another cup is engraved with a figure holding a flower, perhaps Hsi Wang Mu, Queen of the Taoist paradise, and a phoenix, into which red, green and white pigments have been rubbed. There are also some rhinoceros horn ladles and chopsticks, the existence of which is mentioned in T'ang times by Tu Fu, the poet, in his poem *The Snare of Beauty*. Most of the pieces in this collection belong to the Ch'ing dynasty.

Among some hundred and eighty rhinoceros horn cups belonging to Sir Chester Beatty at the Beatty Library in Dublin are (besides the cup marked Hsüan Ho illustrated on plate 135) one inscribed *P'ing Yün-ko* and another "*respectfully offered by your disciple Chiang Jen-hsi*". There was a Ch'ing carver Chiang Jen, who may have been the man in question. There is also in this collection what appears to be

a rhinoceros horn brush pot covered with figures of immortals under pines in high relief, and with a long inscription on the base to say that it was carved by imperial order, but giving no date or name of the carver. This piece may be as early as the K'ang Hsi period. High relief carving of the finest quality is to be seen on the cup of plate 142, which is probably a palace piece.

As time goes on we shall no doubt be able to identify the carvers of many of these rhinoceros horn cups, whose names and studios are at present a closed book to us⁴¹. It has been said that the production of these cups continued up to Tao Kuang times (he died in 1850) and then suddenly ceased. But I know no evidence for this. A great number of these cups, particularly the coarser specimens which have little merit, are of Cantonese workmanship. Canton is often mentioned as the centre of the trade, and made pieces both for the home market and for export. We know the Dutch exported rhinoceros horn to Japan in the seventeenth century, but I have never heard that the Japanese ever carved cups for themselves. Others again almost certainly come from Foochow, for in this province at Têhua were made large numbers of small white porcelain cups in the shape of miniature rhinoceros horn vessels, many of which must have been made about 1700. But besides the artisan craftsman there were certainly gifted amateur carvers using this medium, and some of the eighteenth century cups are most elaborate works of art. The early cups were without question libation vessels, but by the reign of Ch'ien Lung (1736-95) they had become little more than vehicles for the carver's virtuosity. Carved figures of rhinoceros horn are rarer, but are still to be found in collections (plates 144, 145). They are sometimes gilded (plate 146). Occasionally we encounter ornamental work in buffalo horn, though this material is neither so attractive nor so satisfactorily worked as rhinoceros horn. A figure of buffalo horn (plate 147) has a Wan Li date mark; a landscape carved in the same material (plate 148) is quite exceptional.

- ¹ Bernard Laufer, *Ivory in China*, Chicago 1925, p. 12.
- ² There are even differences in African ivory from the East Coast, which is known in the trade as 'soft', and the ivory from the West Coast of Africa, which is known as 'hard'. The latter is normally of darker grain and finer bark, and from a straighter tusk. The best African ivory comes from the Gold Coast, the Cameroons and Sierra Leone, and is harder and less likely to discolour than any other. It is the habitat and food of the elephant which causes these differences in the quality of his tusks.
- ³ *Catalogue of the International Exhibition of Chinese Art*, London, Burlington House, 1935-6, no. 318.
- ⁴ Kōsaku Hamada, "Engraved Ivory and Pottery found on the Site of the Yin Capital", *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Tōyō Bunko*, Tokyo 1926.
- ⁵ Shih Chang-yu, "Important Discoveries in the vicinity of Yin Hsü, with a supplement on the stratigraphy of Hsiao-ts'un", *China Journal of Archaeology*, 1947, vol. 2.
- ⁶ In modern collections pieces of carved bone of Shang and Chou date have often been mistaken for ivory.
- ⁷ Warren E. Cox, *Chinese Ivory Sculpture*, New York 1946, plate 3.
- ⁸ (as No. 3 above): no. 218.
- ⁹ R. Grousset, *La Chine et son Art*, Paris 1951, plate 1.
- ¹⁰ In the Kadoorie Collection, Hong Kong.
- ¹¹ In the possession of Dr. J. W. Grice, formerly of Tientsin. Mats of ivory plait were made in India in the nineteenth century.
- ¹² e. g. in the style of the marvellously ingenious octagonal ivory fan in the Metropolitan Museum. Cf. Laufer, *op. cit.*, plate 8.
- ¹³ J. L. Duyvendak, *China's Discovery of Africa*, p. 12.
- ¹⁴ S. E. Lucas, *Catalogue of the Sassoon Collection of Chinese Ivories*, vol. 3, London, Country Life, 1952, no. 1381.
- ¹⁵ Ardenne de Tizac, *Annals in Chinese Art*, London 1923.
- ¹⁶ John C. Ferguson, *Survey of Chinese Art*, Shanghai 1939, fig. 215.
- ¹⁷ Lucas, *op. cit.* vol. 3, no. 826.
- ¹⁸ Translated by S. E. Lucas. The screen is illustrated in vol. 2 of the Sassoon Catalogue, no. 635 A and B.
- ¹⁹ Sir Percival David, "Hsiang and his Album", *Oriental Ceramic Society Transactions*, 1933/34, p. 22.
- ²⁰ *The British Museum Quarterly*, vol. XVIII, no. 1, March 1953, plate VI, p. 20.
- ²¹ See *Catalogue of the Mexican Art from Pre-Columbian times to the present day*, organized under the auspices of the Mexican Government at the Tate Gallery by the Arts Council, London 1953, nos. 726 and 727.
- ²² John Barrow, *Travels in China - Peking to Canton*, 2nd edition, London 1806, pp. 308 and 309.
- ²³ H. T. Chang, "On the question of the existence of elephant and rhinoceros in North China in historical times", *Bulletin Geol. Soc. China*, vol. 5, 1926, pp. 99-106.
- ²⁴ J. B. Du Halde, *A Description of the Empire of China in Chinese Tartary together with the Kingdom of Korea and Tibet* including the geography and history (natural as well as civil) of those countries. London, 2 vols. 1738.
- ²⁵ The *C'ien han shu*, Ch. 27, B, p. 176 (Laufer). - See also J. L. Duyvendak, *China's Discovery of Africa*, pp. 10-12 and Professor Goodrich's *A Short History of the Chinese People*, p. 31.
- ²⁶ The Man I sent one of these animals as tribute in 84 A. D.; S. Western Szechuan in 94; Tongking between 166 and 188; Funan (Arabia) in 539; Ho Ling (Java) in 819 and another was sent from Annam in 1809. See Berthold Laufer, *Chinese Clay Figures*. History of the Rhinoceros, part 1, Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, 1914, pp. 80-81.
- ²⁷ A. Fontoura da Costa, *Deambulations of the Rhinoceros (Ganda) of Muzaffar, King of Cambaya from 1514 to 1516*, Portuguese Republic Colonial Office, 1937.
- ²⁸ The origin of the mythical properties of the rhinoceros horn has been discussed by Mr. Ettinghausen in his fascinating work on *The Unicorn*. He evidently believes in a Chinese origin for these myths, for he writes "Lately A. G. Godbey has suggested that the antidotal power of rhinoceros horn may not have been in Ctesias's original account, since neither Aristotle nor Pliny mention this feature, though they were familiar with the text and used it in their writings. It would thus appear to be a later interpolation of the text which is preserved only through quotations in other authors. If this plausible assumption should prove correct (the lack of any reference to it in early Indian literature supports it) the belief in the magical virtue of the horn in Roman times would probably go back to Chinese superstitions which were imparted to the western world when Roman traders imported the horn from Far Eastern markets". R. Ettinghausen, *The Unicorn*, Studies in Muslim Iconography, The Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1950, p. 99, footnote.
- ²⁹ Its hatred of the elephant, its supposed fondness for music and perfumes, and its amorous qualities towards virgins, were dwelt upon by Arab writers, and also its prickly tongue, which was remarked upon by Marco Polo. The supposed lack of joints to its legs, necessitated it was believed that it should sleep leaning against a tree in a standing position. It was, they said, most easily captured by using a young man, highly perfumed and dressed as a virgin, as a bait, or by inducing it to lean against half sawn through timber, which gave under its weight; for when it fell down it was supposed to be unable to rise. If treed a hunter could always put it to flight by urinating into its ear!

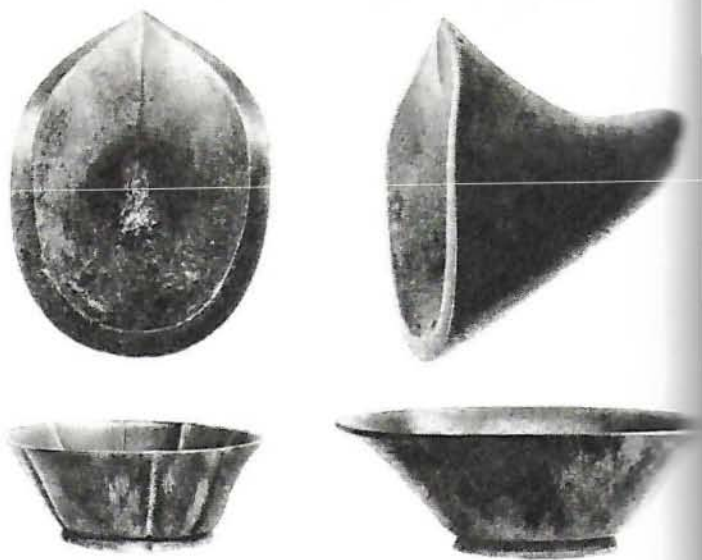
- ³⁰ Mas'udi, *Les Prairies d'Or*. Text in French by Barbier de Meynard and Paul Cortet, Paris 1864, vol. I, p. 385.
- ³¹ P. Hirth and W. W. Rockhill, *Chau Ju-kua*, St. Petersburg 1911, p. 126. The passages of Suleyman and the Sung History relating to rhinoceros horn are cited by the authors in their annotation.
- ³² R. Ettinghausen, *op. cit.*, p. 55.
- ³³ *Ku kung*, vol. 27, no. 14.
- ³⁴ *Ibid*, vol. 16, no. 19.
- ³⁵ J. Ferguson, *A Survey of Chinese Art*, plate 193.
- ³⁶ *Catalogue of the International Exhibition of Chinese Art*, London, Burlington House, 1935-6, no. 2929.
- ³⁷ Wolfgang Barn, "Some Eastern Objects from the Hapsburg Collections", *The Burlington House Magazine*, Dec. 1936, pl. I B, C (opposite p. 270).
- ³⁸ Episo, "More Eastern Objects formerly in the Hapsburg Collections", *The Burlington House Magazine*, Aug. 1939, pl. II b (opposite p. 69).
- ³⁹ *Memoirs of Zabr-ed-Din Muhammad Babur*, translated by Leyden and Ersking, revised by Lucas King, vol. II, London 1921, p. 329.
- ⁴⁰ *British Museum Quarterly*, vol. XVIII, 1953, Oriental Antiquities from the Sloane Collection in the British Museum.
- ⁴¹ The reputation of one of their artists, a Mr. Yu, who lived in the reign of K'ang Hsi (1662-1722) has been recorded as follows: "A certain person surnamed Yu of this district (*i.e.* Wu-hsi) excelled in carving and engraving rhinoceros horn, ivory, jade and stone into ornaments and playthings. His brilliant and exquisite workmanship was ranked first in Suchou, Ch'angchou and Huchou. When he was a youth, a relative of his had a rhinoceros horn cup which was greatly treasured. His father admired the cup and borrowed it. It happened that there was a rhinoceros horn at hand and the youth made an exact copy but its appearance was not finished and thereupon he pounded the plant balsam and dyed it as one dyes one's finger nails. The imitation became indistinguishable from the original, and when it was taken to his relative, the latter could not see the difference between the two, and accordingly it was known as Yu Rhinoceros horn Cup. In the middle of the K'ang Hsi period he was summoned to the Palace and later on in his old age he resigned and returned home. He said that when he was in the Palace he was given a pearl and ordered to engrave the Ch'ih Pi Fu on it. As the pearl was small and hard he thought that it was difficult to do. Then he was given a pair of spectacles, and when he tried to use his knife he could see very clearly and did not notice the small space and he could use his knife more easily than ever before". This information appears in *Chung kuo i shu sheng lüeh*, ch. 3, p. 17b, written by Li Fang in 1911, reprinted 1914. Unfortunately Yu's work is, as far as I know, unidentified.



133. TORTOISE-SHELL BOX AND COVER

About 1820. – Diameter 10 cm. (enlarged). – Jenyns Collection, Bottisham Hall, Cambridgeshire

The cover of this box is carved into an elaborate detail in relief with figures of a lady and a horseman and others sitting in a boat, against a background of trees and houses. Such boxes were made in Canton and were very popular in the Regency period in England. Tortoise-shell was known and valued in China at least as early as Han times, for the *Hou Han shu* refers to an imperial consort of the third rank being given a tortoise-shell hair-pin and there is reference in the *Shih chi* to “a prince of the Chin state who wanted to invade Chou to obtain tortoise-shell hair-pins.” This same work says that tortoise-shell was a product of India. Tortoise-shell is found as an inlay on many Chinese objects in the Shōsō-in which date back to the 8th century, including some of the musical instruments, and a history of the Ch’in dynasty speaks of “the wind blowing on the tortoise-shell *ts’êng*” (the *ts’êng*, a musical instrument of 36 strings, was probably in this case covered with tortoise-shell, or perhaps it had tortoise-shell pegs). In the *Yüan shih* we hear in the biography of one Chang Hung that in the 3rd year of Chih Yüan (1337) Chang Hung helped his father to build a palace with a wall around it and that when it was finished the Emperor gave him many gold buckles and a tortoise-shell cup. Tortoise-shell girdles are mentioned with rhinoceros horn girdles as worn in the court of the Ming Emperors. Tortoise-shell, together with rhinoceros horn and hornbill ivory, share the reputation for having the property of detecting poison, and small tortoise-shell wine-cups of the 18th century may be encountered.



134a + b. THREE RHINOCEROS HORN CUPS IN THE SHŌSŌ-IN

T'ang period (618–906). – Shōsō-in, Japan

All the earliest surviving documented rhinoceros horn material from China is in the Shōsō-in, Nara, Japan. This includes fish amulets, pendant containers (*gōsu*), girdle ornaments, Buddhist sceptres (*nyoi*) with the palm of rhinoceros horn, a footrule, small knives (*tōsu*) with rhinoceros horn handles; also four cups, as follows:

a) A cup in the north case of the lower floor of the Middle Section, shaped like a carved horn, tapering to a blunt point with a shallow bowl. Height 8.5 cm., width 7 cm. Harada Catalogue No. 401,

b) Two cups in the north case of the lower floor, of the North Section. Left: Height 4 cm., diameter 10 cm. – Right: Height 5 cm., diameter 5.5 cm.

The cup 134a is evidently the piece described in the gift inventory of A.D. 756, when the possessions of the Emperor Shōmu were dedicated to the Buddha by his widow. It is undecorated. The other two cups, described as “yellowish brown with worm-holes”, one of them (b, left) with a lobed mouth and ribbed sides, and the other (b, right) with a trumpet-shaped mouth, do not correspond in weight or colour to two cups mentioned in the deed of gift, one of which was white, and the other black. The present cups are probably intended as replacements of the original ones which were removed on A.D. January 7th, 814. But they are not likely to be later in date than the T'ang period.



139. RHINOCEROS HORN CUP

Before 1692. – Height 8.5 cm. – British Museum (Sloane Collection), London

This cup has a dragon lizard border and is decorated with a broad band of diaper round the body and narrow bands of key-fret round the lip and foot, which has been gilded. Beneath the former is a band of clouds and a phoenix painted in gold. This is one of the four rhinoceros horn cups (three Chinese and one Indian) which came to the British Museum on Sir Henry Sloane's death in 1753. Unfortunately all but two have lost their original labels.

This cup is almost without question the gilded rhinoceros horn cup acquired by Sloane from Kaempfer (No. 1142), who made his collection in Japan between 1690 and 1692, and which Sir Hans Sloane acquired from his widow in 1723.



141. RHINOCEROS HORN CUP

17th/18th century. – Height 13 cm. – Collection Mrs. Dreyfus, London

This rhinoceros horn cup is most elaborately made and decorated. It stands on a high hexagonal foot, whose panels are decorated alternately with the "endless knot", fans and other antiques in slight relief. A tangle of entwined dragon lizards carved in the round form the handle, and there are other lizards in relief inside and outside the mouth. The body is decorated with two bands of archaic bronze patterns and there is a narrow band of key-fret at the top of the lip.

This cup, from its shape, could belong to the K'ang Hsi period (1662–1722).



140. RHINOCEROS HORN LIBATION CUP

With a cyclical date corresponding to 1756 (or 1696). – Diameter 13.5 cm. – British Museum, London

This rhinoceros horn libation cup has inlaid on the body three monsters in jade, with mother of pearl claws. They have heads of phoenix, dragon and tiger, all travelling half submerged through clouds etched in relief. A silver or pewter band incised with key-fret is mounted at the lip, and similar bands with a cloud border are on the foot-rim and the side of the handle.

This piece is incised on the flat of the handle with an inscription reading: "Spring of 1756 (or 1696), copied from Sun Hsüeh-chü, imitating an *i* of Chou Wen-i" and on the base with another inscription of six seal characters in a *cartouche* reading "made by Meng Shao-chü of Old Wu (i.e. Soochow)."

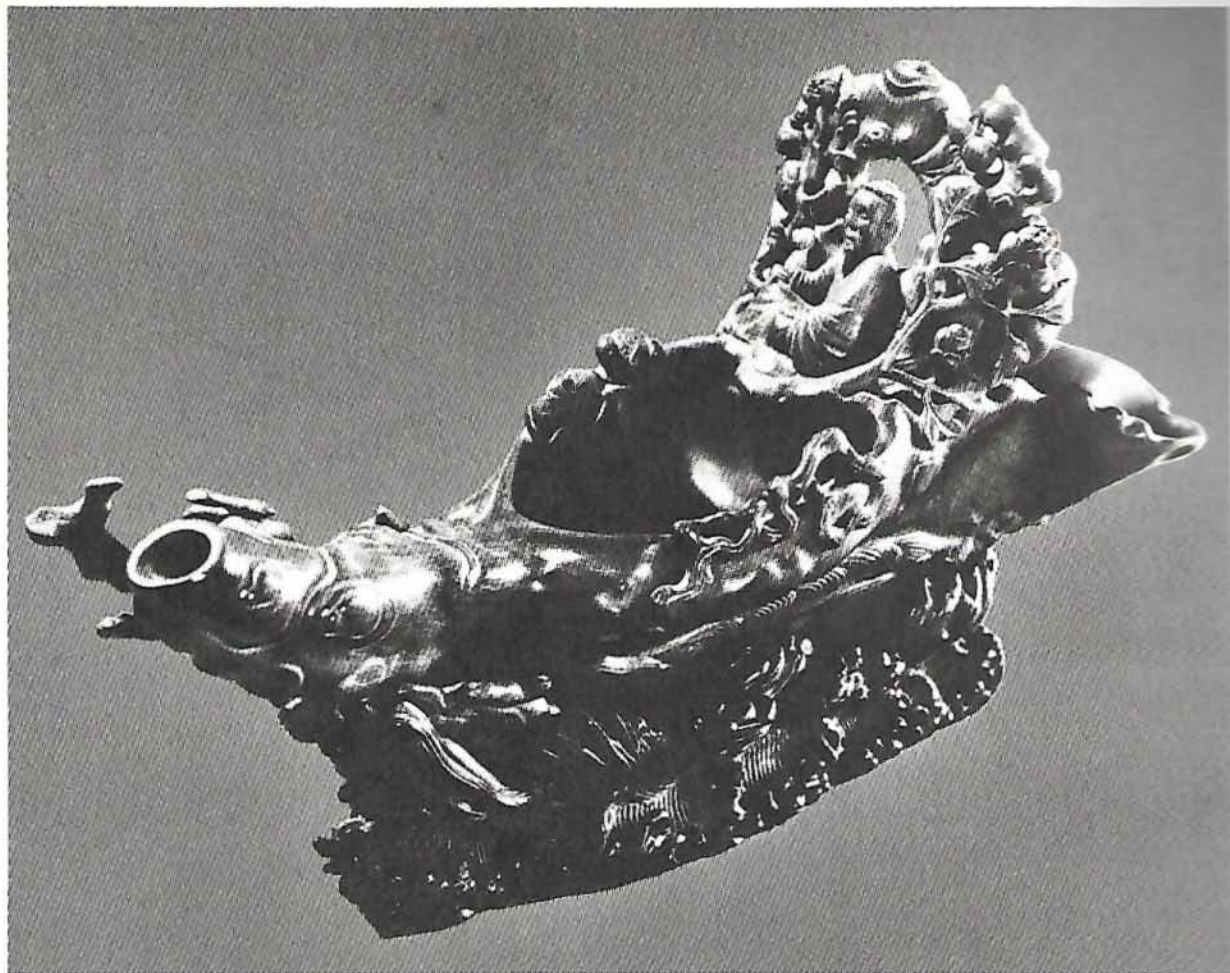


142. RHINOCEROS HORN CUP

Probably Ch'ien Lung period (1736–1795). – Diameter 15 cm. – Collection Mr. Henry de Lazlo, Englefield Green

This rhinoceros horn cup is most delicately carved and deeply undercut with fishermen at work on a river whose banks are surrounded by reeds and willows. Three men in a boat are shown on the side which is not illustrated. The handle is in the form of a massive pine tree, whose branches stray within the interior of the cup, which is modelled to resemble the surface of a cliff. There are two seals on the base which are illegible.

This cup is the most beautiful and poetic piece of carving which I have ever seen in rhinoceros horn. It is probably a Palace piece. There are four characters engraved on the base of the cup, in the form of a pair of seals: *chih sheng yu k'an*, "of upright birth, of great integrity".



143. RHINOCEROS CARVING OF CHANG CH'EN IN HIS BOAT

Ming dynasty (1368–1644). – Length 27 cm. – Palace Museum, Taiwan

This intricate carving in rhinoceros horn represents the story of the Han dynasty statesman and traveller, Chang Ch'ien, floating down the Yangtze in a boat in the form of a hollow log. Inside the log there is a poem written by the Emperor Ch'ien Lung in 1782, and at the back a four character inscription of uncertain meaning signed Yu-t'ung.

There is another representation of Chang Ch'ien in silver and in the same guise in plate 35 of our first volume on the *Minor Arts of China*.



144. RHINOCEROS HORN CARVING OF KUAN YIN,
GODDESS OF MERCY

*Dated 1599. – Length 10.5 cm. (enlarged). – Fogg Art Museum,
Cambridge, Mass.*

In this rhinoceros horn sculpture the figure of Kuan Yin is represented carved in the round, pouring balm from her vase on an attendant figure whose hands are clasped in adoration. The piece is inscribed on the base "Joyfully offered by the disciple Mi Wan-chung of the Chin Kang Tung (a Buddhist shrine) of Chiu Hua Shan in the *chi bai* year of Wan Li (1599) 3rd month 1st day."



145. RHINOCEROS HORN SCULPTURE OF PU TAI

*Ming dynasty (1368–1644). – Length 17.4 cm. – Collection
Mrs. Dreyfus, London*

Pu Tai, the monk with the calico bag, is supposed to have been the last incarnation of Maitreya and to have died in 917. He is usually represented seated with a large bare stomach, playing with children, and with a bag containing his belongings and food. He is reported to have slept in the open air and to have indicated coming changes of weather by changing his shoes.



146. GILDED RHINOCEROS HORN CARVING

18th century. - Height 25.8 cm. - Collection of the late The Honourable Mrs. Basil Ionides, Buxted, Sussex

This group of figures has been carved from a rhinoceros horn in the round and gilded. It is interesting to see how the shape of the carving has been conditioned by the original outline of the horn. The group probably represents Hsi Wang Mu, Queen of the Taoist Paradise, carrying a sheaf of lotus with a recumbent deer and a boy on one knee in attendance. Hsi Wang Mu, the Western Royal Mother, is supposed to have lived in the K'un L'un mountains. On her birthday all the Immortals assemble for a great feast. It is curious that the Chinese should have gilded both rhinoceros horn and ivory, since this obscures the attractive nature of the material.



147. HORN FIGURE OF KUAN YIN, GODDESS OF MERCY

Mark of Wan Li (1573-1619) and probably of the period. - Height 28 cm. - Collection Mr. J. F. C. da Andrade, London

The figure of Kuan Yin carved in the round was probably made from cow or buffalo horn. Kuan Yin is standing in flowing robes with her hair dressed high in an elaborate coiffure. In her left hand she pours balm from her vase onto the world of men. The base is lacquered and carries the six character mark of Wan Li. The piece is probably of the period of its mark, but it may be later.



148 a + b. LANDSCAPE OF CARVED HORN *APPLIQUÉ*

Probably Ch'ien Lung period (1736-1795). - Height 73 cm., length 100 cm. - Formerly in possession of Spink & Son, Ltd., London

It is curious to find horn carved in a manner which reminds one of the ivory landscape on plate 99. The Chinese employment of horn, usually buffalo and deer horn, must have as long a history as rhinoceros horn, but it is unrecorded. For instance, there is in the Shōsō-in a box for keeping a *go* board, carved all over with transparent horse hoof or buffalo horn in hexagonal patterns, bordered by lines made out of deer horn, which of course must belong to the T'ang period.

149. HORN LANTERN

Late 18th or early 19th century. – Height overall 79 cm. –
British Museum, London

This horn lantern is decorated with bats and floral scrolls in red, green, yellow and gold in strips which appear to be mica, which have been stuck on *appliqué*.

The horn lanterns of China early attracted the attention of Europeans, and in 1755 Pierre d'Incarville wrote his *Mémoire sur la manière singulière dont les Chinois fondent la corne à la lanterne*. In the account of his embassy to the court of Peking in 1794 Lord Macartney describes lanterns used in prodigious numbers, made of silk gauze or horn. In those of horn the joints of the sheets of the material were not to be detected. He writes:

"The usual method of managing them, according to the information obtained on the spot, is to bind the horn by immersion in boiling water, after which it is cut open and flattened; it then easily scales and is separated into two or three thin laminae or plates. In order that these plates should be made to join, they are exposed to the penetrating effect of steam, by which they are rendered almost perfectly soft. In this state the edges of the pieces to be joined are carefully scraped and slanted off so that pieces overlapping each other shall not together exceed the thickness of the plate of any other part. By applying the edges thus prepared immediately to each other and pressing them with pincers, they intimately adhere, and, incorporating, form one substance, similar in every respect to the other parts, and thus uniform pieces of horn may be prepared to almost any extent."

150. BASKETWORK BOX AND COVER WOVEN OF SPLIT BAMBOO, PROBABLY FROM KWANGTUNG

Before 1674. – Length 36 cm., width 22 cm. – Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen

The basket illustrated is mentioned in an inventory of 1674 of the Art Treasures of the Danish Kings. It is of oval shape made of finely split bamboo. Both lid and box are finished by a band, painted in red and gilded at the edge. Basketwork also appears in the same collection in combination with lacquer on an octagonal shaped tray with a big handle and fluted sides, covered on the outside with basketwork, which is also mentioned in an inventory of 1690 of the Art Treasures of the Danish Kings, along with a pillow made of plaited string net with lacquer ends. In his book *Chinese Basketry* (Chicago 1925), B. Laufer illustrates basketwork of Anhui, Kuangsi, Fukien, Chekiang, Kiangsi and Kwangtung. The finest of his baskets seem to come from Chekiang, either from Hangchow, Wen Chou, Ning-po or Ch'eng Hien, Shaohing Fu (most of these are partially lacquered). One of his baskets is dated 1726 and another 1898, and others are attributed to the Yung Chêng and K'ang Hsi periods. The most elegant basketwork, in the shape of flower baskets, travelling and toilet baskets, comes from the Yangtze valley.

