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Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

Archaeological Research in China 1923-1934

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there were said to be 91---there were between 600 and 700 fragments, large and small. The former were arranged about the walls and on a table, while the latter were piled up in baskets. We were told that the workmen employed in clearing out the tomb had deliberately broken up many of the vessels in the hope that they might turn out either to be made of gold or at least to contain it. (2-a) Our informants also expressed

(2-a)

About a year later the Provincial Library at K'ai-fêng (the former Confucian Temple of that city), where the Hsin Chêng bronzes had eventually been stored, had them as far as possible restored by a skilled metal-worker (rumored to be a foremost maker of "fake" antique bronzes) from Shantung (cf. page 211); but of course their gold-plating, turquoise inlays, and other accessories were gone forever, and much of their original magnificence was thus lost.

the suspicion that they had stolen outright many of the smaller and more easily concealed objects. Later we saw in the shops of some of the dealers in Peking bronze vessels as well as ornaments of jade alleged to have been found at Hsin Chêng; but these assertions we of course had no means of verifying.

The collection, we saw at once, was earlier in date than the Han period. It ranged from great vases and bells to chariot-fittings, horse furniture, and objects as to whose nature or use all clues had been destroyed; for no records of the xxxxxxxxx^a excavation had been kept. (3) Many of the

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This was stated to us at the time, and it has also been affirmed in published accounts of the find; see, e.g., Transacts. Science Soc. of China, vol. III, 1926: Dr. C. Li, "The Bones of Sincheng"; ref. to page 13.

objects were covered with a patina in varying shades of green and blue, with occasional areas of red. On their surfaces they bore designs in both high and low relief, and there was a striking use of conventionalized zoöomorphic forms---animals, birds, and fantastic creatures---as handles, supports, and decorative elements. Some of the objects appeared to have been covered originally with gold leaf, of which a few

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