

A CHRONOLOGY OF
T'ANG CERAMIC FORMS
AND
THEIR PROVINCIAL DISTRIBUTION

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ABSTRACT

This thesis sets out to show, by way of chronological charts, some evolutionary trends of eighteen prototypal ceramic forms that were commonly used in the Sui and T'ang periods. The objects represented in this study come primarily from dated tombs that have been excavated in China and illustrated in Chinese archaeological journals. In the analysis of the prototypal forms, emphasis will be placed on their origin, textual mentions, and possible functions. Relevant comparisons to other contemporary media will also be included. The chronology, with accompanying documentation, should provide a framework from which art historical conclusions may be drawn, and in which objects of questionable origin may be examined.

In another section, some specimens recovered from Sui and T'ang kiln sites are presented in an attempt to relate the tomb excavated objects to some possible sites of production. This exercise will also yield some insight to the distribution and influence of certain forms.

The thesis will conclude with an examination of the present findings to comparable studies published in Chinese. Moreover, the present findings will be examined in the light of some of the generally accepted theories regarding the ceramic art of the Sui and T'ang periods.

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CHRONOLOGICAL CHARTS I, II, and III.

MAP OF PROVINCIAL DISTRIBUTION OF FORMS

CHAPTER I

No systematic study of T'ang ceramic forms is known to exist in the English language¹. Indeed, it seems comparatively little has been written on the overall subject of ceramic art in the T'ang dynasty. On the other hand, western scholars have been, and still are, greatly in favour of the later wares - ceramics of the Sung dynasty and after. It seems therefore appropriate to start the present thesis with a brief exploration into the history of ceramic collection and scholarship both in the West and in China. This attempt will hopefully provide some historical reasons that will account for the relative absence of research concerning the early ware of a pre-Sung date.

The first western exhibition of Chinese ceramics was held in London in 1896², and by 1899 S. W. Bushell had published a major work on the subject, Oriental Ceramic Art. Within the next few decades, a great number of antique ceramic objects from China reached the West and Japan. This influx that took place shortly after the turn of the century was dramatically felt, affecting corresponding advances in the knowledge of this field. This advancement in scholarship

1. An article appearing in the Chinese archaeological journal, Wen Wu, deals partly with the evolution of T'ang ceramic forms. This source will briefly be mentioned towards the end of this chapter, and discussed in more detail in the concluding chapter.

2. This early exhibition consists primarily of ceramic objects from the Ming period, see Exhibition of Coloured Chinese Porcelain, Burlington Fine Arts Club, London, 1896.

may be illustrated by contrasting the opinions of two contemporary authors of that time.

Writing in 1902, Hippisley stated

"The description which has been attempted of the varieties of porcelain hitherto enumerated (i.e. Han and T'ang wares) possessed merely a historical interest. No specimens manufactured prior to the advent of the Sung dynasty have survived to the present day." 3

What a far cry this is compared to the view expressed by A. L. Hetherington just twenty years later. In a chapter dedicated to the wares of the T'ang dynasty, he remarked,

"At the present time we know more about the potter's craft from the seventh to the end of the ninth century than we do about some of the later wares." 4

Since then, scholarship in the field of Chinese ceramics again reversed the opinion of Mr. Hetherington. The last decades saw the publication of many books on the wares of later periods - Yüan Porcelain and Stoneware, Ming Pottery and Porcelain, Oriental Blue and White, Blanc de Chine, and Chinese Export Wares, to name but a few. At the same time, readers often find that survey books on the subject of Chinese ceramics contain much more factual information concerning later wares than those having a pre-Sung date.

The reasons for the disproportionate number of studies in favour of later ceramics are many. In this brief exploration, the author would like to consider only those which may be interpreted into the two frameworks within the field

3. Hippisley, A. E., Ceramic Art in China (quoted from Hetherington, A. L., The Early Ceramic Wares of China, London, 1924, p. 43.

4. Hetherington, A. L., The Early Ceramic Wares of China, London, 1924, p. 71.

of art history - that of connoisseurship and archaeology. It is the view of the author that although there exist overlaps, scholarship pertaining to later wares belongs predominately to the realm of the connoisseur, while the study of early ceramics has close ties with the archaeological disciplines.

In the past, western studies in the field of Chinese ceramics have leaned heavily on the side of connoisseurship. This approach, involving critical judgement in matters of taste, was in many respects largely inherited from the Chinese themselves, and before returning to the West, it may be best to examine the tradition of ceramic collection and scholarship in China.

It is uncertain when precisely connoisseurship in ceramics started in China. Treatises on the subject, such as the Tao Shuo, Tao Ya, and Tao Lu, do not reveal any information regarding the origins of ceramic collection. From the above sources, however, one immediately notices that they are primarily concerned with wares of a post-T'ang date. Information regarding pre-Sung wares is only scantily mentioned. This near-negligence in the treatment of early ceramics in traditional Chinese texts indeed seems prevalent. It is seen again in the Li tai ming tz'u t'u pu, "Illustrated Description of the Celebrated Porcelain of Different Dynasties", compiled by Hsiang Yuan-p'ien around the end of the sixteenth century. Of the eighty-two illustrations showing objects which were appreciated by connoisseurs at that time, forty-two belonged to the Sung

(960-1279), one piece to the Yuan (1279-1368), and the remaining thirty-nine belong to the Ming (1368-1644)⁵.

Besides receiving only infrequent mention in traditional ceramic treatises, the records of the T'ang histories also contain little mention of the potter's craft. Only very general and passing remarks were made concerning the tributary wares sent to the court by the few better known kilns such as Yüeh chou, Jao chou, and one Hsing chou⁶.

The lack of attention paid to early wares in textual accounts suggests that ceramic art before the Sung dynasty did not fully enjoy the patronage of the court, nor were ceramic objects avidly collected by men of cultivation.

All of this changed in the Sung dynasty. Under the patronage of the Sung emperors, pottery kilns came under imperial supervision, and the "official" wares were established. Sung ceramics were produced by and for a cultural élite that was perhaps more cultivated than any other that has existed in Chinese history. The quest for beauty and refinement at times developed to a point of fastidiousness, as may be exemplified by the case in which Ting ware was deemed unfit for official use on account of its unglazed or metal fitted rim⁷. The Sung court must have been the

5. Bushell, S. W., Description of Chinese Pottery and Porcelain : Being a Translation of the T'ao shuo, Oxford, 1910, p. XVII.

6. For recorded mention of T'ang ware in T'ang literature and history, see WW, 1972, no. 3, p. 40, chart 1.

7. The Sung author, Yeh chih, stated, "The white ware of T'ing chou was deemed inappropriate for usage by the court on account of its 'mang'. Consequently, an order was passed to produce green-glazed ware at Ju chou." See KG, 1974, no. 6, p. 405, footnote 17. For a definition of the term "mang" see page 386 of the above reference.

greatest patron of the ceramic industry, for it is recorded in the Sung History that from a single kiln site, porcelain numbering 112,627 pieces were sent to the court as tributes⁸. As a result of this new enthusiasm, it is no wonder that later Chinese connoisseurs began to classify certain wares of that period - those of Ting, Ju, Kuan, Chün, and Lung-ch'uan, as the "classic" wares of Chinese ceramics.

Under this cultivated climate nurtured by the Sung emperors, scholars and collectors also developed a passion for connoisseurship. Mi Fei (1050-1107), one of the greatest connoisseurs of painting in the Sung period, also collected pottery ink stones. In the book Yen shih (History of the Ink-Stone), he wrote,

"In the home of Ch'en Wen-wei, there is a pottery ink stone from the time of Yen, the King of Shu. It is accompanied by a cover on which is surmounted a phoenix. The other parts of the stone are carved with various flowers and grass ... Also inscribed are the characters 'Feng Hwang Tai' (The Platform of the Phoenix)." 9

The evidence cited in the paragraphs above supports the theory that the origin of proper ceramics connoisseurship probably started in the Sung. However, it is still necessary to offer some explanation for the traditional lack of attention paid to the wares of the earlier periods. One reason may simply be that few T'ang wares survived the successive wars which followed in the wake of the An Lu-shan

8. This number was recorded in the chapter on geography of the Sung History, and in reference to the province of Shensi. See KG, 1962, no. 6, p. 312.

9. LSJX, 1955, no. 1, p. 27.

rebellion that began in 756. From the mid-eighth century to the establishment of the Sung, China suffered the loss of Central Asia to the Uighurs, the Tibetan invasion and the sacking of Changan, rebellions by local warlords, and the political chaos of the Five Dynasties. It is likely that many of the kiln sites were destroyed during the turmoil of the period.

Another explanation for the general neglect of the wares of the T'ang dynasty may be found in the differing aesthetic taste of the Sung period. The influence of Sung imperial patronage fostered in the ceramic art a sense of refinement and cultivated elegance, quite unlike the robust and unsophisticated vigour that characterise T'ang wares.

Still another explanation for the seemingly deliberate neglect relating to early ceramics may be the association of these with the "ming chi", tomb furnishings of the dead. As there is every reason to believe that traditionally the Chinese were aware of the existence of tomb furnishings, they were always considered too closely associated with the inauspiciousness of death to be considered worthy of collecting. Even, or perhaps especially, in the Sung period, those who went against social taboos were viewed with misgivings by their contemporaries. The gentleman dealer of the Sung, Pi Shao-tung, named his studio "The Pavilion of Death", because he possessed objects acquired from grave sites¹⁰. Social sentiments were so strong that

10. Fontein, J. and Wu, T., Unearthing China's Past, Boston, 1973, p. 14.

the archaeologist and connoisseur of calligraphy Yüeh K'ö (1173-1240) reproduced only a single "ming chi" in one of his books¹¹.

Possibly due to the reasons discussed above, the traditional trend in the collection and scholarship of ceramics in China has been greatly in favour of the later wares. The collection which best represents the culmination of this tradition is that found in the National Palace Museum, Taiwan. Formerly of the Imperial collection, ceramic objects of the collection number over 23,780 pieces. Of this number, less than ten pieces are of a pre-Sung date¹².

With the Chinese historical account as background, we may now turn our attention back to the topic of Chinese ceramics in the West.

China has exported ceramic wares westward from as early as the T'ang dynasty, as is evident from the finds at Fostat and Samarra¹³. In the Sung and especially in the Yüan period, an increase in the trade of porcelain occurred. The market for these earlier periods was primarily the Muslim Near East¹⁴, and many of these objects found their

11. Ibid., p. 14.

12. For an inventory of the ceramic collection, see Selection of Masterworks in the Collection of the National Palace Museum, Taiwan, 1974, p. 37. Curiously, the inventory list does not record any ceramic objects of a pre-Sung date. The number ten attributed to the group of earlier ceramic objects is a guess of the present author based on his experience with the collection.

13. See Sarre, Die Keramik von Samarra, Berlin, 1925.

14. Medley, M., Yüan Porcelain and Stoneware, London, 1974, p. 5 and p. 7.

way to the West. By the Ming and Ch'ing dynasties, Chinese porcelain was directly sought after by almost every nation in Europe¹⁵. T. Volker, in his publication of the records of the Dutch India Company, 1602-1682, concluded that during this period approximately 12 million pieces of Chinese porcelain were imported by the Dutch alone¹⁶.

This ample availability of objects of the later periods, coupled with the Western records kept during the transactions in trade, provided excellent material for studies. Scholarship of Chinese ceramics in the West is also greatly enhanced by the considerable quantity of Chinese treatises available in this field.

Another less obvious element which aided the study of later ceramics is the existence of marks and documentations on the body of the pieces themselves. Although objects with inscriptions from as early as the Han dynasty have been found¹⁷, reign and hallmarks probably did not become a consistent feature until the Yüan period, where they were stamped on the body of the "shu-fu" ware. Since then, these marks have become a regular occurrence on the vessels of

15. For details, see Gordon, E., Chinese Export Porcelain, an Historical Survey, New York, 1977.

16. Ibid., p. 9.

17. A jar inscribed with a total of thirty-three characters, datable to the sixteenth year of Yung-yüan (equivalent to A.D. 94) has been excavated from a Six-Dynasties tomb. See KG, 1973, no. 6, p. 355, and fig. 5.

the Ming, Ch'ing, and even present day wares¹⁸. These are normally found written on the bottom of the objects. In addition, the body of later ceramic wares often contains inscriptions in the form of dedications, poems, or verses of appreciation¹⁹. Collectively, these reign marks and inscriptions provide valuable and tangible evidence for the connoisseur of ceramics and help to date and give provenance to a piece. Barring the possibility of forgeries, the inscribed documentations on the pots often give insight to the studio of production, and even past ownership of the vessels concerned.

This important feature typifying later wares, coupled with the considerable number of Western records and Chinese treatises, contributed greatly to the connoisseurship of Chinese ceramics in the West. The pursuit of the connoisseur is thus characterised by the exercise of critical judgement through the investigation of historical records along with the examination of tangible evidence present on the body of the vessels. In this respect, Western scholarship on the subject of later ceramic wares has been immensely successful.

18. For further details, see Hobson, R. L., Chinese Pottery and Porcelain, London, 1915, Chapter XVII, "Marks on Chinese Pottery and Porcelain".

19. The pair of David Temple Vases serves as an excellent example. Each vase bears a long inscription dated 1351 stating that the vases, together with an incense burner, were presented by Chang Wên-chin to a temple of Hu Ching-i. The home of the donors has been identified from the inscription, to be a town seventy miles from Ching-tê-chên in Kiangsi.

With the study of earlier wares, however, the methods of the connoisseur cannot be so conveniently applied. This is due mainly to a lack of the precise factors which made favourable the study of later ceramics. Mentioned already is the paucity of Chinese accounts dealing with this subject in ceramic treatises. The existing accounts are often very brief and limited to vague descriptions, like those found in the Tao Shuo²⁰. As mentioned earlier, no account of great significance regarding early ceramics is known to exist in the historical annals. Yet, the wares of the T'ang dynasty must have enjoyed considerable popularity. This is evident from the great quantity excavated from T'ang tombs and from the praise bestowed upon these wares by the T'ang poets²¹. Unfortunately, poetic appraisals and general descriptions do not provide tangible material for a serious study.

Without the benefit of adequate historical documentation, the connoisseur's approach to the study of early wares is further made difficult by the lack of reign marks or inscriptions on the pieces themselves. Confronted with these problems, it is not difficult to see why Western scholarship in the past has favoured the study of later wares, where a connoisseur's approach can be applied effectively.

20. See Bushell, S. W., Description of Chinese Pottery and Porcelain, Being a Translation of the T'ao Shuo., Oxford, 1910, Book IV, pp. 101-108.

21. For an account of some poetic works which praise ceramic wares of the T'ang period, see WW, 1972, no. 3, pp. 34-35.

We may now turn our attention to the early wares, and investigate their ties to the discipline of archaeology. A great number of Chinese ceramic vessels in the present ownership of Western collections were acquired around the turn of the twentieth century, a time of political chaos in China. Some of these objects, such as the painted neolithic pottery, were legitimately excavated by Westerners and taken out of China²². Most of the objects, however, were excavated and exported in clandestine operations. They were, more often than not, obtained by Chinese grave robbers and taken to the antique markets of Peking and Shanghai, where they were then dispersed to collections in Europe, America, and Japan. Most of these objects arrived at their final destinations through so many intermediaries that there is little or no indication as to their original provenance or date.

Due to the lack of documentation concerning these objects, earlier knowledge of them was necessarily general. Even if these early pieces were attributed to the correct dynasties, there were very few reliable methods which enabled a more precise date within a period. Needless to say, almost no information concerning their place of production was available.

These newly arrived objects presented a challenge to ceramic scholars. Lacking marks and inscriptions, the early vessels were little known even in their native land. As a

22. Fontein, J., and Wu, T., Unearthing China's Past, Boston, 1973, p. 17.

result, the criteria on which these objects were attributed were primarily based on characteristics such as glaze, body paste, and form.

At the present, some of the past uncertainties may be remedied with the help of studies carried out inside China in the last decades. Before using these, however, it is necessary to give up the connoisseur's approach and adopt the attitude of the archaeologist.

Within the last three decades, controlled excavations undertaken on the Chinese mainland have yielded a wealth of important finds which enable a more accurate study of early Chinese ceramics. Objects excavated from tombs, many of which contain dated inscriptions, have turned up in great numbers all over China. At the same time, discoveries and excavations of pre-Sung kiln sites have produced many ceramic specimens and valuable information regarding the production of wares in China at that time. Collectively, these newly excavated artifacts constitute the most reliable group of material available for the updating of our knowledge of the early Chinese ceramic wares.

Gradually and increasingly, ceramic scholars outside China are making use of this primary material to further their studies. Objects acquired in the past of questionable date and origin are now subjected to comparisons in the light of newly excavated finds. This relatively new approach has proven so useful that there are now almost no serious publications in the field of early Chinese ceramics which have not made extensive use of the primary evidence published

in the Chinese archaeological journals.

Two particularly informative works which made abundant use of Chinese archaeological sources are Unearthing China's Past and Sekai Tōji Zenshū (Catalogue of World Ceramics), Vol. 11. The former is a detailed catalogue of an exhibition held at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Written by Jan Fontein and Wu Tung, this work makes extensive use of Chinese archaeological data. A discussion of each entry is made in the light of recent finds. The comparison of objects extant in Western collections with similar pieces excavated "in situ" yields valuable insight as to the possible date, provenance, and function of many objects of previously questionable or unknown origin.

The Japanese publication, Sekai Tōji Zenshū, Vol. 11, concerns itself with the wares of the Sui and T'ang dynasties. It is composed of chapters listed under different headings and written by various authors. Although different from the Boston catalogue, the Japanese authors nevertheless made ample use of archaeological evidence to attribute date and provenance to objects which are discussed in the book. Besides the comparison of objects, this work also contains a chart full of useful information regarding important dated tombs of the Sui, T'ang, and Five Dynasties periods, and the objects that each contained.

Both of the publications mentioned above have been inspirational to the writing of the present thesis. Two others are Chinese articles appearing in archaeological journals. One is written by Li Chih-yen and entitled "A

General Survey of T'ang Ceramic Kilns and the Periodic Distribution of T'ang Ceramic Wares"²³. The other is written by Chih Yen and entitled "The Development of Sui Porcelain"²⁴. Both articles contain interesting accounts of some ceramic forms which were used in Sui and T'ang periods. The findings of these two works will be discussed and compared with the findings of this paper in the concluding chapter.

It is the contention of this thesis that there exists a need for more systematic studies in the field of early Chinese ceramics. New research should make more use of the Chinese archaeological reports, as they constitute the most primary of sources except for the actual excavated objects themselves. As much as possible a systematised study should also contain, as in Sekai Tōji Zenshū, a body of collated material whose information may be readily available for future reference.

The aim of this thesis is to present a chronological study of Sui and T'ang ceramic forms. The emphasis is placed on the provincial distribution and sites of production of these forms. It is hoped that this study will provide an evolutionary and stylistic framework from which art historical conclusions may be drawn. An additional function of the chronology is to provide a framework within which object of unknown or questionable origin may be examined.

23. WW, 1972, no. 3, pp. 34-48.

24. WW, 1977, no. 2, pp. 57-62.

CHAPTER II

This chapter is divided primarily into two parts, preceded by an explanatory text. The first consists of three chronological charts, to be found in the supplementary pocket at the end of the thesis. The second part contains the formal documentation of the prototypal objects represented in the chronological charts. The following text will further explain the structure and notation of the two parts.

The chronological charts are three in number; respectively, they represent the time segments of 450 to 950, 500 to 750, and 700 to 900. The first one is twice the size of the other two and on it is charted the evolution of eleven prototypal ceramic forms. Although the T'ang dynasty lasted only from the years 618 to 907, it was thought best to extend the time segment to include parts of the Six Dynasties (220-580), the Sui (581-618), and parts of the Five Dynasties (907-960). The reason for the extension is to insure a sense of continuity to the chronology. It is demonstrable that many of the vessels that were used in the T'ang period owe their origins to prototypes of a much earlier date. The inclusion of objects from the Five Dynasties period into the chronology helps to indicate the trend of evolution which certain forms followed after the fall of the T'ang dynasty.

The second chart is concerned with the occurrence of a group of jars, some of which are inter-related. These

prototypes are six in number and plotted within a time segment from 500 to 750. After the latter date, no dated examples of these forms have been found.

The third chart shows the evolution of the ewer forms. The segment of time in this chart dates only from 700 to 950. The reason for this will be discussed in Chapter III in the analysis of prototype XVIII.

The compilation of any chronology poses a number of natural limitations and problems, and some of these encountered in the course of this writing warrant mentioning. As the illustrations of the objects in the chronology come almost exclusively from Chinese archaeological sources, there is the natural and inevitable shortage of original photographs. Since a single excavated tomb can yield up to as many as one thousand objects in different media, it was never possible to illustrate but a fraction of the finds from any individual dig¹. A problem is posed by the poor quality of some of the earlier photographs. For this there is no easy solution, as often the original photographs are the only illustrations that are available of the objects.

A different inadequacy of the original archaeological reports is that regarding documentation. It is not uncommon to find oneself in a position of being unable to locate the

1. The tomb of Princess Yung Tai, who died in the year 702, yielded a total of more than 1,000 objects in various media. These include 185 ceramic vessels, 774 pieces of figurines made from pottery and wood, 92 coins, and over 100 metal objects. See Hasebe, G. and Sato, M., Ceramic Art of the World, Vol 11, (text in Japanese), Tokyo 1976, p. 301.

dimensions to certain illustrated objects. Consequently, there exist a few unavoidable blanks in the documentation of the present chronology.

The selection of prototypes to be represented in the chronology took considerable deliberation. It was clear from the beginning that in a writing of finite length and scope, some decisions must be made with regard to the elimination of certain prototypal forms from the chronology. The first group of objects to be eliminated from our concern consists of forms which had undergone little noticeable change throughout history, or whose changes are too subtle to be examined with the present sources available. Forms included in this group are ordinary cups, bowls and plates.

Other forms are excluded from this study for reasons of being too unique. Objects in this category often bear little resemblance to any other forms and occur very infrequently. The inclusion of these atypical forms would add little to the overall usefulness of the chronology.

The prototypes selected for the chronological charts are chosen on the basis that each possesses characteristics which are distinguishable from other prototypes yet consistent with members of its own. As much as it is possible, the objects of the chronology come from excavated tombs with inscribed or reliably-deduced tombs. The photographs are reproduced almost exclusively from Chinese archaeological journals; namely, Kaogu Tung Shun, Kaogu, Wen Wu Tsau-kao Tzu-liao, Wu Wu, and Kaogu Xuebao.

The format and numbering system of the chronology merit some explanation. Due to the large number of objects to be presented it was necessary to keep the photographs to a manageable size. Each horizontally plotted progression represents the evolution of a particular prototypal form. The prototypes are each assigned a Roman numeral, to be found on the left-hand margin of the charts.

Every photograph in the chronology is assigned a number, found either beneath or above the object. These are respectively the prototypal number and the discussion number. Those with a prototypal number are permanent members of the chronology. This number is composed of a Roman numeral followed by an ~~Arabic~~ Arabic number. In certain prototypes where subgrouping is necessary, a capital letter between the two numbers will be used to indicate a subgroup. Thus, the prototypal object with number XVII A 3 would refer to an object of subgroup A in prototype XVII, and its occurrence in the permanent framework of the chronology would be third. Every object with a prototypal number is formally documented in Section Two of this chapter.

The discussion number, found above the object, is composed of a Roman numeral signifying the prototype to which it belongs, but followed by a small-case letter of the alphabet. Objects with a discussion number are not formally documented, nor are they permanent members of the chronological framework. These are usually only generally dated. They are charted for the purpose of discussion and comparison, and the sources for them are footnoted in the analysis in Chapter III.

Section Two of this chapter contains the formal documentation of every prototypal object in the chronology. The documentation is normally listed under four headings. A fifth one may be added in a case where the dating of the object is deduced rather than inscribed. The headings are as follows :

1. Province of excavation
2. Date of tomb
3. Dimension - in height only
4. Source
5. (Only where applicable) comments regarding the attribution of the deduced date.

Thus, the entry for the first prototypal form would be :

I 1

1. Chekiang
2. 447
- 3.
4. WT, 1955, no. 11, p. 19.

The third heading in this example is left blank because no dimension to this particular piece could be found in the original report. A fifth heading is not necessary here since the tomb was datable to an inscription found on one of its bricks. To the right of some entries, a photograph showing a cross-section view of the corresponding piece may be included if one is available. This additional photograph helps to show the relative thickness and hidden features, like the foot or base, of the object.

Prototype I

I 1

1. Chêkiang
2. 447
- 3.
4. WT, 1955, no. 11, p. 19

I 2

1. Shansi
2. 567
3. H. approx. 34.5 cm. rim to base
4. WW, 1975, no. 4, p. 64



I 3

1. Shensi
2. 608
3. H. 26.5 cm.
4. KK, 1959, no. 9, p. 471

I 4

1. Hupei
2. C. Sui
3. H. 25.0 cm.
4. KT, 1957, no. 6, p. 30
5. Datable by "Wu-chu" coins

I 5

1. Shensi
2. 668
3. H. 19.7 cm.
4. WW, 1959, no. 3, p. 43

I 6

1. Szechuan
2. 955
- 3.
4. KT, 1958, no. 5, p. 18

Prototype II

II 1

1. Anhui
2. 586
3. H. 47.0 cm.
4. KG, 1976, no. 2, p. 134

II 2

1. Hopei
2. C. 589
3. H. 39.5 cm.
4. KT, 1957, no. 3, p. 28
5. Fêng family tomb group, with five dated tomb stabs : 484, 541, 565, 583, 589

II 3

1. Anhui
2. 600
3. H. 18.0 cm.
4. KG, 1977, no. 1, p. 65

II 4

1. Shensi
2. 608
- 3.
4. KG, 1959, no. 9, p. 471

II 5

1. Shensi
2. 615
3. H. 26.3 cm.
4. KGXB, 1956, no. 3, p. 33

II 6

1. Fukien
2. 930
3. H. 21.0 cm.
4. WW, 1975, no. 1, p. 62

Prototype III

III A 1

1. Hunan
2. 499
3. H. 30.0 cm.
4. WT, 1957, no. 12, p. 45

III B 1

1. Hunan
2. 499
- 3.
4. WT, 1957, no. 12, p. 45

III B 2

1. Kansu
2. 528
3. H. 36.5 cm
4. WW, 1975, no. 6, p. 85

III B 3

1. Anhui
2. 946
3. H. 30.0 cm.
4. WT, 1958, no. 3, p. 65

III C 1

1. Honan
2. 575
3. H. 23.0 cm.
4. WW, 1972, no. 1, p. 47

III C 2

1. Shansi
2. C. 679
3. H. 15.0 cm.
4. KG, 1960, no. 1, p. 37
5. Tomb construction and objects excavated closely resemble those of a tomb dated 679

III C 3

1. Shansi
2. C. 679
3. H. 24.0 cm.
4. KG, 1960, no. 1, p. 37
5. Tomb construction and objects excavated closely resemble those of a tomb dated 679

III C 4

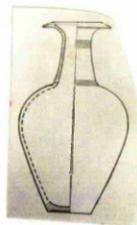
1. Shansi
2. 684
3. H. 24.5 cm.
4. KG, 1965, no. 9, p. 462

III C 5

1. Shansi
2. C. 696
3. H. 23.4 cm.
4. KG, 1959, no. 9, p. 473
5. Tomb construction and paintings closely resemble those of a tomb dated 696

III D 1

1. Shansi
2. 567
3. H. 38.0 cm.
4. WW, 1975, no. 4, p. 64



III D 2

1. Shensi
2. 615
3. H. 24.0 cm.
4. KGXB, 1956, no. 3, p. 33

Prototype IV

IV 1

1. Chêkiang
2. After 759
3. H. 26.7 cm.
4. KG, 1958, no. 12, p. 22
5. Date deduced by coins found in tomb

IV 2

1. Chêkiang
2. 850
3. H. 30.0 cm.
4. KGXB, 1959, no. 3, p. 107
5. Date inscribed on body

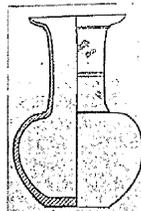
Prototype V

V 1

1. Hupei
2. C. Sui
- 3.
4. KT, 1957, no. 6, p. 30
5. Datable by "Wu chu" coins

V 2

1. Kiangsu
2. 787
3. H. 33.5 cm.
4. KT, 1957, no. 6, p. 30



Prototype VI

VI 1

1. Hopei
2. C. latter 6th century
3. H. 20.1 cm.
4. KT, 1957, no. 3, p. 28
5. Feng family tomb group, with five dated tomb slabs : 484, 541, 565, 583, 589

VI 2

1. Honan
2. 595
3. H. 12.0 cm.
4. KG, 1959, no. 10, p. 541

VI 3

1. Shensi
2. 610
3. H. 18.8 cm.
4. WW, 1959, no. 8, p. 4

VI 4

1. Shensi
2. 706
- 3.
4. WW, 1964, no. 1, p. 7

Prototype VII

VII A 1

1. Honan
2. 575
- 3.
4. WW, 1972, no. 1, p. 47

VII A 2

1. Shensi
2. 611
3. H. 15.0 cm.
4. WT, 1957, no. 8, p. 65

VII A 3

1. Hopei
2. 649
- 3.
4. KG, 1959, no. 1, p. 24

VII A 4

1. Shansi
2. C. 696
3. H. 23.0 cm.
4. KG, 1959, no. 9, p. 473
5. Tomb construction and paintings closely resemble those of a tomb dated 696

VII A 5

1. Shansi
2. 704
3. H. 32.0 cm.
4. KG, 1962, no. 2, p. 63

VII A 6

1. Honan
2. 711
3. H. 32.0 cm.
4. KG, 1964, no. 6, p. 294

VII A 7

1. Hopei
2. 736
- 3.
4. KG, 1959, no. 1, p. 24

VII A 8

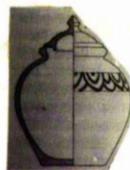
1. Shansi
2. 771
3. H. 32.0 cm.
4. KG, 1965, no. 8, p. 389

VII B 1

1. Honan
2. 595
3. H. 33.0 cm.
4. KG, 1959, no. 10, p. 541

VII B 2

1. Liaoning
2. 741
3. H. approx. 33.0 cm.
4. KG, 1973, no. 6, p. 356



VII B 3

1. Kiangsu
2. 787
3. H. 11.5 cm.
4. KG, 1966, no. 4, p. 227

Prototype VIII

VIII 1

1. Shensi
2. 707
3. H. 51.5 cm.
4. KT, 1956, no. 6, p. 50

VIII 2

1. Shensi
2. 728
3. H. 119.5 cm.
4. KT, 1956, no. 6, p. 47

VIII 3

1. Honan
2. 784
3. H. 50.0 cm.
4. WT, 1956, no. 5, p. 41

VIII 4

1. Shensi
2. 801
3. H. 52.5 cm.
4. KGXB, 1956, no. 3, p. 33



VIII 5

1. Honan
2. 850
- 3.
4. KT, 1957, no. 4, p. 9

Prototype IX

IX 1

1. Kiangsi
2. C. 600
3. H. 9.0 cm.
4. KG, 1960, no. 1, p. 26
5. Excavated from a group of eight tombs from which three dated slabs inscribed with dates 591, 599, and 606 were found.

IX 2

1. Shansi
2. C. 679
3. H. 8.0 cm
4. KG, 1960, no. 1, p. 37
5. Objects from this tomb very similar to those from a tomb dated 679

IX 3

1. Shansi
2. C. 696
3. H. 10.2 cm
4. KG, 1959, no. 9, p. 473
5. Objects from this tomb very similar to those found in a tomb dated 696

IX 4

1. Anhui
2. 946
3. H. 6.0 cm
4. WT, 1958, no. 3, p. 65

Prototype X

X 1

1. Hupei
2. 485
3. H. 6.5 cm.
4. KG, 1965, no. 4, p. 177

X 2

1. Fukien
2. C. 500
3. H. 4.8 cm
4. KG, 1965, no. 8, p. 426
5. Construction of tomb is very similar to one nearby which is dated 497

X 3

1. Hopei
2. C. 565
3. H. 8.7 cm
4. KG, 1959, no. 4, p. 191
5. Fêng family tomb group, with five dated tomb slabs : 484, 541, 565, 583, 589

X 4

1. Fukien
2. C. 630
- 3.
4. HJAS, 1937, no. 4, p. 1.
5. Date inferred by inscribed bricks

X 5

1. Shansi
2. 771
3. H. 3.5 cm
4. KG, 1965, no. 8, p. 389

X 6

1. Chêkiang
2. C. 848
3. H. of bowl 4.5 cm, H. of stand 3.5 cm.
4. WW, 1976, no. 7, p. 60
5. Object found amidst heap along with a bowl inscribed with a date of 850

X 7

1. Chêkiang
2. 898
- 3.
4. KG, 1975, no. 3, p. 186
5. Found with inscribed brick

Prototype XI

XI 1

1. Shensi
2. 654 or 675
3. H. 10.0 cm
4. KG, 1977, no. 2, p. 132

XI 2

1. Liaoning
2. 684
- 3.
4. WW, 1959, no. 5, p. 62

XI 3

1. Shansi
2. 704
- 3.
4. KG, 1962, no. 2, p. 63

XI 4

1. Hopei
2. C. 735
- 3.
4. KG, 1959, no. 7, p. 350
5. The date "33rd year of Kai-yüan" was given in the original article. The Kai-yüan reign lasted only 28 years. Perhaps a misprint occurred and the date should have been "23rd year of Kai-yüan".

XI 5

1. Liaoning
2. 741
3. H. 27.6 cm.
4. KG, 1973, no. 6, p. 356

XI 6

1. Honan
2. 758 or 784
3. H. 24.0 cm.
4. WT, 1956, no. 5, p. 41
5. The man was buried in 758, his wife in 784

XI 7

1. Shensi
2. 801
3. H. 28.5 cm.
4. KGXB, 1956, no. 3, p. 33

XI 8

1. Kiangsu
2. 850
3. H. 14.5 cm.
4. WW, 1963, no. 5, p. 70

XI 9

1. Kiangsu
2. 886
3. H. 20.5 cm.
4. KG, 1964, no. 6, p. 321

XI 10

1. Szechuan
2. 955
3. H. 9.1 cm.
4. KT, 1958, no. 5, p. 18

Prototype XII

XII A 1

1. Hupei
2. 485
3. H. 32.8 cm.
4. WT, 1957, no. 1, p. 69

XII A 2

1. Honan
2. 575
3. H. 20.0 cm.
4. WW, 1972, no. 1, p. 47

XII A 3

1. Honan
2. 576
3. H. 24.0 cm.
4. KG, 1964, no. 9, p. 482

XII A 4

1. Honan
2. 576
- 3.
4. KG, 1964, no. 9, p. 482

XII B 1

1. Hopei
2. C. 583
3. H. 24.6 cm.
4. KT, 1957, no. 3, p. 28
5. Fêng family tomb group, with five dated tomb slabs : 484, 541, 565, 569, 583

XII B 2

1. Honan
2. 589
- 3.
4. KG, 1973, no. 4, p. 232

XII B 3

1. Honan
2. C. 596
3. H. 25.0 cm.
4. KT, 1956, no. 6, p. 71
5. Inscribed tomb slab is illustrated but not read. Inscription contains date equivalent to 596

XII B 4

1. Honan
2. 603
3. H. 18.2 cm.
4. WT, 1958, no. 8, p. 47



XII B 5

1. Shensi
2. 608
- 3.
4. KG, 1959, no. 9, p. 471

XII B 6

1. Shensi
2. 668
3. H. 30.0 cm.
4. WW, 1959, no. 3, p. 43

XII B 7

1. Liaoning
2. 741
3. H. 27.6 cm.
4. KG, 1973, no. 6, p. 356

Prototype XIII

XIII 1

1. Kueichou
2. C. 5th to 6th century
3. H. 20.5 cm.
4. KG, 1973, no. 6, p. 345
5. Object attributed to the Six Dynasties period



XIII 2

1. Honan
2. 576
3. H. 28.0 cm.
4. KG, 1964, no. 9, p. 482

XIII 3

1. Anhui
2. 607
3. H. 20.0 cm.
4. KG, 1977, no. 1, p. 65

XIII 4

1. Shensi
2. 611
3. H. 18.0 cm.
4. WT, 1957, no. 8, p. 65

XIII 5

1. Shensi
2. 615
3. H. 24.5 cm.
4. KGXB, 1956, no. 3, p. 33

XIII 6

1. Shensi
2. C. 642
3. H. 27.2 cm.
4. KGXB, 1956, no. 3, p. 33
5. Figurines from this tomb said to be very similar to those found in a tomb dated 642 (p. 66)

Prototype XIV

XIV 1

1. Hunan
2. C. 5th to 6th century
3. H. 14.0 cm.
4. KGXB, 1959, no. 3, p. 75
5. Object attributed to the Southern Dynasties



XIV 2

1. Hunan
2. C. Sui
3. H. approx. 4.8 cm.
4. KGXB, 1959, no. 3, p. 75
5. Datable by "Wu-chu" coins



XIV 3

1. Shensi
2. 706
- 3.
4. WW, 1964, no. 1, p. 7

Prototype XV

XV 1

1. Hupei
2. 455
3. H. 11.6 cm.
4. KG, 1965, no. 4, p. 176



XV 2

1. Kiangsi
2. 611
3. H. 13.2 cm.
4. KG, 1977, no. 2, p. 142

Prototype XVI

XVI 1

1. Hupei
2. 455
3. H. 35.6 cm.
4. KG, 1965, no. 4, p. 176



XVI 2

1. Anhui
2. 600
3. H. 32.4 cm.
4. KG, 1977, no. 1, p. 65



Prototype XVII

XVII A 1

1. Kwangtung
2. C. 499
3. H. 18.5 cm.
4. KG, 1961, no. 3, p. 139
5. Tomb from which object was excavated is located next to one which is dated 499. The construction and furnishing of the two are said to be identical.

XVII A 2

1. Kueichou
2. C. 5th to 6th century
3. H. 26.0 cm.
4. KG, 1973, no. 6, p. 345
5. Object is attributed to the Southern Dynasties.



XVII A 3

1. Shensi
2. 608
3. H. 20.0 cm.
4. KG, 1959, no. 9, p. 471

XVII A 4

1. Kwangtung
2. 610
3. H. 19.5 cm.
4. KG, 1965, no. 5, p. 230

XVII A 5

1. Hupei
2. C. Sui
3. H. 13.0 cm.
4. KT, 1957, no. 6, p. 30
5. Datable by "Wu chu" coins.

XVII B 1

1. Kwangtung
2. C. 499
3. H. 20.0 cm.
4. KG, 1961, no. 3, p. 139
5. Tomb construction and furnishing said to be identical to another dated 499.

XVII B 2

1. Kwangtung
2. 730
3. H. 19.0 cm.
4. WW, 1961, no. 6, p. 45



XVII B 3

1. Kwangtung
2. 730
3. H. 20.0 cm.
4. WW, 1961, no. 6, p. 45



XVII C 1

1. Shensi
2. 608
3. H. 15.0 cm.
4. KG, 1959, no. 9, p. 471

Prototype XVIII

XVIII A 1

1. Chêkiang
2. 810
- 3.
4. Chung-kuo Ch'ing-t'ze Shih Lüeh plate 9

XVIII B 1

1. Kiangsu
2. 847
- 3.
4. Chung-kuo Ch'ing-t'ze Shih Lüeh plate 10
5. Date inscribed on body.

XVIII B 2

1. Chêkiang
2. C. 848
3. H. 25.0 cm.
4. WW, 1976, no. 7, p. 60
5. Object found amidst heap which also contains a bowl inscribed with a date equivalent to 848.

XVIII B 3

1. Chêkiang
2. C. 848
- 3.
4. WW, 1976, no. 7, p. 60
5. Object found amidst heap which also contains a bowl inscribed with a date equivalent to 848.

XVIII B 4

1. Chêkiang
2. C. 898
- 3.
4. KG, 1975, no. 3, p. 186
5. Object found with brick inscribed with date equivalent to 898.

XVIII C 1

1. Honan
2. 850
- 3.
4. KT, 1957, no. 4, p. 9

XVIII C 2

1. Honan
2. C. 850
- 3.
4. KT, 1957, no. 4, p. 9
5. Date deduced by a comparison of objects from this tomb to nearby tomb of 850 date.

XVIII D 1

1. Chêkiang
2. C. 848
- 3.
4. WW, 1976, no. 7, p. 60
5. Object found amidst heap which also contains a bowl inscribed with a date equivalent to 848.

XVIII D 2

1. Chêkiang
2. C. 898
- 3.
4. KG, 1975, no. 3, p. 186
5. Object found with brick inscribed 898.

XVIII E 1

1. Honan
2. C. 850
- 3.
4. KT, 1957, no. 4, p. 9
5. Date deduced by a comparison of objects from this tomb to nearby tomb of 850 date.

XVIII F 1

1. Anhui
2. C. 850
- 3.
4. WT, 1954, no. 4, p. 31
5. Similarity with XII 8 of Chronology.

XVIII G 1

1. Anhui
2. 946
3. H. 7.0 cm.
4. WT, 1958, no. 3, p. 65

XVIII H 1

1. Chêkiang
2. C. 898
- 3.
4. KG, 1975, no. 3, p. 186
5. Object found with brick inscribed 898.

CHAPTER III

This chapter contains the interpretation and analysis of the data presented in the previous chapter. Each prototype represented in the chronology is individually discussed. The discussion may include information on the possible origin, historical mention, and function of each prototype. The stylistic trend of evolution of each prototype is examined, and relevant comparisons with its counterparts in other media will be made. The objects for these comparisons may come from other excavations in China, or they may be drawn from collections existing outside China. All illustrations of such objects of comparison are assigned figure numbers, and will appear on the right-hand margin of the text in this and the following two chapters.

Prototype I

Excavated evidence strongly indicates that this unique prototypal form is indigenous to China. In Unearthing China's Past, Fontein notes that the early type of chicken-spouted ewers seem to have been current almost exclusively in the territory governed by the Chin dynasties¹. The dated examples in the chronology show that by the mid-sixth century, the chicken-spouted ewer occurred widely north of the Yangtze River, and three of them come from the tombs of

1. Fontein, J. and Wu, T., Unearthing China's Past, Boston, 1973, p. 140.

the aristocracy². It seems that what started out as a common and regional form in the fourth and fifth centuries later became an item much prized by the metropolitan upper class.

An early piece (fig. 1), datable to 375, was excavated in Ch'angsha, Hunan³. Typifying the earlier examples of this prototype, this piece is squat in proportion, resembling a jar.

fig. 1



The functional spout is located on the broad shoulder - away from the neck. Noteworthy also are the square lugs and the undecorated handle - features of the earlier pieces.

I 1 of the chronology retains the essential structural components of the previous example. The proportions, however, have become slenderer. From a tomb dated 447, the handle of this piece is portrayed in the form of a dragon's head almost resting on the dish mouth.

I a was excavated from Kiangsu and attributed to the T'ang dynasty⁴. Stylistically, this object should be of an earlier date on account of its square lugs and the undecorated body. The dragon on the handle is portrayed biting the lip of the dish mouth. It is unknown whether

2. I 2 was excavated from the tomb of Han Yi, a general and provincial governor of the Northern Ch'i dynasty. I 3 came from the tomb of Li Ch'ing-hsuan, daughter of a prominent official in the Sui administration. I 5 came from the tomb of Li Shuang, a high official of the T'ang dynasty.

3. KGXB, 1959, no. 3, p. 75.

4. Selection of Excavated Cultural Objects from Kiangsu Province (江蘇省出土文物選集), Peking, 1963, plate 155.

the spout of this specimen is functional.

Form I 2 is dated 567 and represents a completed transition from the body of a "jar" to that of a "vase". Immediately noticeable in this example is the inverted lotus petals modelled on the shoulder of the vessel. This is a decorative trait characteristic of the latter half of the sixth century. The square lugs have become thinly cut. This object should be compared to XII A 3, a jar excavated from a tomb dated 576. The square lugs and the lotus-modelled shoulder are very similarly treated.

Attributed to the Sui dynasty or slightly later is I b, excavated from Kiangsu⁵. Stylistically, this piece may precede or succeed I 3. The existence of the separate raised ridges on the neck may encourage the placement of this object between I 3 and I 4. However, this feature can already be seen in II 1 and II 2, objects dated respectively to 586 and c. 589 and belonging to a prototype which is closely related to the present one. Therefore, the neck ridges themselves do not necessarily force a later date than I 3. On the other hand, the shoulder ridge and the auxiliary loop handles indicate an earlier date than I 3. The ridge on the shoulder is most likely to be a vestige of the demarcation made by the lotus leaf motif⁶.

5. Ibid., plate 154.

6. The evolutionary trend of the inverted lotus petal motif can be traced from the plastic to the linear form. These two stages are linked by the intermittent feature of raised ridges. This trend will be discussed in detail in the analysis of Prototype XII.

The auxiliary loop handles, unlike those of I 3, have not yet been attached with the rivet-like studs.

I 3 should be noted for the incised lines on the "chest" of the vessel - an evolution of the ridge in the previous example. The rivet-like studs on the auxiliary loop handles constitute a new decorative element which is to be found on later examples of other prototypes⁷. Also noticeable is a lengthening of the dish mouth, where the dragon is still portrayed "biting" the rim.

The dragon on the handle of I 4 is depicted "drinking" from the vessel, with its head almost inside the very tall dish mouth. The chicken head is no longer located on the shoulder. Instead, it is placed where the neck joins the body. The two protruding ridges on the neck, like I b, are separate and very prominent.

I 5 may be considered a direct descendant of I 4. The two are nearly identical in form except for minor differences. The shape of I 5 is more squat, and this feeling is reinforced by the prominent splayed base and the wide neck. The ridges on the neck of this example have become wide flanges. The dragon is still depicted in a "drinking" position.

I 5 is the last datable piece of this prototype until the mid-tenth century, which produced object I 6. It seems very likely that the occurrence of this form began

7. See prototypal objects XIII 6 and XIV 3 of the chronology. This feature will also be discussed again in Chapter V.

to diminish after the seventh century, although a few may be attributed to the first half of the eighth century on account of their polychrome lead glaze⁸. Belonging to this group is the specimen shown in fig. 2⁹. Although this object has the basic structural components of this prototype, the body proportions are quite unlike those of its predecessors.



fig. 2

I 6, from a tomb in Szechuan dated 955, represents a reoccurrence of the prototypal form with proportions similar to those of the early seventh century. The body of this shard reveals the vertical fluting commonly found on the body of vessels of the late T'ang and Five Dynasties periods. Unfortunately, it is not known what the overall shape was like, or whether the chicken spout was functional.

Concerning the spout of this prototype, a suggestion was made by a Chinese author that the functional type was used by the living, while those with solid spouts were made for tomb furnishing¹⁰. The theory is not completely supported by evidence, as many ewers with functional spouts

8. For a theory on the dating of T'ang "san-ts'ai" ware, see article entitled "On T'ang Soft-glazed Pottery", by William Watson, appearing in Colloquies on Art and Archaeology in Asia, No. 1, University of London, 1970, pp.41-50.

9. Hasebe, G. and Sato, M., Ceramic Art of the World, Vol. 11 Sui and T'ang (世界陶器全集 11 隋唐), Tokyo, 1976, plate 225.

10. WW, 1959, no. 12, p. 51.

have been acquired from excavated tombs (fig. 1, I 1).

For another explanation, we must look to the shapes of the vessels themselves.

The earlier forms of this prototype already indicate two methods of usage. On the one hand, there are those having hollow spouts and handles. On the other hand, there exist examples like fig. 3, which do not have a handle nor a functional spout¹¹. We may presume that the latter is used by grasping the neck and/or the body of the vessel for pouring.



fig. 3

Note that the shoulder is round, enabling easy decanting. The shoulders on examples I 1 and fig. 1, however, are broad, and if a spout is not attached, it would require a pouring angle of over 135° in order to empty the contents. With the addition of a spout and a handle, the vessel functions similarly to a modern teapot, and the pouring angle need not exceed 90° .

Decantation is the major problem concerning the later vessels of tall stature and seemingly equipped with non-functional spouts. Due to their increased size¹², it is unlikely that they were used by grasping with just one hand.

11. Historical Relics Unearthed in New China (新中國出土文物) Peking, 1972, plate 117. This piece is reported to be from Kiangsi, and attributed to the Western Tsin dynasty (265-316).

12. For example, I 2 in the chronology is 37 cm. in height.

Although the near-vertical handles of these later examples appear to be strong enough to withstand the strain of weight in pouring, such an endeavour would require the unnatural twisting of the wrist in order to reach a tilt of near 135 degrees for decanting. This effort would be awkward at best, and dangerous; for a vessel of this size, when full, must weigh a considerable amount. It is more probable that these later examples with non-functional spouts, were used with two hands - one hand on the vertical handle, and the other near the base. Again, because the liquid is poured from the mouthrim, the shoulder of the vessel is rounded rather than broad, so that space for liquid retention is reduced.

Prototype II

This form has an uncertain origin, and no examples prior to the second half of the sixth century have been found. The datable pieces excavated in China all come from north of the Yangtze River - in the provinces of Anhui, Hopei, and Shensi. A specimen without a precise date has also been found in Shantung¹³. Certain examples of this prototype share a remarkable likeness in proportion and basic structure with objects of the previous prototype, the chicken spouted vessel.

The earliest dated example of this form is II 1, excavated in Anhui from a tomb dated 586. The upper body region

13. Selected Items Excavated from Shantung (山東文物選集), Peking, 1959, plate 212.

of this piece, like the chicken-spouted ewer I 2, is decorated with lotus leaf motifs. In the present piece, however, the inverted lotus leaves are contained in three horizontal rows. On the neck are two ridges which are set rather far apart from one another. Inside the register below the handles is a row of impressed circular designs. These circular designs are found impressed rather randomly on the neck of another piece (fig. 4) which is otherwise identical to II 1. Fig. 4 is also found in Anhui and attributed to the Sui dynasty¹⁴.



fig. 4

Object II 2 came from the Fêng family tomb group, which produced five inscribed slabs of dates 484, 541, 565, 583 and 589. This piece is accorded the last date because of its general resemblance to II 1, except that this one is undecorated. Even the ridges on the neck appear in the same position as the II 1.

II 3 is much smaller in height than the previous two, but its relationship to the others can hardly be doubted. The noticeable difference in this piece is the absence of the double neck ridges. Instead, a single one is placed where the base of the neck joins the body.

Both II 4 and II 5 were excavated from the province of Shensi, from tombs dated seven years apart. II 4 was found

14. WW, 1959, no. 6, p. 20, fig. 14.

in the same tomb as prototypal object I 3, and the basic structure and proportion of the two are identical. II 5 closely resembles II 4, except it has four handles instead of two, and the prominently concave base is slightly more splayed. Both of these examples have incised lines on the neck, probably vestiges of the ridges on the earlier examples.

II a is from the collection of the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford¹⁵. It is clearly an object belonging to the present prototype. Although it is not precisely dated, it may be attributed to the latter half of the seventh century. This piece is structurally and proportionally very similar to prototypal object I 5, which is from a tomb in Shensi datable to 668.

No precisely dated examples of this prototype from the eighth and ninth century have been found. A distantly related piece may be that of fig. 5, an object excavated in Inner Mongolia and attributed by the Chinese to the late T'ang period¹⁶. Although equipped with very different handle fittings, the body components of this specimen conform to the other examples of



fig. 5

15. Tregear, M., Catalogue of Chinese Greenware in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, Oxford, 1976, plate 110.

16. Archaeology in New China (新中國的考古收獲) Peking, 1961, plate (cxvii) 1.

this prototype - tall dish mouth, a relatively short neck, and an ovoid body which rests on a slightly splayed base. The tapered base of this example is supported on a splayed foot.

II 6, excavated from a tomb dated 930 in Fukien, may possibly be an evolution of this prototype. The dish mouth so characteristic of the other example has disappeared, and the neck has become considerably wider. A trend to phase out the dish mouth can be detected around the second half of the T'ang period (this is better demonstrated in the evolution of prototype IV).

A special note regarding this prototype is that it seems to share an intimate relationship with prototype I. Obvious resemblance in form can be seen by a comparison of II 4 to I 3, and II a to I 5. An additional similarity shared by objects of these two prototypes is the raised ridges, or incised lines, often found on the neck of these vessels.

Prototype III

Prototype III should be considered that subgroup III A is fundamentally different from subgroup III B. There is, however, a relationship between them in the late 7th and 8th century, when they become merged to some extent to form subgroup III C. III D is eccentric and to a limited extent related to III B.

The origin of this form is traceable to the West. Mario Prodan, in The Art of the T'ang Potter, notes that this bottle is a Roman shape which came from Alexandria via

Afghanistan, Persia, Northern India, and into China. He further adds that this particular bottle is always found resting on the left hand of Buddha images¹⁷. A search for this form in the Buddhist sculptures of China has proven fruitful, in the caves of Maichishan, Kansu. Fig. 6 shows a Bodhisattva holding precisely such an object.



fig. 6

This sculpture is found in Cave 115, and accompanied by a 190 character dedicatory inscription dated to the third year of Hsüan-wu Ti of Wei, equivalent to 502¹⁸.

In addition to being represented in stone, examples of this prototype also occur in metal. Figs. 7, 8 and 9 are all excavated from datable tombs in Northern China. Fig. 7, and one similarly shaped as fig. 8, were found among the objects from the Fêng tombs in Hopei¹⁹. Fig. 8

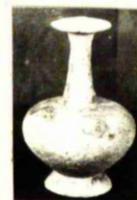


fig. 7

17. Prodan, M., The Art of the T'ang Potter, London, 1960, p. 24.

18. Sullivan, M., The Cave Temples of Maichishan, London, 1969, plate 25, p. 25.

19. KT, 1957, no. 3, p. 33. The Fêng family were members of the aristocracy from the Northern Wei to the Sui dynasty.

came also from a tomb in Hopei datable to 524²⁰. The piece in fig. 9 was excavated in Kansu from a tomb datable to 528²¹. All of the above tombs belonged to Wei nobility



fig. 8



fig. 9

A mention has already been made above regarding the relationship of this prototype to the religion of Buddhism. Therefore, it is not surprising to find these bottles appearing in the tombs of the Wei nobility, as the rulers of this dynasty were great patrons of the Buddhist religion²².

The earliest datable examples of this prototype in the

20. KG, 1972, no. 5, p. 33. This tomb belongs to the wife of a high official in the Wei government.

21. WW, 1975, no. 6, p. 85. This tomb belongs to a Wei Minister of Cultural Affairs.

22. For documentation, see Soper, A. C., Literary Evidence for Early Buddhist Art in China, Switzerland, 1959, pp. 94-114.

ceramic medium are III A 1 and III B 1. Both of them are found in a Ch'i dynasty tomb of a date 499. Interesting is the occurrence of the two distinguishable forms within the same tomb. III A 1 has a metal counterpart in fig. 8, while III B 1, minus a foot, is more closely related to the metal form in fig. 9.

Another set of two bottles near-identical to III A 2 and III B 1 is represented by III a. and III b., both found in a single undated tomb in Hunan²³. Schematic views of these two undated bottles are respectively shown in figs. 10 and 11. Note that III b., like III B 1, is devoid of a foot, and the bottle rests on a flat base.



fig. 10



fig. 11

III B 2, from a Kansu tomb dated 528, is another example of a squat footless bottle. It was excavated from the same tomb as the metal piece in fig. 9. Although proportionately similar, the ceramic object is again footless. In addition, the dimension of the ceramic piece is over twice the size of its metal counterpart (36.5 cm. vs. 16.5 cm. respectively).

Nearly identical in form to the metal piece in fig. 9 is the prototypal form III C 1. Similarly proportioned as

23. KGXB, 1959, no. 3, p. 75, plates XVI:8 and XVII:1.

the example in subgroup III B, III C 1 has acquired a foot. Interpreted in the context of ceramic style, the characteristic of the foot may have come from the taller bottles similar to III A 1 and III a, both of which have a well-trimmed foot. The progression of subgroup III C may be thought of as the offspring of a marriage between subgroups III A and III B. III C 2 to III C 5, and III c are further representations of this trend of combined characteristics. III C 2 and III C 5 have strong affiliations with III A 1 in the long slender neck and the existence of a foot; however, their squatter body proportions recall that which is seen in the subgroup III B. Noteworthy is the tall splayed foot found in the examples of III C 3 and III c, an undated piece excavated from the province of Kiangsu²⁴. This prominently splayed foot is not found in the previous examples of this prototype. This unique feature, however, is found in the metal form in fig. 7. Although not as tall as the ones found in the ceramic examples, the foot of the metal bottle from the Fêng tombs is unquestionably the forerunner of the two ceramic examples.

A different trend of development in this prototype is represented by subgroup III D. Unlike subgroup III C, objects in III D lack a foot, while the body is elongated rather than squat. The attenuated body proportions of III D 1 and III D 2 are similar to that of III A 1; however,

24. WW, 1973, no. 5, p. 72.

the tapered flat base seems to be derived from III B 1. The relationship of this subgroup to III A and III B can be further seen in the neck. The neck of III D 1 is long like the examples of III A 1 and III a, while the neck of III D 2 is short like the ones on the examples of III B 1 and III B 2.

The last dated example of this prototype is III B 3. This piece was excavated from an Anhui tomb datable to 955. It belongs to the subgroup III B as it relates closely to III B 1 : both have wide and comparatively short necks supported by a squat body set on a flat base.

A historical mention of this prototype will serve as a conclusion to the discussion of this form. Ch'ang Tê-ch'ien, writing in P'ing Hua P'u, stated,

"There were no ceramic bottles/vases in the past, they were all made in bronze. It was not until the T'ang dynasty that ceramic ones were made." 25

This account is somewhat inaccurate, for excavated evidence shows that ceramic bottles occurred with their metal counterparts from as early as the late fifth century.

Prototype IV

The task of tracing the stylistic development of this form is not an easy one, and much is dependant on the deduced attributions of the Chinese sources. Only two pieces of this prototype, IV 1 and IV 2, are reliably dated.

25. Fu Chên-lun, China's Great Invention - Ceramics

Peking, 1955, p. 26. (中國偉大的發明—陶瓷)傅振倫著

IV a was excavated from Kiangsu and attributed by the Chinese reporter to the Sui period²⁶. The body components of this piece share similarities with objects belonging to other prototypes. For example, the ovoid body is not unlike that found in III A 1 and III a, while the dish mouth is very similar to II 3. The unique feature of IV a is the low, wide, and almost straight neck. The shoulder is attached with two vertically placed loop handles.

IV b was excavated from a tomb in Chêkiang and attributed to the early T'ang period²⁷. Characteristic similarities between this piece and IV a are evident. The two differ only slightly in proportion, IV b has a taller and slightly flared neck. In addition, the body is widest at the shoulder, with the contour of the body tapering towards the base.

A rather drastic evolution from the previous examples is represented in IV c. Excavated from Kiangsu, this object is attributed to the mid-T'ang period²⁸. A bulbous form with a concave base, this piece is fitted with four horizontal strap handles. The neck reveals an interesting transitional stage of evolution. Only slightly narrower in size to the dish mouth, it foreshadows the development of the single unit trumpet mouth.

The first "neckless" example of this prototype may be

26. KT, 1958, no. 2, p. 46, fig. 5.

27. KT, 1956, no. 6, p. 54.

28. WW, 1973, no. 5, p. 70.

represented by IV d, a piece excavated from Hupei province and attributed to the late T'ang period²⁹. The body of this object is still bulbous like the previous, but the four loop handles have again been placed vertically and closely to the base of the neck. The greatest noticeable change is in the mouth of this object. No longer do the components of this prototype consist of three parts - a dish mouth, the neck, and the body. Instead, the vessel now consists of a body and a single unit flared mouth.

IV 1, the first reliably dated piece of this prototype, shows a further evolution of this form. The flaring mouth of the previous example has evolved into a full trumpet whose diameter is equal in length to the widest part of the body. In example IV 2, the trumpet mouth is even more pronounced, with its diameter well exceeding the largest width of the body. An important note should also be mentioned regarding the handles of the latter example. These two handles of questionable function are attached directly onto the base of the trumpet mouth rather than the shoulder of the vessel.

The next stage of evolution in this prototype may be jointly represented by IV e³⁰ and IV f³¹, two objects

29. KG, 1959, no. 11, p. 622, plate VI:1

30. Watson, W., An Exhibition of Archaeological Finds of the People's Republic of China, London, 1973, fig. 329.

31. Historical Relics Unearthed in New China (新中國出土文物) Peking, 1972, plate 171.

attributed to the Five Dynasties period. The former retained a trait of IV 2 in the location of the handles - they are placed onto the base of the single unit mouth. In the latter examples, the handles are altogether absent. The mouth of these two pieces represent another noticeable evolution. Unlike the dish mouth, or the trumpet mouth which accompanied the vessels of this prototype, the ones in these two examples may be described as a "round funnel" shape.

The objects of this prototype, with the exception of IV d, were found exclusively in Kiangsu and Chekiang, two provinces which are located next to one another along the eastern coast of China.

Prototype V

The evolution of prototype V is also a difficult one to trace, as precisely dated pieces are few. It is again necessary to rely upon the more general attributions given by the authors of the Chinese archaeological reports. Although many specimens of this prototype have been found in the various provinces of China, most of these are near-identical in form. For this reason, only a selected few are charted in the present chronology.

The province of Hunan yielded the greatest number of examples belonging to this prototype, and the area may well be the origin of this form. An early piece is V a, excavated from a Nan-chao tomb in Hunan³². The overall appearance of

32. KGXB, 1959, no. 3, p. 75, plate XVI:1.

this object is squat due to its relatively short neck. The six carefully modelled square handles are placed in a unique manner of two opposing pairs and two opposing single units.

Excavated from a tomb in Kiangsu and dated to the Sui period is V b³³. The handles of this piece appear to be attached differently from the previous piece. Here, they seem to be grouped into three pairs and placed an equal distance from each other. Moreover, the handles are no longer carefully modelled squares; rather, they are the result of coils of clay freely pressed onto the vessel body. Although the structural components of the form remain unchanged, a prominent elongation of the neck occurs, thereby giving the overall form a much taller stature. A cross-section view of a similarly proportioned piece is seen in fig. 12, a piece



fig. 12

excavated from Hunan and attributed also to the Sui dynasty³⁴.

V 1 was found in the same Hupei tomb as prototypical object I 4, and the two have comparable structural components and proportions. V 1 has undergone little change from its direct predecessor except for a sharper concavity towards the base of the vessel.

33. Selection of Excavated Cultural Objects from Kiangsu Province (江蘇省出土文物選集), Peking, 1963, plate 152.

34. KG, 1966, no. 4, p. 205.

The next stage in the evolution of this form may be exemplified by V C, excavated from the province of Hupei and accorded the general attribution of T'ang³⁵. The combined characteristics of the two ridges on the neck and the splayed base should put this object stylistically to the seventh century. This piece may be favourably compared with I 4 and I 5. The latter is datable to 668. The rounder body of this object makes the tall neck even taller, while it is unclear from the photograph and the original text whether there were handles on this vessel.

A handleless example of this prototype is found in V d, excavated from Kiangsi and given the general attribution of T'ang dynasty³⁶. This specimen was acquired from a group of tombs which also yielded an identically proportioned piece which is affixed with six handles in the same manner as V a³⁷. This Kiangsi piece has a rather short body, almost like the result of a truncation of the splayed base in example V c. A further modification is apparent in the dish mouth of V d. Rather than having deep straight sides, the mouth of V d is shallow and rolled. A further development of this trait in Kiangsi is seen in object V 2.

The mouth in prototypal object V 2, which is dated 787, has become very shallow, resembling a saucer. The body is

35. KG, 1959, no. 11, p. 622.

36. KG, 1964, no. 5, p. 234.

37. WT, 1956, no. 2, p. 42.

void of handles and very short in proportion. The neck, however, remains long and narrow. The overall feeling conveyed by this specimen is a slight sense of imbalance.

In the province of Hunan, the evolution of this prototype takes on a different progression, which can be traced by the objects represented in V e^{37^a}, V f³⁸, and V g³⁹. V e came from a tomb near Changsha, and is assigned the general attribution of T'ang. The tomb also yielded a number of Kai-yüan coins; therefore, the tomb could not predate 713⁴⁰. There are broken evidence of handles on this piece, although it is not clear how they were positioned. The most noticeable difference in this piece is the change in the proportions of the body components. The neck and the dish mouth have become noticeably wider in relation to the width of the body. The widening of the top portion of this prototype continues onto V f and V g. At the same time, the widening is accompanied by a shortening of the neck. The overall effect is that the form has thus been significantly changed to a squatter shape. To be noted in this evolution is the phasing out of the handles.

A mention must be made concerning the handles of this prototype. A few suggestions have been made in the primary

37.^a Ibid.

38. WT, 1956, no. 11, p. 46.

39. WW, 1959, no. 8, p. 23.

40. The Kai-yüan reign spanned from 713 to 741.

sources that it appears that the handles to certain specimens were deliberately broken at the time of burial⁴¹.

This was perceived as a funerary custom of that time, as the tradition is said to exist still in present day Honan⁴². Although there exist many examples of this form with intact handles, this theory does not completely lose its validity; if this custom did not exist, it would be difficult to explain the large number of examples which were found with handles broken off. The non-protuberant positioning of these handles make accidental breakage very unlikely in an otherwise undamaged specimen.

Prototype VI

All examples of this prototype so far excavated come from the metropolitan provinces of Honan, Hopei, and Shensi. The earliest datable example is VI 1, which was excavated from the Fêng family tombs of Hopei province. The five inscribed dates of these tombs span from 484 to 589. This example is shaped in a "tear-drop", with almost straight sides on the upper half of the body.

VI 2 was excavated in Honan from a tomb with the inscribed date of 595. The body of this specimen is comparatively much more bulbous than the previous. The diameter of the shallow dish mouth is about the same as the diameter of the foot.

41. KGXB, 1959, no. 3, p. 96.

42. KG, 1959, no. 4, p. 9.

The dated piece from Shensi, VI 3, is quite different from the other objects of this prototype. The immediately noticeable dissimilarities are the absence of a foot and an everted, rather than a dish mouth. Incised onto the body of this piece are two horizontal lines; otherwise, the body is proportionately similar to the previous two examples.

Attributed to the Sui and/or early T'ang period is example VI a from Shensi. The mouth of this piece has again evolved back to a dish shape, somewhat deeper than that found in example VI 2.

VI b should be placed chronologically after VI 4, for it was found in a Honan tomb along with coins datable to the Kai-yüan reign (713-741). Stylistically, however, it should perhaps be a predecessor to VI 4. The very bulbous body and the relatively tall dish mouth place this piece into an evolutionary slot between VI a and VI 4. The diameter of the foot in this piece is slightly wider than the diameter of its mouth. VI b may have been produced at a date prior to, but buried at a date after, the example in VI 4.

VI 4 is markedly different in body proportions from the previous examples of this prototype. Excavated from a Shensi tomb dated 704, this vessel resembles a jar rather than a bottle. The widest part of its body is at the shoulder instead of at the belly of the vessel. The squatness of this object is further reinforced by the wide diameter of its foot. The tall dish mouth has a prominently everted rim.

Prototype VII

The objects belonging to this prototype may be divided into two subgroups, VII A and VII B. The former consist of jars which remain little changed through a period of over two centuries. The subgroup VII B started out as a covered version of the same jar as those found in subgroup VII A. Later examples, however, show that these covered jars take on a quite different evolution.

From the dated objects plotted on the progression of VII A 1 to VII A 8, not much can be said regarding their evolution in form. Almost no distinguishable change of a consistent nature can be traced. This subgroup of coverless jars illustrates what was probably a very common shape that was also of a very common function. The narrow neck found on most of these objects indicates a probable function as a liquid container. However, the wide mouth exhibited in VII A 5 and VII A 8 suggests a different usage, perhaps for the preservation of food, as the wide mouth opening can freely accommodate a hand or some other implement.

The close relationship shared between the two subgroups of prototype VII can be demonstrated by a comparison of VII A 2 to VII B 1. The basic shape of the two objects is very similar, although the latter is more than twice the height of the former. Another minor difference is that the neck opening in VII B 1 is considerably wider. The cover of this piece is also worthy of note; it is unusually wide to extend well over the mouth of the jar.

In the example VII B 2, the cover is small in comparison

to the jar, and it fits inside the mouth of the vessel. The general shape of this piece is quite different from the previous. Found in Liaoning province and datable to 741, this piece lacks a neck, and the mouth is wide and fashioned with a rolled rim.

Another very different piece in this subgroup is VII B 3. This object is much shorter in stature than the previous two, and a first impression senses that it may be an abbreviated version of another form. A comparison of this piece to prototypal object V 2 confirms this suspicion. Both objects were excavated from the same Kiangsu tomb, datable to 787. A closer examination reveals that VII B 3 is essentially the bottom half of V 2. The short vertical collar mouth of VII B 2 is a direct result of the truncation of the vertical neck of V 2. The cover on this jar is also radically different from the previous two. It is knobless and almost disc-like, presumably to fit over the mouth of the jar.

Prototype VIII

The objects charted in prototype VIII of the chronology represent only one stylistic group of jars and urns which may have been used for the function of holding the ash or bone remains of the deceased person⁴³. The unifying

43. KG, 1965, no. 6, p. 286. The author of this article on funerary urns states that there are two burial methods still common in Kwangtung province which involve the use of these urns. One is cremation, while the other is a "second burial" which takes place after the corpse has been buried for about 10 years. This reburial involves either the transferring of the bone remains to an urn, or a new cremation. In either case, the remains are put into the funerary urn for reburial. The author further concludes that excavated evidence show that the practice of reburial already existed in the T'ang period.

characteristics in the examples of prototype VIII are three basic components - a cover, the main body, and a stand. The "stand", in some cases, need not be separable from the body.

Before starting an investigation into the ceramic pieces of this prototype, we may first consider this form in metal. The bronze covered vessel

in fig. 13 is described as having a cover topped by a stupa with seven rings. It is thought to belong to the period of eighth century or



fig. 13

earlier⁴⁴. This object, with a strong Buddhist theme, may have been introduced into China through central Asia in a similar way to the tall neck bottle in prototype III A. Examples of prototype III A are also common in the bronze medium and strongly identified with the Buddhist religion (see discussion on prototype III).

The earliest dated example of this prototype in ceramics is VIII 1, from a Shensi tomb of date 707. It is not clear from the original photograph and text whether the jar is made in one or two separate pieces. The prominently splayed base section, however, strongly foretells the evolution of a separated stand. The flat cover is crowned

44. Los Angeles County Museum, Arts of the T'ang Dynasty, Los Angeles, 1957, plate 116.

by a spire-shaped knob that recalls the type found in T'ang Buddhist temples⁴⁵.

VIII 2 comes from a Shensi tomb datable to 728. Although this specimen is lavishly decorated and stands twice as high in size as most other objects in this prototype, the basic structural components remain the same - a covered jar supported on a stand.

VIII 3 and VIII 4 may be jointly discussed and compared to VIII 1. The unmistakable three-part assemblage of these two examples is evident, yet the joining of the stand to the bottom of the base in VIII 3 shows almost no interruption in the contour of the overall form. The feeling conveyed is that the jar and the stand may have been made initially in a single piece. VIII 4 is nearly identical to VIII 3, except that the diameter of the stand is slightly less than the base of the jar. This difference gives the overall piece a sense of unsteadiness. The covers of both VIII 3 and VIII 4 are modelled and fitted onto the jar in a manner identical to that of VIII 1.

The last datable example of the chronology is VIII 5. Two noticeable differences occurred here. The first concerns the cover - it no longer fits levelly onto the jar: instead, its dome remains visible above the mouth of the jar. The second change occurred in the stand. Its diameter

45. For examples, see Sickman, L., and Soper, A., The Art and Architecture of China, Maryland, 1971, figs. 268 and 269.

is significantly greater than the base of the jar. The result is, in contrast to the unsteadiness of VIII 4, the assembled object here gives one a feeling of stability.

Examples VIII 2⁴⁶, VIII b⁴⁷ and VIII c⁴⁸ are only given the general attributed date of T'ang. The purpose of including these into the chronology is to convey some minor variations of this basic shape which still conforms to the same structural principles. Respectively, they come from the provinces of Shansi, Szechuan, and Kwangtung. The "stand" in VIII a, and VIII b, is in effect an inseparable base of the object. On the other hand, VIII c has a tiered stand quite unlike the splayed versions found more commonly in the northern provinces. The covers to all three of these are each differently modelled.

Examples of this prototype with the unique function of a funerary container have surfaced from almost every province in China, and it may be beneficial to explore this form in more detail. Mentioned already is the relationship of the spire-knobbed cover to the spires on the T'ang pagoda. There exist other decorative themes found on similarly related vessels which may more conclusively tie this prototype to the Buddhist religion.

46. KT, 1955, no. 4, p. 57.

47. KT, 1956, no. 5, p. 31.

48. WT, 1956, no. 5, p. 21.

A predecessor to the objects of prototype VIII could well be represented by fig. 14, a piece found in Chêkiang and dated to the early fourth century⁴⁹. This piece is of special interest for it contains easily recognizable iconographical and decorative themes. The piece is elaborately adorned with architecture, worshipping figures, and birds and beasts. The religious theme can be easily found in the appliqué Buddha figures which have been attached to the body of the vessel. These modelled figures may be interpreted as wealth and companionship which followed the soul of the deceased to the afterworld. The Buddha appliqué would indicate the faith of the deceased.



fig. 14

An example dated 756, fig. 15⁵⁰, compares favourably to the Chêkiang vessel. Although much simplified, this piece from Kwangtung province is modelled similarly to fig. 14. Both objects were probably used to "house" the ashes, or bone remains of a deceased person.



fig. 15

49. Historical Relics Unearthed in New China (新中國出土文物), Peking, 1972, plate 116.

50. KG, 1965, no. 6, p. 287.

Returning to the prototypal objects in the chronology, the Buddhist iconographical theme can also be seen. The spire knob of the cover has been compared by other authors to the spires found in the pagoda, or stupa, of the Buddhist religion⁵¹. The stupa, or pagoda in China, is normally thought of as containing some relic of Buddha or a Buddhist saint. In the same consideration, the modelling of the knob of these burial jars into a pagoda spire alludes to the analogy that the jar contains the relic of a person of Buddhist faith.

Another decorative motif which may have important religious significance is the "pie-crust" decoration as typified in fig. 15 and example VII c of the chronology. This motif is most often found on jars used to store ashes, and the greatest number of jars with this motif are found in the province of Hunan⁵². Whether evolved from the lotus motif or not, the "pie-crust" decoration occurs often enough in burial urns to merit a more detailed study in the future.

51. For another opinion on the relationship of these burial jars to Buddhism, see article by H. C. Lovell, "Some Northern Chinese Ceramic Wares of the Sixth and Seventh Centuries", O.A., 1975, no. 21, p. 338.

52. For examples from Hunan, see :

KG, 1966, no. 3, p. 161, fig. 5 : 1, 2, 3.

KG, 1960, no. 5, p. 18, plate I : 5

KT, 1957, no. 5, p. 40, plate VIII : 2.

Prototype IX

The Western origin of this form and the importation of it into China, initially in the metal medium, has already been investigated by ceramic scholars⁵³. Recent excavated evidence indicates that this form had already infiltrated into China by the fifth century; and by the seventh century, it was mentioned in the dynastic history - the Sui shu.

The discussion of this prototype must begin first with an examination of the types of metal stem cups which have been discovered in China. The earliest datable piece is shown in fig. 16, one of three excavated from the Northern Wei capital of Tatung⁵⁴.



fig. 16

From an ink stone found accompanying these cups, the objects were dated to the latter half of the fifth century. The strong Western characteristics of this piece should leave little doubt that the piece was manufactured outside China.

It is recorded in the Sui Shu that agate goblets were included in the lists of treasured objects sought after by the envoys sent to modern Turkestan by Emperor Yang (604-617)

53. See Medley, M., Metalwork and Chinese Ceramics, Monograph Series No. 2, Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art, University of London, 1972, p. 5.

54. WW, 1972, no. 1, p. 83.

of the Sui dynasty⁵⁵. Presumably, these envoys also brought back goblets of metal, such as the one found in the tomb of Li Ching-hsün, who died in the year 608 (fig. 17).



fig. 17

Another type of metal stem cup, fig. 18, was excavated from a tomb near Ch'angsha, Hunan. It is described as a tin cup with gold gilt, and given the rather general attribution of early T'ang⁵⁶. Unlike the bowl-shaped body of the previous two examples, this cup has a deeper bell-shaped body.



fig. 18

The ceramic stem cups also generally conform to these two types, and as in the metal medium, the bowl-shaped cups made an earlier appearance than the bell-shaped type. The ceramic stem cup with the earliest attribution was found in Hunan (fig. 19). It was among the objects from five



fig. 19

55. Bingham, W., The Founding of the T'ang Dynasty, Baltimore, 1941, p. 26.

56. WW, 1960, no. 3, p. 56.

tombs attributed by the author to the Chin dynasties (265-420)⁵⁷. The earliness of this date is questionable in view of the scarcity of substantial evidence that is offered in support of the attribution.

A comparison of fig. 19 with a more reliably dated piece makes the early Chin date even more doubtful. Prototypal object IX 1 is also identical to the Hunan piece in fig. 19. IX 1 was excavated from a group of eight tombs in Kiangsi which also yielded dated inscriptions of 591, 599 and 606. IX 1, fig. 19, and the metal counterpart in fig. 17, are structurally very similar. They may be considered as stylistic contemporaries. Also attributed to the Sui period is IX a, a piece noted to be a typical Sui form⁵⁸. The deep bell-shaped body of this object can be found in the metal medium, as in fig. 18. IX b⁵⁹ and IX c⁶⁰ may also be considered as slavish copies of metal forms. Both objects are from Hunan and accorded the general date of early T'ang. A cross-section view of IX b is shown in fig. 20.



fig. 20

57. KG, 1965, no. 5, p. 225.

58. KG, 1959, no. 5, p. 225.

59. KG, 1966, no. 4, p. 204.

60. KT, 1958, no. 3, p. 22.

IX d⁶¹ is included in the chronology because its polychrome glaze dates the piece to a probable date of early eighth century⁶². From the province of Hunan, where a large number of such stem cups have surfaced, the overall shape of this cup had changed little since the early seventh century.

On the other hand, this prototype seemingly underwent a different evolution in the province of Shansi. IX 2 and IX 3, both from dated tombs in Shansi, are respectively labelled as a censor and a lamp. Regardless of what these two forms have been used for, their general shapes, especially IX 3, closely resemble fig. 16, also from the province of Shansi.

A concluding observation may be made concerning the relationship between the ceramic stem cups and their counterparts in metal. The stem of the bowl-shaped metal piece in fig. 17 is only sparsely decorated with two slightly raised ridges. In the ceramic copies of this form, which may include fig. 19, IX 1 and IX 2, the stem is devoid of decoration, with no attempt to reproduce the slightly raised ridges. These may be considered rather insignificant and consequently ignored.

In the example of the bell-shaped cup, however, the

61. WW, 1959, no. 8, p. 23, fig. 5.

62. For a theory on the dating of T'ang polychrome ware, see article entitled "On T'ang Soft-glazed Pottery", by W. Watson, appearing in Art and Archaeology in Asia, No. 1, published by the University of London, 1970, p. 43.

surface details are faithfully copied. The stem of this type of cup, as seen in fig. 18, is often fashioned with a large protruding ridge. This characteristic was apparently deemed sufficiently important, as almost all of the bell-shaped ceramic stem cups are equipped with a protruding ridge. This decorative feature was even applied to a bowl-shaped cup, as the example IX 3 shows.

Prototype X

In this prototype, the object having the earliest attributed date is that in fig. 21, found in a Hunan tomb. It is dated to the Chin (265-420) period, though little evidence is given in the original article to support this early attribution⁶³.



fig. 21

Surprisingly, however, a metal example also of an early attribution date, compares quite favourably with the ceramic piece. This metal set consisting of a cup with stand and cover, fig. 22, was excavated in Kueichou province from tombs said to belong either to the period of Eastern Chin (317-420) or that



fig. 22

63. KG, 1965, no. 5, p. 255.

of the Southern Dynasties (265-581)⁶⁴. Also found in this group of tombs was a single stand without its accompaniments. A careful examination of a cross-section drawing of this set, ^{fig. 23,} shows that the construction principle of the stand is identical to that of the pottery stand of fig. 21. In both cases the stand consists of a shallow saucer supported on a rather tall and wide foot ring. Protruding from the centre of the saucer is a ring onto which the foot of the cup is placed. In the metal set, the footing of the cup is clearly seen to fit over and outside the protruding ring. Regarding the fit of the ceramic stand, we may guess that the footing of the cup fitted inside the ring protrusion. The reason for this belief is that if this piece was fitted in the same way as the metal set, the footing of the original ceramic cup would have had to be quite tall and disproportionately wide in order to accommodate the already wide protruding ring. The argument for an inside fit is supported by succeeding pieces of this prototype as X 4.



fig. 23

A completely different structural principle was employed in the manufacture of prototypal object X 1, a piece from a tomb



fig. 24

64. KG, 1963, no. 6, p. 347, fig. 12 : 1

in Hupei datable to 485. As can be clearly seen in the cross-section diagram (fig. 24), the saucer and the cup are made in an inseparable single unit. The saucer has a flat base in contrast to the footring found in the previous two examples.

X 2, with a deduced attribution of around 500, comes from Fukien province and represents the first of three similarly constructed sets of bowl and saucer. The other two are objects X 3 and X 4 of the chronology. From the same tombs which yielded X 2 and

X 3, a metal counterpart of the form was also found. Fig. 25



fig. 25

is the metal piece which accompanied X 2 in the Fukien tomb, while fig. 26 was found in the same Hopei tomb as X 3. The



fig. 26

third member of this group of similarly constructed objects is X a. Also from the province of Fukien, this specimen is attributed to the Sui or early T'ang period⁶⁵. The two components of X a, consisting of a bowl and a saucer, are said to be glazed together, forming an inseparable unit⁶⁶. It is not known if X 2 and X 3 were glazed together in the same manner. The common characteristic shared by all three specimens is that each consisted of a bowl and a shallow saucer. All three pieces appear to have a flat base.

65. KG, 1959, no. 4, p. 191.

66. Ibid.

Found in the same tomb as X a was X b. Also labelled as a cup with stand, this piece indicates that two different styles of this prototype were in contemporary use. No information concerning the construction of this piece is available in the original text, but this object resembles the metal set in fig. 22. The components of both sets are structurally similar: the cup and stand are both accompanied with tall footrings. The "saucer" on X b, however, is flat rather than upturned like its metal counterpart. It is regrettable that we do not know whether there exists a protruding ring on the centre of the stand in X b. If a ring exists, then the structural principle involved in the making of this object would be identical to that of fig. 22 - the footring of the cup sits over and outside the protruding ring of the stand.

Another set which may be contemporary with X a and X b is X 4, from a Fukien tomb datable to about 630. The foot of the bowl is clearly shown set inside the ring of the saucer. The stand of this piece shows an identical constructional principle to the example in fig. 21, while the bowl resembles those found in the examples X 2, X 3 and X a.

The next piece, X 5, was found in Shansi and dated to 771. It may be considered to be a primitive form of bowl stand, similar to X 1. While X 1 is composed of an inseparable unit along with a bowl, X 5 probably was used in conjunction with a wide bowl that now is missing.

X 6 and X 7, both of late ninth century dates, are nearly identical in structure and may be jointly discussed. Both bowls are lobed and foliated to resemble a floral form. A more important evolution has occurred on the stand. Instead of being modelled with a protruding ring, the centre of these two "saucers" is concave and forms a hollow for the setting of the bowl.

A stylistic precursor of X 6 and X 7 can be found in the example of a gold stand found in Sian, Shensi, and inscribed with a date of 860 (fig. 27)⁶⁷. The stand of all three objects is basically similar, even in the folded petalled rim. A minor difference with the gold stand in fig. 27 is that it still has a slightly protruding ring in addition to the concave hollow of the stand. In the ceramic pieces, X 6 and X 7, the protruding ring has been phased out, presumably accompanied by a deepening of the concave hollow.

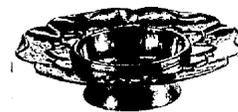


fig. 27

The last example of this prototype to be discussed is X c, excavated from Kiangsu and attributed to the Five Dynasties period⁶⁸. The bowl of this set has become very

67. Archaeology in New China (新中國的考古收穫) Peking, 1961, plate CV:2, for date, see p. 101.

68. Historical Relics Unearthed in New China (新中國出土文物) Peking, 1972, plate 172.

tall in stature. The stand is also quite unlike those of former examples. The former shallow saucer has given way to a relatively deep dish, while the foot of the previous examples has become a decorated stem, not unlike the stem in the cup IX 3.

The analysis and discussion of this form may be concluded by an examination of it in its historical context. The Chinese author, Feng Hsien-ming, offered an account by a Sung author on the origin of this implement. The Sung account claims that the "t'o-tze", cup stand, did not exist prior to the T'ang dynasty. The shape was invented by a daughter of a T'ang official in the late eighth century; the invention was necessitated because the lady disliked holding the hot cup during tea drinking. It is said that she modelled a protruding ring on a saucer with melted wax. The cup was then firmly set onto this wax ring, and the result was so successful that an order was made to have lacquer objects made from this model⁶⁹.

Charming as this story may be, it is not based on art historical fact. The datable archaeological evidence irrefutably shows that many examples of the cup stand existed in many parts of China long before the late eighth century.

69. WW, 1963, no. 1, p. 10.

Prototype XI

The objects charted in prototype XI were all excavated from tombs with inscribed dates. Collectively, they all share the characteristics of having two opposing handles placed rather high on the body region as well as possessing a fairly wide mouth opening. In the future, it will probably be necessary to revise the objects within this prototype into subgroups, after more examples with more distinguishing characteristics are excavated. At present, these seemingly different pieces in prototype XI will be discussed together, without suggesting that they follow a single linear evolution.

Noticeable similarities can be seen in the examples of XI 2, XI 3, XI 4 and XI 5 - pieces respectively excavated from the provinces of Liaoning, Shansi, Hopei, and again Liaoning. All of these are robust ovoid forms, each affixed with a pair of handles fashioned from thick coils. In the first three of the four examples, the height of the arch formed by the handles slightly exceeds the level of the mouth rim, while in XI 5 a "collar" raises the height of the mouth rim above that of the handles. In all four of these objects, the mouthrim is noticeably rolled.

The two pieces from Shensi, XI 1 and XI 7, are stylistically related. Although the location and size of the handles differ, the objects are structurally similar. The fundamental shape shared by both consists of a tall jar with relatively straight sides and an everted mouthrim.

XI 6, a piece from Honan, may be stylistically compared to the group of similar jars represented by examples XI 2 to XI 5. This vessel is also of a prominently ovoid shape proportionately similar to the other of the group. The difference is that the mouth of XI 6 is straight and considerably wider. In addition, the handles are thinner in size and attached onto the body without forming an arch.

Little can directly be said at present considering the remaining examples of this prototype. They must stay for the time being, merely as dated examples awaiting additional evidence before any meaningful comparison or analysis can be made.

Prototype XII

On first impression, it seems a futile attempt to try and link XII A 1 to any other form besides its few immediate relatives⁷⁰. Although the decorative motifs of this group of jars represented by XII A 1 have been examined⁷¹, no one has yet offered an evolutionary trend of this form. Upon close scrutiny, it can be seen that this unusual piece is the



fig. 28.

70. Up to date approximately six or seven of these objects are known to be extant. Two of them belong in Western collections, while the remainder are in the various museums in China.

71. See Lovell, H. C., "Some Northern Chinese Ceramic Wares of the Sixth and Seventh Centuries", O.A., 1975, no. 21, p. 328.

precursor of a more common group of jars. This is demonstrated in fig. 28, showing the "dismemberment" of the piece. The resulting centre section from this dismemberment is the direct precursor of XII A 2, which appears some ninety years after XII A 1. The two objects are almost identical in form except for minor differences in the length of the lotus petals and the types of handles used. XII A 1 and XII A 2 were respectively excavated from Hupei and Honan.

Prototypal objects XII A 3 and XII A 4 should be discussed jointly, as they were found in the same Honan tomb datable to 576. Both are direct descendants of XII A 2. The plastic decoration of both pieces is similar to the previous example; the upper portion of the body is modelled in inverted lotus petals. The handles of XII A 4 are identical to those found on XII A 2, while those on XII A 3 are unique square handles placed in a horizontal orientation, very similar to those found on the example of I 2. An important note should be made regarding the proportion of XII A 4. Noticeable in this example is a slight elongation of the body, accompanied by a widening of the mouth opening. This body elongation represents the initial stage of a new trend of evolution - traceable in the progression of subgroup XII B.

XII B 1 may represent the first datable piece of this subgroup. Although there are five possible dates for this piece (see formal documentation in Chapter II), the latest date, 583, is hereby chosen because this object appears to

be a stylistic successor of XII A 4. The upper body of this piece has lost the plastic modelling of the lotus motifs, but a vestige of them remains in the form of a prominently raised ridge, marking the terminating point where the tips of the inverted lotus leaves would have been.

The four objects, XII B 2 to XII B 5 are all dated within the period between 589-608. Within this short duration of twenty years, one can clearly witness a rapid elongation of the otherwise unchanged form. A noticeable alteration in the contour of the lower portion of XII B 4 and XII B 5 can also be seen. Unlike the previous examples whose lower regions end in a rather soft curve, the same areas of XII B 4 and XII B 5 are sharply tapered with almost straight sides. Regardless of such minor evolutionary differences, the four objects remain very similar - especially in the shared characteristic of possessing a distinguishing ridge on the equator of the vessel.

The objects in XII a, XII b, and XII c belong to the collection of the Royal Ontario Museum⁷². They are respectively attributed to the general dates of seventh century, seventh to eighth century, and eighth century⁷³. Stylistically, these may be used to represent three evolutionary stages between objects XII B 5 and XII B 6 of the chronology.

72. Mino, V., Pre-Sung Dynasty Chinese Stonewares, Ontario, 1974, plates 7, 27 and 31.

73. Ibid., pp. 20, 41 and 45.

The evolutionary change traceable in the three pieces, XII a, XII b and XII c, is the phasing out of the equatorial ridge and an attenuation of the basic form. In XII a, a definite lowering of the equatorial demarcation has occurred. Notice also that unlike the former horizontal ridge, the demarcation here consists of mere lines. XII b represents the completed phasing out of the body demarcation that was noted earlier to be a remnant of the lotus petal motif. XII c is a further evolution of this progression. The smooth undecorated body now takes on a slight change in proportion. It has undergone a lengthening with the vessel terminating to a sharp concavity in the lower region. The shape of XII c is basically similar to that of the next prototypal object, XII B 6.

XII B 6, a piece from Shensi datable to 668, may be considered an evolution of XII c. The curvature in the contour of this piece is even sharper than the previous examples, with the widest part of the vessel in the shoulder instead of the belly of the vessel. Other changes which have occurred are a rolled rim and a footless base.

XII B 7, from Liaoning and datable to 741, has appeared as a member of the previous prototype, XI. Stylistically, it may also be considered as a member of the present prototype. The similarities in basic structure and proportion between this piece and XII B 6 can readily be discerned. The minor differences are the number of handles, which has been reduced from four to two, and the return of a foot.

Prototype XIII

The objects in prototype XIII share many common traits with objects in the previous prototype. XIII 1, excavated from Kueichou, is imprecisely dated to the Six Dynasties period and is likely to be a contemporary or a descendant of XII A 1, as both possess the unique lotus decorated body. This early example is characterised by a very wide mouth which rises only very slightly to form a low collar. The squat ovoid body is divided into three registers; the top one is very narrow and frames the square lug handles, the centre area is the widest and is decorated in the form of plastic lotus petals, the third register is undecorated.

XIII 2 may be considered to be an evolution of XIII 1. This object was found in the same Honan tomb as XII A 3 and XII A 4, but they are structurally different. Like XIII 1, the body of XIII 2 is divided into three main registers of comparable size. These are separated by raised ridges, while the centre register is further divided into two halves by the use of incised lines. Again like XIII 1, this piece has a short and very wide "collar" mouth. A minor change in this piece, however, is the absence of a foot.

XIII 3 and XIII 4 are further dated examples of this prototype, excavated respectively from the provinces of Anhui and Shensi. The essential features previously mentioned remain unchanged - the mouth opening is short and wide, and the body is still clearly divided into three distinctive regions. Also witnessed in these two specimens is the return of a foot.

XIII 5 and XIII 6 may be discussed jointly as both are from the province of Shensi; in addition, they are similar to one another. The structure and proportion of these two pieces have definite close relations with objects in prototype XII, noticeably those of XII B 1 and XII B 2. Yet, the body division of these two examples into three, instead of two, distinctive registers places them characteristically into the evolution of prototype XIII. While acknowledging a probable influence from prototype XII, the specimens of XIII 5 and XIII 6 are thought of as attenuated versions of XIII 4.

Prototype XIV

The evolutionary trend of prototype XIV is less readily obvious than most others. The trend appears to start with a unique dish mouth bottle of no known comparable samples. This vessel, XIV 1, was excavated from Hunan, and attributed to the Southern Dynasties. The form has four basic structural components - a dish mouth, a short neck, a relatively large ovoid body, and a foot. The four handles are horizontally placed on the shoulder of the vessel.

XIV²₁ was obtained from the same group of tombs which yielded the previous specimen. From the tomb which contained this object were found a number of Sui coins⁷⁴. This piece represents a radical change in the evolution of this prototype. The dish mouth has become wider and shallower,

74. KGXB, 1959, v.3, p. 96.

the neck has almost disappeared, and the body is now round rather than ovoid. The overall effect is a squat version of XIV 1. The handles, although remaining horizontally placed, are greatly arched, conveying a sense of verticality.

XIV 3, from a Shensi tomb datable to 706, represents yet another stage of radical change in this form. The handles are now vertically placed. A rolled and everted mouth has replaced the dish mouth, and the neck has disappeared. Regardless of such minor dissimilarities, the overall structure and proportion of this piece remain closely tied to that of XIV 2.

Something remains to be noted regarding prototype XIV, and that is the example of XIV a. This piece was excavated from a Shensi tomb datable to 664⁷⁵. The body proportion of this piece is nearly identical to XIV 3 except for the mouth opening. This rather tall vertical mouth appears to be an influence from the characteristics of prototype XII. A favourable comparison may be drawn between the present piece with that of XII b.

Prototype XV

The occurrence of this small jar form is quite common; however, reliably dated pieces are very few. The basic shape of XV 1, from a Honan tomb datable to 455, is composed of a dish mouth with vertical sides, a narrow neck

75. WW, 1972, no. 7, p. 33.

which opens out into an ovoid body. The form terminates in a concave base. Mounted onto the shoulder are four small horizontally oriented handles.

XV²_A is a direct evolution of XV 1, but the two contain discernable differences. The dish mouth of XV 2 is everted rather than straight. The neck has become slightly wider and shorter. The body is rounder and squat, supported by a foot. The handles also appear more carefully made than those of the previous piece.

An almost identical piece to XV 2 is shown in a cross-section diagram in fig. 29. This piece was found in a tomb very close in location to, and of the same date as the tomb which yielded XV 2⁷⁶. The object in fig. 29 possesses six handles of alternating orientations.



fig. 29

Prototype XVI

The shape and evolution of this prototype are very similar to those of the previous one. In fact, both XV 1 and XVI 1 were from the same Hupei tomb. Indeed, the only differences between these two pieces seem to be size and the height of the dish mouth.

Unlike XV 1, however, XVI 1 follows a different trend

76. KG, 1977, no. 2, p. 142.

of evolution. XVI 2, a piece excavated from Anhui and of similar height to XVI 1, is squatter and wider in appearance. The neck has virtually disappeared, giving way to an everted mouth. The handles of this piece are also quite different from the previous example. Unlike the incipient lugs of XVI 1, the handles of XVI 2 consist of four double loops which connect from the underside of the mouth to the horizontal ridge of the shoulder.

A near identically shaped piece to XVI 2 is found in the Seattle Art Museum (XVI a)⁷⁷. Although only half the height of XVI 2, XVI a nevertheless compares favourably in shape to the former. The fully developed polychrome glaze of this specimen probably dates it to the first half of the eighth century⁷⁸.

Prototype XVII

This prototype may have a southern origin, as the earliest pieces excavated so far have come from the province of Kwangtung. The unifying characteristics of this form consist of an attenuated jar shape crowned by a wide but very short "collar" mouth; the base is normally splayed. Mounted on the shoulder are handles of various numbers and styles; these are often placed where the shoulder is

77. Prodan, M., The Art of the T'ang Potter, London, 1960, plate xxv.

78. Attribution of polychrome ware after W. Watson, "On T'ang Soft-glazed Pottery", Colloquies on Art and Archaeology in Asia, No. 1, University of London, 1970, pp. 41-50.

incised by horizontal lines.

Objects XVII A 1 and XVII B 1 were both excavated from the same dated tomb in Kwangtung. Although they appear structurally similar, there exist enough discernable minor differences to classify them into different subgroups. XVII A 1 has a significantly narrower mouth than XVII B 1. The upper region of the body is fairly bulbous, while the base is already showing a very slight tendency to splay. The handles, placed in an alternating fashion, are located rather high up on the shoulder.

XVII A 2 was excavated from Kueichou, from the same group of tombs which produced XIII 1. This piece may also be dated to the fifth or sixth century. This specimen is virtually identical in form to XVII A 1, even in the number and manner of placement of the handles. A minor difference concerns decoration. Incised on the upper region of this vessel are inverted lotus petals - linear versions of the plastic modellings found in examples such as XII A 1 to XII A 4, and XIII 1.

By the early seventh century, this form had travelled to North China, as exemplified by XVII A 3, a piece from a Shensi tomb datable to 608. A notable elongation of the form has occurred in this example, with the vessel terminating in a prominently splayed base. A minor change has also been affected in the different style of handles used.

The attenuated shape with a prominently splayed base can also be found in South China. XVII A 4 was excavated from a tomb in Kwangtung datable to 610. The cross-section

view of the objects shows that the "collar" mouth is slightly everted.

The last datable object in subgroup XVII A is from Hupei, and some notable changes can be seen in this object XVII A 5. The mouth has become taller, and the splayed base has lost its prominence. The cover may also be considered as an additional new feature.

Having dealt with subgroup A of prototype XVII, we may now turn our attention to subgroup B. Unlike the previous progression, datable objects of subgroup XVII B show little change in their evolution. This may be due to the form being confined in its native locality. XVII B 1, as mentioned earlier, was found in the same tomb as XVII A 1. The next two examples to be considered are XVII a⁷⁹ and XVII b⁸⁰ - both objects were found in the province of Kwangtung and respectively attributed to the Sixth Dynasties, and Sui or early T'ang period. Both pieces differ from XVII B 1 only in size and, to a lesser degree, the curvature of body contour.

XVII B 2 and XVII B 3 are two of four similarly shaped jars also excavated from Kwangtung. When these two are compared to XVII B 1, little difference in the progression of the basic form is noticeable. This remarkable lack of evolutionary change in a period spanning over two hundred years is only matched by one other very common shape -

79. KG, 1965, no. 5, p. 232, fig. 4 : 9

80. KG, 1963, no. 9, p. 489, fig. 7 : 1

namely, the handleless jar of prototype VII.

XVII C 1 is a squat version of XVII B 3, and the two were found in the same Shensi tomb. The structural components of the two are identical except that XVII C 1 lacks the square lugs found in the taller piece. A piece related to XVII C 1 is XVII c, excavated from Kiangsu and attributed to a Sui and slightly later date⁸¹. This object is essentially a development from XVII C 1; however, an additional influence may be exerted from XVI 2. This influence can be seen in the straight concave base of the object.

Prototype XVIII

The problems encountered in the process of analysing this basic prototype are both perplexing and challenging. Reliably dated examples of the ewer form are few and far between; while variations in shapes are seemingly endless. More than any other prototype, it is necessary to divide the objects of this general group into a number of subgroups. In making the matter more complicated, there exist many contradictions and incongruities among modern attributions, historical accounts, and excavated evidence.

We may start our investigation by first examining the datable objects which have been excavated. Significantly, the earliest reliably dated ewer, XVII A 1, comes from a

81. Selection of Excavated Cultural Objects from Kiangsu Province (江蘇省出土文物選集) Peking, 1963, plate 153.

tomb in Chekiang datable to 810. This piece is essentially a pear-shaped form with a flared mouth and a very shallow foot. The short faceted spout is attached to the sloping shoulder, opposite to the handle. Otherwise, this vessel is free of all decoration and surface fittings. Interesting to note is that the body of this piece is composed of only a single uninterrupted structural component; even the foot appears to be a smooth extension of the body.

No other examples quite like XVIII A 1 have been found in any reports of excavated tombs. However, a piece very closely resembling it has been found in an excavation of the Yu-yao kiln sites at Chekiang province. The ewer in XVIII a was obtained from the Hwang-shan-shan kiln and attributed to the Five Dynasties period⁸². This kiln specimen, like its forerunner XVIII A 1, has a single unit body structure. It has, however, acquired a slimmer profile. Other minor differences include a wider everted mouth, and a wider and apparently round spout. Otherwise the two objects are identically structured.

Another possible stylistic descendant of XVIII A 1 may be found in XVIII b, a piece excavated from Anhui and attributed only to a general date of T'ang⁸³. The structure of the body in this ewer is composed of two distinguishable components - a tall flaring mouth and a tall ovoid body. Yet, the area where these two components are joined still

82. KGXB, 1959, no. 3, p. 107, plate III : 8

83. WW, 1965, no. 10, p. 46, fig. 5.

exhibits a relatively smooth contour, recalling the single-unit body structure that is found in prototypical object XVIII A 1.

A possible contemporary of XVIII b may be XVIII c, a piece found in Kiangsu province and dated to the T'ang dynasty⁸⁴. Like the previous example, XVIII c is also constructed in two basic components - a mouth section and an ovoid body. Noticeable minor differences between the two, which take on separate evolutions later, can already be noted. In XVIII c, the mouth section is proportionately shorter in relation to the body, and the joint between these two components is rather abrupt. The very short spout on this piece also seems to be attached in a slightly higher location than the spout on XVIII b.

Reliably dated to the middle of the ninth century are a number of ewers. Most of these contemporary forms are so different from one another, however, that it was necessary to categorize them into separate subgroups.

XVIII B 1 is a shard inscribed with the date of 847. Although the top portion and the original surface fixtures have been broken, we can still compare the remaining body to XVIII B 2 to establish a similarity. The body of both objects is similarly proportioned. Present in both is the characteristic fluting of the body.

XVIII B 2 and XVIII B 3 were found in the same site in Chekiang. Except for very minor differences in the handle

84. KG, 1976, no. 5, p. 313, plate IV : 3

and spout, these two ewers are identically shaped with comparable proportions. Although both spouts are long, one is straight while the other assumes a vague "S" curve. Closely resembling these two objects is XVIII B 3, also from Chekiang and datable to the end of the ninth century. All three of these objects share the common features of possessing a tall trumpet mouth, an ovoid body with vertical lobing and to which is attached a long spout and a long strap handle.

Stylistically, the subgroup XVIII B may be considered to have evolved from XVIII b. The reasons for this progression may be based on the mouth section as well as the joining of this to the body. As mentioned earlier, the mouth section of XVIII a is relatively tall in comparison to its body. This characteristic developed, resulting in the trumpet mouth of subgroup XVIII B. The union of the mouth and body components shown in this subgroup also reflect the smoothness of the joint demonstrated in example XVIII a.

The object in XVIII d is charted onto the chronology to offer a possible evolutionary trend following the progression of subgroup XVIII B. XVIII d was excavated from Changsha, Hunan and attributed to the Five Dynasties period⁸⁵. The affected changes noticeable in this piece are a shortening of the body, a lengthening of the truly "S" shaped spout, and the addition of an inward curve to

85. KG, 1965, no. 9, p. 483.

the base of the mouth section, where it joins the body.

The subgroup XVIII C may be considered to be a stylistic evolution of XVIII c. Structurally, the objects within this subgroup are the same as the piece XVIII c, they are all composed of two main body components - a mouth section and an ovoid body. Similar to XVIII c, the mouth section of XVIII C 1 and XVIII C 2 is short in relation to the body. The area where the mouth section joins the body is abrupt and distinctively marked. Also like XVIII c, the very short spouts of the two specimens in subgroup XVIII C are placed very high on the shoulder of the vessel.

The two objects which make up the subgroup XVIII D represent a unique type of ewer. This uniqueness is due to an alteration in the functioning principle of the ewer form. While all of the other vessels have their spouts located opposite, or 180 degrees, to the handle, the spout in this subgroup is located at a right angle to the handle. This alteration in structure is promoted by a minor change in the working principle of a ewer.

Both XVIII D 1 and XVIII D 2 were excavated from Chekiang. Although they are perhaps dated some fifty years apart, the two objects are virtually the same. They are characterized by a short vertical collar mouth and an ovoid body. Projecting from the body is a long straight spout. The long rectangular handle is attached at right angles to the spout. A set of lugs are placed opposite to the spout, presumably used for the fastening of the cover. Concerning this last feature, more will be said in the concluding

chapter of this thesis.

There remain a number of subgroups in the chronology which are each represented by only one available datable example. XVIII E 1 was found in the same tomb as XVIII C 2. This type of ewer is usually called "Hu-p'ing", or the "bottle of the Hu people", in reference to the ancient Pei-ti tribe in the North of China. This type of ewer is often depicted in T'ang figurines which are clearly identifiable as foreigners (fig. 30)⁸⁶.



fig. 30

XVIII F 1 was found in the province of Anhui, and represents a fairly well-known shape. The original site of production of this form will be discussed in the following chapter. For the time being, this piece is accorded an approximate date of 850 because of its similarity with prototypical object XII 8 of the chronology.

XVIII G 1 is also from Anhui province. It comes from a tomb with an inscribed date of 946. This form, which resembles a modern teapot, has no precedent in Anhui province, and it was necessary to look elsewhere for an origin. A search for a similar relative did produce a very similar piece - from the province of Hunan and also attributed to the Five Dynasties period⁸⁷. XVIII h, like XVIII G 1, is

86. Prodan, M., The Art of the T'ang Potter, London, 1960, plate 83.

87. WW, 1960, no. 3, p. 58.

very round in form and equipped with a very short spout. From the repertoire of ewer forms that have been excavated from Hunan, there exists a round form which may have been a predecessor of XVIII h and XVIII G 1.

XVIII e⁸⁸, XVIII f⁸⁹ and XVIII g⁹⁰ were all exclusively excavated from Hunan. As far as is known, this form has not been excavated from any other province. Crowned by a very wide and relatively tall dish mouth, the body of these three examples is spherical in shape. Attached to the body is a very short spout, while the handle bridges the belly of the vessel to the underside of the dish mouth. Imprecisely dated only to the T'ang period, these three objects reveal that there existed a predilection for a spherical form in Hunan in the T'ang period. This partiality may have given birth also to the round ewers as represented in examples XVIII h and XVIII G 1. Another possible link that bridges this transition in form from XVIII g to XVIII h will be discussed in the analysis of the Hunan Wa-cha-p'ing kiln site in the next chapter.

The last datable example of a ewer is XVIII H 1. This specimen was found in the same site as XVIII B 4 and XVIII D 2. This form is basically a bottle with a

88. KG, 1959, no. 12, p. 649.

89. KG, 1966, no. 4, p. 205. A near-identical piece to this object can be found in the collection of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. See Tregear, M., Catalogue of Greenware in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, Oxford, 1976, plate 216.

90. KT, 1957, no. 5, p. 40.

long neck and a round body to which is affixed a long curving spout. The strap handle connects the neck to the belly of the body. It is not clear from the original photograph whether the body of this object is incised with floral decoration. An identical piece, but with incised decoration, has been attributed to the Five Dynasties period (XVIII i)⁹¹.

The above account has dealt briefly with all the known reliably dated examples of the ewer form. These subgroups of the chronology represent only a few shapes in which objects belonging to the ewer prototype can take on. More examples of ewers will be discussed in the next chapter, which is concerned with the examination of kiln evidence. Those are not precisely dated and therefore will not appear in the chronology.

Having examined the datable archaeological evidence, we may now turn our attention to investigating the origin of the ewer prototype. Fêng Hsien-ming, in an article on the Changsha Tung-kuan kiln site, discusses this topic. He points out that the term "hu", a jug, came into use during the Ming dynasty, and that in the T'ang period, the ewer was called either a "ch'u-tzu" or a "p'ien-ti"⁹². These latter two terms were cited by Fêng as coming from a written work, T'su Hsia Chi, by the T'ang author

91. KG, 1975, no. 3, p. 186, plate IX : 5.

92. WW, 1960, no. 3, p. 74.

Li K'uang-yi. Some of the passages in the T'ang text are sufficiently important and are translated here for further discussion :

"In the early Yüan-ho period⁹³, the jar and ladle were specially used for the dispensing of wine ... When little is left⁹⁴, the chu-tzu was then employed. It was shaped like a vase and equipped with a cover, spout, and handle. After the ninth year of T'ai-ho⁹⁵ ... the vessel was rid of its handle, and lugs were added instead. This new form, resembling a tea bottle but with minor differences, was called pien-t'i." 96

Implied in the T'ang historical account is that the "chu-tzu" ever did not come into common usage until the early ninth century. Even then, it was used only when there was insufficient wine left in the jar for the employment of the ladle. The method of wine dispensing described in the text has parallels in the medium of painting. Fig. 31⁹⁷ and fig 32⁹⁸ show details of two

93. The Yüan-ho reign spanned from 806 to 820.

94. The meaning of the three Chinese characters 居無何 is not explicit. Taken in context, this phrase is hereby interpreted as "when little is left".

95. The ninth year of T'ai-ho (太和) is equivalent to 835.

96. WW, 1960, no. 3, p. 74.

97. Attributed to Ku Kai-chih (pp.344-406). See Studies on Ku Kai-chih, by Ma ch'ai (顧愷之研究) 馬采著, Shanghai, 1958, plate 47.

98. Attributed to Yen Li-pên, active in the seventh century. Detail of "Hsiao Yih Trying to Locate a Masterpiece", from Three Hundred Masterpieces of Chinese Painting in the Palace Museum, Vol. 1, Taiwan, 1959, plate 2.

paintings which are respectively attributed to an Eastern Chin and a T'ang artist. Both paintings depict a similar method of wine preparation as described in the T'ang text. Of special interest in both figures is that the "jar" described is a container supported on three legs - for the purpose of warming the contents over a fire. A ladle is clearly depicted in fig. 31 and cups with stands - a prototype of early origin (see prototype X), are clearly portrayed in both figures.



fig. 31



fig. 32

The same implements for the heating and dispensing of warm wine can also be found in archaeological excavations. A group of tombs attributed to the Nan Chao period (fourth to sixth centuries) in Kueichou have a number of metal cooking vessels and ladles (figs. 33, 34 and 35)⁹⁹. It is quite likely that some of these were used for the preparation of warm wine. Also excavated



fig.33

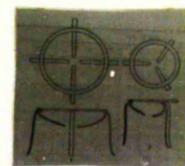


fig. 34

99. KG, 1973, no. 6, p. 342.

from these tombs were a number of chicken spouted ewers and a metal cup with stand. The presence of the chicken-spouted ewers in this context strongly suggests that they may have been the functional predecessors of the "chu-tze" ewers; the former was used also for the dispensing of wine when too little is left in the warming vessel to be picked up by the ladle.

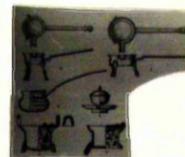


fig. 35

The theory that the chicken spouted ewer is a functional forerunner of the "chu-tze" ewer finds support in the archaeological evidence of the sixth to the eighth century. The dated tombs of this period, many of which are very rich by any standard, did not yield one single example of the "chu-tze" ewer. Often present in these tombs, however, were ewers with the chicken spout. Conversely, the occurrence of the "chu-tze" ewers in the ninth century was marked by a virtual extinction of the chicken-spouted ewer form.

The cumulative evidence in historical text, T'ang paintings, and archaeological finds argue that the ewers of prototype XVIII are primarily ninth century forms. Now we must examine other opinions and evidence which argue otherwise.

In a recent Chinese article, two examples of the "chu-tze" ewers are listed as belonging to the repertoire

of Sui forms (6 and 7 of fig. 36)¹⁰⁰.

Both objects are said to belong to the collection of the National Palace Museum at Peking¹⁰¹. As the date of attribution is not supported by archaeological find, it is not necessarily closed to disagreement.

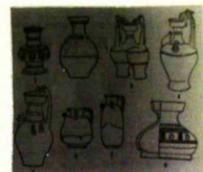


fig. 36

Indeed, two near-identical forms to number 7 of fig. 36 have been attributed to the ninth and tenth century by the Japanese¹⁰², and Yutaka Mino of the Royal Ontario Museum (fig. 37)¹⁰³. This is only



fig. 37

one example which illustrates the uncertainties surrounding the "chu-tze" ewer form. While there exist many other attributions of this prototypal form to a time earlier than the ninth century, they are as yet unsubstantiated by any concrete archaeological evidence.

Another factor that argues in favour of an earlier date than the ninth century for the "chu-tze" ewer is the

100. WW, 1977, no. 2, p. 58, figs. 3 : 6 and 3 : 7.

101. Ibid.

102. Hasebe, G., and Sato, M., Ceramic Art of the World, Vol. 11, Sui and T'ang (世界陶瓷全集 11 隋唐) Tokyo, 1976, plate 145.

103. Mino, Y., Pre-Sung Dynasty Chinese Stonewares, Ontario, 1974, plate 68.

existence of this form in the "san-t'sai" ware of the T'ang dynasty. If the theory that the polychrome "san-t'sai" ware were produced exclusively in the first half of the eighth century is correct¹⁰⁴, then the ewer form must have existed prior to the early ninth century, for quite a number of well-proportioned pieces of this form are glazed in "san-t'sai" polychrome (fig. 38)¹⁰⁵.



fig. 38

The evidence brought up in the discussion of the dating of prototype XVIII raised more questions than it answered. For the moment, at least, the problems cannot easily be resolved. Until more reliably dated objects of this prototype surface in the future, the findings of the present chronological study stand in favour on the side of the argument that the "chu-tze" ewers did not become a common form until perhaps the late eighth or early ninth century.

104. Watson, W., "On T'ang Soft-Glazed Pottery", Colloquies on Art and Archaeology in Asia, No. 1, University of London, 1970, p. 43.

105. Hasebe, G., and Sato, M., Ceramic Art of the World, Vol. 11, Sui and T'ang (世界陶器全集 11 隋唐) Tokyo, 1976, plate 143. The ewer in fig. 38 is curiously dated by the Japanese authors to the ninth to the tenth centuries. This attribution conflicts with the theory that T'ang polychrome glazed ware did not last into the ninth century.

CHAPTER IV

All of the objects belonging to the chronology thus far discussed in the previous chapter belong to excavations of T'ang tombs. Collectively, these tomb objects reveal only information about where they were buried. No reliable clue as to their original sites of production can easily be deduced from these objects alone. This chapter is an attempt to relate the tomb objects in the chronology to some possible sites of production. The body of material to be examined in this chapter is the wasters which have been unearthed in the various Sui and T'ang kiln sites. By comparing the material from kiln sites to those from tomb excavations, we may gain some insight as to the provincial distribution and influence of certain ceramic forms.

This chapter is divided into seven sections which correspond to specific provinces of China, listed alphabetically, where excavated kilns have yielded specimens relevant to the present study. These objects will appear in the form of numbered figures preceding the discussion of each major kiln. The following discussion will include the comments of the original authors of the kiln excavations as well as observations by the present author.

Anhui province

1). Shou-chou Yao



fig. 39



fig. 40



fig. 41

Objects represented in figs. 39, 40 and 41 were excavated from the kilns in Shou-chou. The first two examples are attributed to a Sui period kiln, while the ewer in fig. 41 is dated to a T'ang kiln¹. The broken shard can safely be assumed to have been a vase similar to the one found in fig. 40. This form is represented in prototype II of the chronology. It was pointed out in the kiln report that the vase excavated is very similar to objects unearthed from late Six Dynasties and Sui tombs in the Wu-hu and Ho-hei areas of Anhui². In the chronology, two dated pieces, II 1 and II 3, were excavated from Anhui province, but no known dated pieces have been found from Six Dynasties tombs.

The schematic drawing of the kiln excavated vase, fig. 40, shows all the characteristics of prototype II - the dish mouth, long neck, and the four double loop handles.

1. WW, 1960, no. 12, p. 66.

2. Ibid., pp. 65-66.

Stylistically, it may be accorded a place after II 1 - because of its lack of body decoration, and before II 3 because of the ridges on its neck.

The Shou-chou report is the only kiln report where an example of this prototype has been referred to or illustrated. Yet, as clearly shown in the chronology, examples of this form were also found in tombs of other provinces of northern China. However, until future kiln excavations yield more specimens of this form, it may tentatively be concluded that the Shou-chou kilns constitute an early site where objects of this prototype were produced.

The "chu-tzu" ewer form in fig. 41 is also from one of the Shou-chou kilns. Although the author of the report did not draw a comparison with any pieces from T'ang tombs, one is to be found in a water project site near the Huai river in Anhui (XVIII b)³. A comparison between XVIII b and fig. 41 shows that the two are structurally and proportionately very similar. The only difference is in the form of spout - the kiln specimen sports a short faceted spout, while the one on XVIII b is slightly longer and seemingly round.

It is interesting to note the reasons which the author of the report gave to date the kiln site that produced this ewer form. Firstly, the kiln was attributed to the T'ang period because of the dominance of yellow glaze ware - a characteristic glaze of Shou-chou mentioned by Lu Yü

3. WW, 1965, no. 10, p. 46.

in Ch'a Ching. Secondly, the attribution of T'ang was given because of the occurrence of the ewer form which is stated to have come into vogue during the T'ang period.

2). Hsiao Yao

The Hsiao Yao excavation reports⁴ did not produce any illustration of objects which are directly relevant to this study. A mention was made in one report, however, that the shards of a type of faceted spout were found which belonged to ewers very similar to those found in the kilns of Shou-chou⁵.

Chêkiang Province

1). Tê-ch'ing Yao



fig. 42

Excavation of the Tê-ch'ing kiln site took place in 1959. From the waster, this kiln was concluded to be most active during the late Six Dynasties period⁶.

4. KG, 1962, no. 3, p. 134.

KG, 1963, no. 12, p. 662

5. KG, 1963, no. 12, p. 667

6. WW, 1959, no. 12, p. 52.

A very interesting specimen unearthed from this excavation is shown in fig. 42. This piece is nearly identical to prototypal object XIV 2, found in Changsha, Hunan. The only discernible difference between the two objects appears to be that the kiln specimen has a flat base while the Hunan example is supported on a rather tall foot. The round body proportion and the shallow dish mouth are comparable in every way, while the horizontally-arched handles differ only slightly in size and the degree of their arch.

The similarities shared by the two vessels are all the more remarkable considering the vast distance that separates the two finds. Even in a straight line, Changsha is more than 425 miles from the Tê-ching kiln site in Chêkiang.

2). Yü-yao Yao



fig. 43



fig. 44



fig. 45



fig. 46

The kilns that make up the Yü-yao site are located around Shang-lin-hu, and numbered sixteen when the report of their initial excavation was first published in 1959⁷. The report does not relate any of the excavated finds to other objects that have been obtained from T'ang tombs.

7. KGXB, 1959, no. 3, p. 108.

Instead, the attribution of the kiln specimens are given to general dynastic periods without clear explanations.

The two ewers represented in figs. 43 and 44 are said to belong to the T'ang dynasty. The former example has an unusually short spout, but otherwise compares very favourably to prototypal objects XVIII B 2 and XVIII B 3. The vertical fluting of the body is also a characteristic quite commonly seen on ewers of the ninth century.

Fig. 44 is a rather ungraceful form in which the squat body is divided into wide registers by vertical lines. No similar examples to this form have been illustrated in any primary sources. There is,

however, a resembling piece illustrated in an article on

Hunan wares written by

Isaac Newton⁸. Fig. 47, doubtfully attributed to the Six Dynasties,

may well be a direct descendant

of the kiln specimen. Both of these two objects share the unique

wide mouth, although the mouth of the example in fig. 47

is twice as tall as the one in fig. 44. The spouts on

both ewers are identical; and the body of fig. 47 retains

a vestige of the divisions of its predecessor in the form of vertical incised lines.



fig. 47

8. I. Newton, "Chinese Ceramic Wares from Hunan", FECB, 1958, Vol. X, nos. 3-4, plate no. 50.

A surface fixture worth noting on fig. 44 of the kiln find are the small auxiliary lugs found attached at right angles to the handle and spout. These lugs appear to be functional items used perhaps for stringing with a cord when transportation of the object was necessary. A pair of similar fixtures are also found on another kiln specimen - fig. 45. This piece is attributed to the Five Dynasties period by the writer of the kiln excavation report. Although located in the exact position as those on fig. 44, the fixtures here consist of small decorative plaques instead of lug handles. It is not certain whether there exists a clay piece which joins the plaque to the body to form a loop for the purpose of stringing a cord, but it is safe to conclude that this latter type of auxiliary fixture is as much decorative as it is functional.

As already mentioned, fig. 45 is dated to the Five Dynasties period. This attribution conflicts with the dating of a nearly identical object, fig. 48. This piece was found in Shanghai, Kiangsu, and given the general date of T'ang⁹. The only discernible difference between this and the object in fig. 45 is that the present piece has a well-cut foot while



fig. 48

9. WW, 1962, No. 3, p. 57.

the other has a concave and footless base. The piece excavated from Shanghai is also interesting in that its body is divided into wide registers in a manner not unlike the object in fig. 44.

Allowing for a bit of imagination, an evolutionary trend of one type of ewer may be traced, in respective order, in the examples of Fig. 44, fig. 47, and fig. 48. In the stage represented by fig. 44, the squat form has a yet "unestablished" mouth; however, the division of the body is already well defined. Fig. 47 represents the next stage, where some apparent experimentation took place. The mouth section has become quite tall, while the body division is marked by shorter and more frequent incised lines. Also different from the previous example is the lack of auxiliary lugs. A more decorative type of auxiliary fitting has returned to fig. 48, perhaps due to a functional necessity. The tall mouth section in fig. 47 has acquired an outward flare in this object. Yet, still recalling fig. 44, the body is again sectioned into wide registers by longitudinal lines.

A very different kind of ewer is shown in fig. 46, excavated from the Yü-yao kilns and attributed to the Five Dynasties. The peculiar trait exhibited in this example is the right angle in which the handle is positioned to the spout. This orientation has already been noted in the discussion of subgroup D of prototype XVIII. The objects belonging to this subgroup that are charted in the chronology both belong to the ninth century, or

the T'ang period. If the kiln specimen is correctly dated, the implication would be that it came after the objects XVIII D 1 and XVIII D 2 of the chronology. A stylistic comparison may be made to examine the validity of this implication.

Firstly, the objects to be compared, XVIII D 2 and fig. 46, are significantly different in form. XVIII D 2 has a tall body which is vertically fluted. Attached to its upper region is a pair of lugs probably used in a sophisticated method of fastening a cover (this will be discussed in Chapter V). The spout of this ninth century piece is also very long in proportion to its body. On the other hand, the object in fig. 46 has many characteristics which indicate an earlier date than XVIII D 2. Lacking in the kiln specimen are the vertical lobes and the vertical lugs for the fitting of a cover. The proportion of its body is squat and bulbous - characteristics typical of the T'ang rather than the Five Dynasties period. The spout is also short in relation to XVIII D 2. Lastly, the wide dish mouth is also a typical T'ang trait. All of these characteristics make it unlikely that the object in fig. 46 could have evolved from XVIII D 2.

The comparison above raises some doubt^{as} to the attribution of fig. 46 to the Five Dynasties. Stylistically, it is more likely to be T'ang, and perhaps a forerunner of the prototypal objects XVIII D 1 and XVIII D 2.

3). Wên-chou Hsi-shan Yao



fig. 49

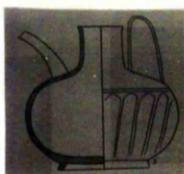


fig. 50



fig. 51

A remark is made in a kiln excavation report that many vessel forms found in the Hsi-shan kiln are similar to those found in the kilns of Yü-yao, Shang-lin-hu¹⁰. Both kilns are located in the province of Chêkiang, approximately 180 miles apart in a straight line.

The similarity between the products of these two kilns may be demonstrated by a comparison of two ewer forms. Fig. 49, from Hsi-shan, compares quite favourably with fig. 45, a specimen from Yü-yao. The only minor difference is that the body of fig. 49 is rounder and supported on a footring. All of the other components are similar, even in the decorative plaques on the side of the vessel.

Fig. 50 is a ewer that was not illustrated within the repertoire of forms found in the Yü-yao kiln excavation report. This form, with its straight neck and peculiarly attached handle, has only one related piece,

10. KG, 1956, no. 11, p. 23.

fig. 52, which is illustrated in another report¹¹. Fig. 52 is structurally, though not proportionately, similar to the kiln specimen in fig. 50. It was excavated in the same Kiangsu site which also produced the ewer in fig. 48.



fig. 52

Excavated also from the Hsi-shan kiln is an example of a cup stand, fig. 51. This is a fairly elaborate example of this prototype and no identical piece to it has been found from any tomb reports. It does, however, bear a structural resemblance to the cup stand of the prototypal object X 3, a piece excavated from Fukien province and dated to the early seventh century. Unlike the Fukien piece, however, the "setting ring" and the saucer of fig. 51 form a single hollow. The footring of the stand is also very tall in comparison to other parts of the object.

Honan Province

1). Anyang Yao



fig. 53



fig. 54.



fig. 55

11. WW, 1962, no. 3, p. 57.

A recent kiln excavation report jointly published by the Honan Provincial Museum and the Anyang Cultural Department provides important information regarding the production of ceramics in the Sui period. This site, located just north of the city of Anyang, yielded examples of three prototypes which relate directly to the chronology. In the conclusion of the report, relationships were drawn between the wasters of this kiln and the objects excavated from the tombs of Pu Jên and Sung Hsün, both of which were located near Anyang¹².

The three wasters from this kiln site which are relevant to this study are reproduced in figs. 53, 54 and 55. The jar, shown in a cross-section reconstruction in fig. 53, may best be compared to prototypal objects XII B 2 and XII B 3 of the chronology. All three pieces share in the characteristic features of having a short vertical mouth, four double-loop handles, and the division of the body into two halves by an equatorial ridge.

Another shard of a form which has a series of related objects in the chronology is the broken bottle in fig. 54, and may be compared to the objects in prototype VI. This bulbous form should stylistically be placed into a space between VI 2 and VI a. Of special interest is the lotus petal decoration on the upper region of the kiln waster. Although this motif is commonly found on vessels of the late sixth century (see prototypal objects II 1 and XII A 2

12. WW, 1977, no. 2, p. 54.

to XII A 4), it has not been found on any other bottles belonging to this prototype.

The last specimen from the Anyang kiln to be discussed is the stem cup shown in fig. 55. This object is composed of a bowl-like container supported on a neatly-turned stem. A search of the archaeological finds unearthed from Sui and T'ang tombs did not produce a piece relating to this one. However, the kiln specimen shares certain common characteristics with prototypal object IX 4, a piece from an Anhui tomb datable to the year 946. Both pieces are decorated in a similar fashion by the probable use of a mould, and the difference in their height is only one centimeter¹³.

The Anyang kiln site is conveniently located on the southern bank of the Huan River, where it is likely that the products of the kiln were transported to other parts of the metropolitan region. The three forms discussed above - the bottle, stem cup, and the type of jar in fig. 42, are all found extensively in the metropolitan provinces of Honan, Hopei, and Shensi. In addition, the stem cup points to a link with the neighbouring province of Anhui.

13. The stem cup excavated from the Anhui tomb is 6.0 cm. in height, while the kiln specimen from Honan measures 7.0 cm. in height.

2). Ho-pi Yao



fig. 56



fig. 57



fig. 58

The Ho-pi kiln is located in the north-western region of Honan province, within one-half kilometer of the Ch'i River, and five kilometers away from the T'ang River. This kiln is believed to have been active from the late T'ang to the early Yüan period¹⁴. Objects that were excavated from the T'ang stratum and relevant to our concern are shown in figs. 56, 57 and 58. The latter two were mentioned in the report as being similar to many objects which had been excavated from T'ang tombs in the regions around Ch'engchou and Loyang¹⁵.

The type of ewer exemplified in fig. 56 is not commonly illustrated in T'ang tomb reports. The only comparable piece was found in a tomb in the neighbouring province of Anhui (fig. 59)¹⁶. The unique



fig. 59

14. WW, 1964, no. 8, p. 1.

15. Ibid., p. 10.

16. WZ, 1954, no. 4, p. 31.

feature of this form is the tall and straight "neck", which joins smoothly to the body without any abruptness. Fixtures attached onto the body include a very short round spout, a wide strap handle and two auxiliary smaller handles.

The jar from the kiln site shown in fig. 57 may be compared with prototypal object XII 7 and a similar piece which was excavated in Szechuan¹⁷.

The latter example, represented in fig. 60, was attributed simply to the T'ang dynasty.

Although differences between

these three pieces can be seen

in the type and number of handles

fitted and some minor dissimilarities in

their mouth rim, the structure and the overall proportions of the objects are very closely related.



fig. 60

Fig. 58 is a unique form of vase, fashioned in the shape of a double gourd. This form was stated in the kiln report as one often found in the T'ang tombs around Chêngchou and Loyang. The height of the specimen found in the kiln site is 25.5 cm., but a much smaller version was apparently also made. From a T'ang tomb located also in Honan, an exact form, but without handles, measuring only 4.5 cm. was found (fig. 61)¹⁸.



fig. 61.

17. KGTX, 1956, no. 5, p. 31, plate X : 3.

18. KG, 1959, no. 5, p. 242.

3). Mi Hsien, Têng-fêng



fig. 62



fig. 63

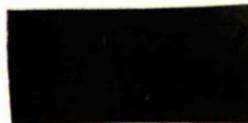


fig. 64

The only objects excavated from the kilns at Mi Hsien and Têng-fêng¹⁹ which are directly relevant to this study are examples of ewers. Fig. 62, a shard from Têng-fêng²⁰, resembles closely a ewer form found in the Ho-pi site (fig. 56). The typical ewer forms found in these two sites have tall and slender bodies, which join onto equally tall-proportioned "necks". The joining is smooth, forming a single unit marked only by continuous curves (fig. 63). An interesting characteristic about the ewers produced at these two sites is that none seem to be equipped with the auxiliary lugs or small handles which are normally found at right angles to the spout.

An intriguing statement regarding the dating of the ewer was made in the report of a Mi Hsien kiln. The statement was made that three broken pieces of spouts were found that were very similar to those of ewers excavated from Sui tombs in the city of Loyang²¹. One of these shards is

19. WW, 1964, no. 2, p. 54, and WW, 1964, no. 3, p. 47.

20. WW, 1964, no. 2, p. 61.

21. WW, 1964, no. 2, p. 59, fig. 6 : 1

represented in fig. 64. Unfortunately, no further reference is offered regarding the dating or source of the Sui ewers. This opinion expressed in the kiln report somewhat conflicts with the findings of the analysis of the "chu-tze" ewer form in Chapter III - that no ewer of the type such as fig. 63 has been found in any reliably dated Sui tomb.

4). Hui Hsien



fig. 65

The four kilns that make up the Hui Hsien site are said to have been active during the T'ang and the Sung periods²². Specimens unearthed from these kilns were composed almost entirely of bowl forms - shapes that are not included within the scope of this thesis. The report does, however, contain an illustration of a ewer found in the Yen-ts'un kiln of Hui Hsien. This specimen, fig. 65, closely resembles the ewer in fig. 56 which was found in the Ho-pi kiln. The similarity is understandable considering that the two sites, Hui Hsien and Ho-pi, are less than fifty miles apart.

22. WW, 1965, no. 11, p. 35.

5). Kung Hsien

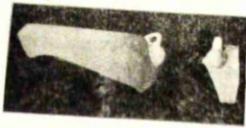


fig. 66

The wasters of this kiln were composed mainly of bowls, of which eleven types were identified. More interesting to this study, however, is the discovery of a kind of wide mouthed jar. These jars are said to have uniformly matched handles made by the use of a mould (fig. 66)²³. Another type of jar was described as having an everted mouth rim, a short neck, swelling shoulder and a flat base. This latter form was said to be most commonly seen in the white ware and "san tsai" ware of the T'ang dynasty²⁴.

Concerning the shard in fig. 66 with the moulded handle, an identical object with the exact handles can be found in the West (fig. 67)²⁵. This object is said by Prodan to be a holy man's begging bowl²⁶.



fig. 67

23. WW, 1959, no. 3, p. 56.

24. Ibid.

25. M. Prodan, The Art of the T'ang Potter, London, 1960, plate III.

26. Ibid, p. 10.

The second type of jar described in the Chinese kiln report as having been produced in the Kung Hsien kilns can also commonly be found in collections in the West. Fig. 68 fits the description perfectly, and the moulded ears are said to be decorative vestiges of rabbits²⁷. An almost identical piece in white glaze can be found on exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum (fig. 69).



fig. 68



fig. 69

Hopei Province

1. Tz'u Hsien Chia-pi Yao

The excavation report of the Chia-pi yao was published in 1959²⁸. Although this article does not contain any illustration of objects which are pertinent to this study, it is nevertheless an important site to be considered.

It was deduced in this early article that some of the objects excavated from the tomb of Pu Jên were the products

27. Ibid., plate XXX, p. 154.

28. KG, 1959, no. 10, p. 546.

of the Chia-pi kiln. In 1959, this was the only kiln site in which prototypes of the Sui period were found. Consequently, many of the objects unearthed belonging to Sui tombs had only the products of this site for comparison.

Since then, additional Sui kiln sites have been discovered and excavated, enabling a more accurate picture of the wares of this period. A case in point is the discovery and subsequent excavation of the Sui dynasty Anyang kiln in 1974²⁹. This newly discovered site has provided more conclusive evidence that the objects from the tomb of Pu Jên were produced in the Anyang kiln rather than the Chia-pia kiln³⁰. Certain objects produced in these two kilns are very similar, for although they are located in different provinces, the two are separated by a distance of less than fifty miles.

2). Chien-tz'ü ts'un Ting yao.



fig. 70



fig. 71



fig. 72

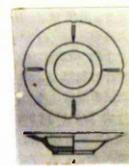


fig. 73

29. WW, 1977, no. 2, p. 48.

30. Ibid., p. 53.

No attempt has been made in the Ting kiln report to relate the wasters to any objects that had been excavated from T'ang tombs³¹. The majority of the forms found at this site consists of bowls and other shapes not directly related to this study. The two prototypal forms from the Ting kiln which are relevant to the chronology are the ewer and the cup stand.

Figs. 70 and 71 are two varieties of spouted ewers found at the Ting kiln. The former example is quite a small object, measuring only 10.5 cm. in height. It has a vaguely modelled handle,

recalling the dragon type found on the chicken spouted ewers.

An almost identical piece has been found in a Shensi T'ang tomb (fig. 74)³² These two



fig. 74

pieces, in addition to being

structurally identical, are almost exactly the same in height - the piece found in Shensi is 10.6 cm. tall.

The ewer represented in fig. 71 can be favourably compared with prototypal object XVIII B 3 and fig. 43, a waster excavated from the Yü-yao kiln at Chêkiang province. The handle of the present piece, however, differs in that the top is looped downwards to be adhered to the base of the neck.

31. The major report of the T'ing kiln excavation is found in the Chinese archaeological journal KG, 1965, no. 8, p. 394.

32. KGXB, 1956, no. 3, p. 33.

Samples of cup stands obtained at the T'ing kiln are represented in figs. 72 and 73. These two examples are both saucerlike stands resembling prototypal objects X 6 and X 7 of the chronology. The centres of the T'ing pieces consist of a fairly deep hollow, while the base is supported on a cut footring. The folding of the saucer rim to simulate a lotus leaf is another characteristic shared by the T'ing specimen and X 6 and X 7 of the chronology. The latter two are from the province of Chêkiang.

Hunan Province

1). Ch'angsha Wa-cha-p'ing yao



fig. 75



fig. 76



fig. 77

A majority of the wasters obtained from the kilns appear to be ewer forms³³. Of the various types of this prototype found, three are selected for discussion.

Fig. 75 represents one very typical and common ewer form of the Wa-chia-p'ing kilns. Its body is cylindrical in

33. The two Chinese articles written on the excavation of the Changsha Wa-chia-p'ing kilns appear in WW, 1960, no. 3, p. 67, and WW, 1960, no. 3, p. 71.

shape, the shoulder is round. On top of the shoulder is another cylindrical mouth section with a slightly everted rim. The spout is short and faceted. Opposite to it is a strap handle which connects the shoulder to the side of the mouth. At a ninety degree angle to the spout, two small auxiliary handles project from the shoulder. This form was undoubtedly very popular in the T'ang time, for almost identical pieces have been found in places as far apart as Anhui (prototypal object XVIII F 1) and Korea³⁴.

It is apparent that the fundamental cylindrical shape, from which the ewers mentioned above are fashioned, was also made into other jars. Precisely such a jar, prototypal object XI 8, was found in a Kiangsu tomb datable to the year 850. The shape and glaze of this object leave little doubt that it was originally produced in the Wa-cha -p'ing kilns.

The waster in fig. 76 should be compared with prototypal objects XVIII D 1 and XVIII D 2. From the description given in the kiln report, it is uncertain whether this object has the lug fittings and a handle which is set at right-angles to the spout³⁵. From the photograph of fig.76, it does appear that opposite to the spout traces of a broken fitting are left. Perhaps the handle is located on the other side from the angle from which this photograph

34. WW, 1960, no. 3, p. 74, fig. 4.

35. Ibid., p. 68; the description mentions that on the shoulder are traces of a handle and some fitting.

was taken. Regardless of these points, the overall shape of the Wa-chia-p'ing waster is very similar to the two objects in subgroup D of prototype XVIII. All three are composed of a tall ovoid form capped by a short collar mouth; the spout is long compared to the body.

Fig. 77 is of interest for two reasons. Firstly, it calls to mind immediately the type of small "hu"s of the Chin period which are quite often modelled with animal parts. Fig. 78 is one such example in which the chicken motif appears³⁶. Secondly, the ewer in fig. 77 may be a link in the evolution from the dish mouth round ewers as represented in XVIII e, f, g to the teapot variety as seen in XVIII h and XVIII G 1. The stylistic evolution of this form may have taken the following progression : 1) the chicken-headed "hu" of the Chin dynasty (fig. 28), 2) the dish-mouth round ewer of the T'ang (XVIII e, f, g), 3) the reoccurrence of the chicken-headed "hu", but without the dish mouth (fig. 77), and 4) the phasing out of the zoomorphic motif. The result of the last stage is the round teapot-shaped ewer of XVIII h.



fig. 78

36. Tregear, M., Catalogue of Chinese Greenware in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, Oxford, 1976, plate 71.

Kwantung Province

1). Kao-ming Ta-kang-shan kiln



fig. 79

The Ta-kang-shan site is one of seven kilns found in the region of Fo-shan³⁷. It is the only site from which a photograph of an object relevant to our concern is produced; the other six sites yielded primarily bowls of various types. Fig. 79 is a large wide mouthed jar which measures 26.5 cm. in height and affixed with six horizontal handles. It is stated in the report that this type of jar can be as small as 18.6 cm. and have four handles. Fig. 79 unmistakably belongs to subgroup B of prototype XVII in the chronology. The size of the three examples in the chronology ranges from 19.0 to 20.0 cm. in height. This kiln specimen may be viewed as a common and very typical form produced in Kwantung during the T'ang and pre-T'ang period. A large number of tombs excavated in this province yielded recognizable examples of this form. It is characterised by a slightly ovoid body supported on a concave flat base,

37. The excavation reports on all seven sites collectively appear in WW, 1959, no. 12, p. 53.

the wide mouth is very short and nearly straight, and attached rather high up on the shoulder area are four or six horizontally-oriented handles.

Shensi Province

1. Yao-chou



fig. 80

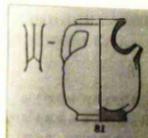


fig. 81

Up to this date, only one kiln known to be active during the T'ang period has been discovered in Shensi. This is the very important site of Yao-chou, thought to be established in the early T'ang period³⁸. The availability of an abundance of good clay and fuel materials, coupled with an excellent location, made this site one of the most productive ceramic centres in China during the T'ang and Sung periods³⁹.

The excavation of this kiln site uncovered three soil strata, with the bottom-most layer containing objects from

38. KG, 1962, no. 6, p. 312.

39. The region of Huang-pao-ch'en is said to produce both fine clay material and good fuel in the form of high quality coal. The saggars made from local refractory clay are claimed to be able to withstand up to seventeen or eighteen repeated firings.

the T'ang dynasty. Most of these specimens are composed of bowl forms⁴⁰. The only two illustrated forms related to our investigation are both ewers. Fig. 80 may be compared with XVIII C 1 and XVIII C 2 of the chronology. All three pieces have tall ovoid bodies which taper towards the base. The base is supported on a cut splay foot. The upper section is a short trumpet mouth. Both the spout and the handle are relatively short.

Fig. 81 appears to be a squat version of fig. 80. Although the body of this piece is rounder than the previous examples, and its trumpet mouth is more concave towards the body, the structural principles of the two examples are the same. A comparison was noted by a Chinese author that these ewers are identical to others which have been excavated from T'ang tombs located in the region east of Sian⁴¹.

40. See 陝西銅川耀州窯 科學出版社 北京 1965
fig. 9, plates VII and VIII.

41. KG, 1962, no. 6, p. 312.

CHAPTER V

Comments and opinions regarding the origin and evolution of Sui and T'ang ceramic forms have already been discussed in the previous Chapters III and IV. In this concluding chapter, the findings of the thesis must now be compared to comparable works for an evaluation of its validity. For this purpose, two Chinese articles, respectively on Sui and T'ang forms, will be employed.

The title of the first article is tentatively translated as "The Development of Porcelain in the Sui Dynasty"¹. This work contains drawings of a number of forms believed to be used in the Sui dynasty. Two examples from this article have been mentioned in the discussion of prototype XVIII, the "chu-tze" ewer (see fig. 36).

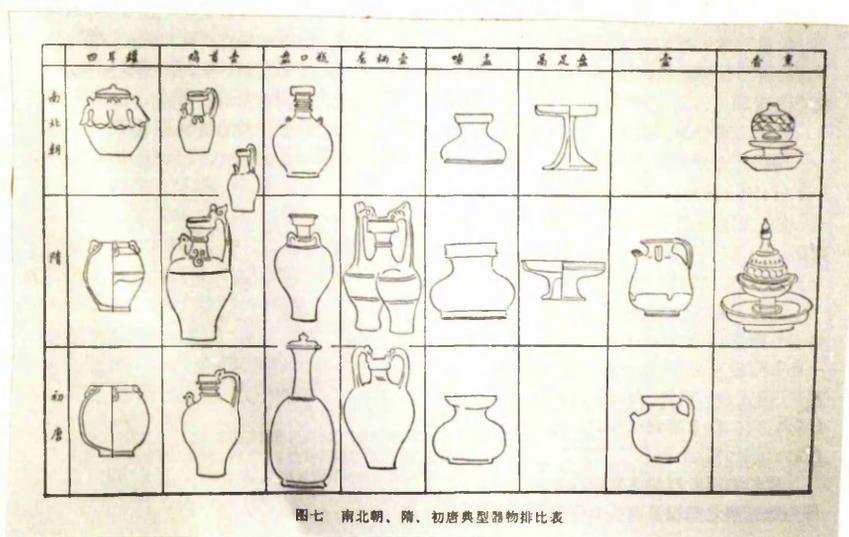


fig. 82

1. WW, 1977, no. 2, p. 57.

Fig. 82 is a chart contained in the Chinese article which expresses the author's viewpoint on the evolution of certain forms through three general time periods². The time segments are represented by the horizontal columns and attributed respectively to the Nan-pei chao, the Sui, and the early T'ang periods. Charted in the vertical columns are the evolutions of eight prototypes. An unfortunate fact about the objects in this chart is that none of them possess any information regarding origin or source, thereby raising many questions as to their attributions. Nevertheless, some comments may be made concerning the vertical columns 1, 2, 3 and 7 (from left to right). The other columns consist of forms not included within the scope of the present thesis.

Column one of the Chinese chart may be compared to prototype XII of the chronology. Although the origin and source of the first example are unknown, the cover-jar with plastic lotus petals is similar to prototypical object XII A 3 in structural principle. Worthy of note on the example in the Chinese chart is that it has a short and wide collar mouth accompanied by a cover; horizontal loop (?) handles, and is supported on a flat base. Almost all of the similar jars in the chronology are supported on a foot, except for XIII 2. The horizontal loop handles are also unique compared to other dated examples in the chronology. The third object in the first column of the Chinese chart is

2. Ibid., p. 60, fig. 7.

also peculiar as it is both round and undecorated. Objects in the chronology show that the undecorated example of this prototype, such as XII b and XII c, are normally ovoid and tall in form. The rounder jars in the chronology normally have division ridges on their bodies.

Column two of the Chinese chart corresponds to prototype I of the chronology, and the first and third examples of the former chart (counting the smaller object charted on the line between the first and second time period) are the same objects as I 1 and I 3 of the chronology. The fourth object, however, is something quite different. This chicken-spouted vessel of unknown origin may be compared to I 5, a piece excavated from a Shensi tomb datable to 668. The body proportions of these two objects are significantly different, especially in the neck and the base. Noteworthy on the body of the piece in the Chinese chart is the absence of lugs, or auxiliary handles. All of the examples in the chronology are equipped with these fittings including E 5, which corresponds to the period of early T'ang dynasty.

The third column of the Chinese chart shows a very doubtful progression. The source for the first example is not revealed, and the object is unknown to the present author. The second object, with an uncharacteristically short straight neck, should no doubt be a member of prototype II, perhaps II 4, of the chronology. The inclusion of the bottle form as a third stage of evolution, however, is most questionable. Firstly, this exact object was

attributed to the late rather than the early T'ang period by another Chinese author³. Secondly and more importantly, this bottle form with a long neck has an early origin in China (see prototype III of the chronology). Its evolution in form is independent from and unrelated to the first and second objects in the Chinese chart. The findings of the present thesis strongly suggest that the second and third objects in column three of the Chinese chart are representatives of two unrelated prototypes, corresponding to prototypes II and III of the chronology. These two forms evolved independently and they should not be considered jointly as the author has done in the Chinese article.

Problems concerning the origin and evolution of the "chu-tzu" ewer, graphed in column seven of the Chinese chart, have been raised in the appropriate section in Chapter III of this thesis. As no reliably dated examples prior to the early ninth century have been found in any tomb excavation report, the data presented in the chronology necessarily conflicts with the evolution of this form shown in the Chinese chart. Judging from the evidence available regarding this prototype, the present author believes that the ewer did not come into common usage until possibly the late eighth or early ninth century.

3. WW, 1972, no. 3, p. 34, fig. 20.

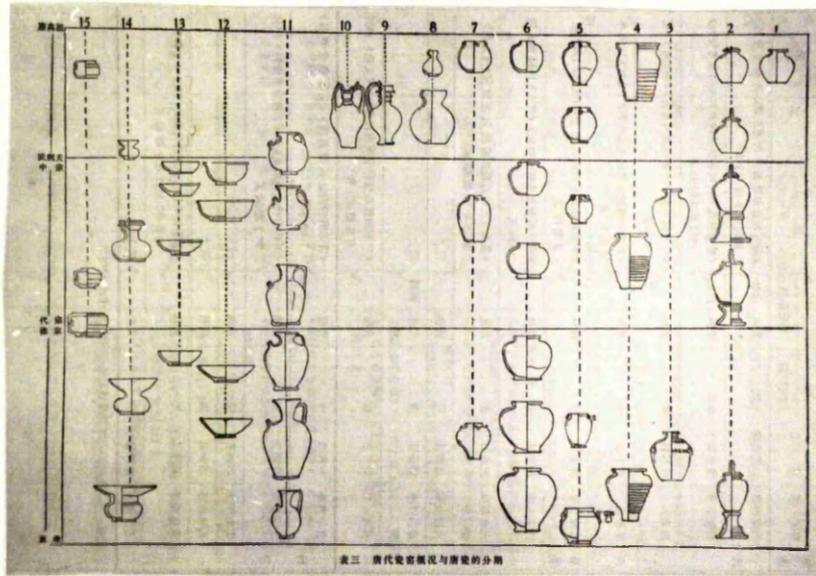


fig. 83

The second Chinese article which is useful for the purpose of comparing the present findings appears also in the Chinese archaeological journal Wen Wu; a tentative translation of its title is "A General Survey of T'ang Kilns and the Periodic Distribution of T'ang Ceramic Forms"⁴. The chart from this article is reproduced in fig. 83 and on it is graphed the evolution of fifteen forms. The objects of the chart are said to be comprised primarily of specimens obtained from T'ang tombs excavated around the region of Sian, Shensi; in addition, some objects from excavated kilns have been included⁵. Note that the numbering of the

4. WW, 1972, no. 3, p. 34.

5. Ibid., p. 35.

prototypes in this Chinese chart, found on the top, progresses from the right to the left; and, like the previous chart dealing with the forms of the Sui dynasty, any information on the source of the objects is also lacking in this one.

The evolution of form number two in fig. 83 may be compared to that of prototype VIII of the chronology. The trend of development of the five objects in the Chinese chart may be divided into three stages : 1) a single jar accompanied by a cover, 2) the addition of a joined-on tall "base" to the jar, and 3) the separation of the "base" to become a stand. The cross-section diagrams show fair consistency during the transitional stages as the jar undergoes an elongation. The base/stand, in all cases, shows the common characteristic of possessing horizontal ridges on either the top, bottom, or both regions.

The datable Shensi examples of prototype VIII in the chronology - VIII 1, VIII 2 and VIII 4, are all sufficiently different from the objects graphed on the Chinese chart, especially with regard to the base. The three Shensi specimens in prototype VIII have either a plain or over-decorative base; none of them has the type of base with raised ridges depicted in form number two of the Chinese chart.

The third example in form two of fig. 83 is of interest as it shows the base of the object adhering to the jar to form an inseparable unit. This cross-section drawing adds support to the assertion put forth in the discussion of

prototype VIII that objects belonging to this prototype do occur, including the cover, in two as well as three separable pieces. The two examples in the chronology which have an inseparable base are VIII a and VIII b, two pieces respectively excavated from the provinces of Shansi and Szechuan.

The objects charted under forms numbers five and seven in fig. 83 may be compared with pieces graphed under prototypes XII, XIII and XVII of the chronology. In the Chinese chart, it appears that the deciding factor which differentiates the objects of the two progressions is that of the foot, for otherwise the second example in form number five is very similar to the first object in form number seven. A comparison of the objects from these two progressions to prototypes XII, XIII and XVII results in many dissimilarities. Many of the pieces graphed on the Chinese chart are simply not published or datable examples that can be included into the chronology; and unfortunately all of these objects lack documentation and source.

On the other hand, many of the dated Shensi forms plotted on the present chronology, and which should have been included in the Chinese chart under the columns five and seven, were simply left out. Among this group may be prototypal objects XII B 5, XII B 6, XIII 4 to XIII 6, XVII A 3 and XVII C 1. The above conditions make a detailed comparison of the evolution of these jars impossible. A note should be made, however, regarding the first example in column five of fig. 83. This cross-section form is identical to XII c of the chronology. The Chinese author

has plotted this object onto a time period corresponding to the early seventh century. This same object is attributed to the eighth century by Y. Mino⁶. In the present thesis, a stylistic comparison of this object to the chronology yields a date of mid-seventh century (see discussion of prototype XII, Chapter III).

The only other form in the Chinese chart which is also represented in the present chronology is that of the "chutze" ewer in column eleven. No comparison can be made in this respect, however, for none of the pieces in the Chinese chart is documented, and none of the dated pieces in the chronology has Shensi as a provenance. Interesting to note, though, is the attribution of the first ewer in column eleven of fig. 83. It is plotted on a spot corresponding to the reign of Empress Wu Tsê-t'ien (684-704). This implies that no ewers could be found to represent the early seventh century and - by extension, the Sui dynasty. This interpretation is yet another viewpoint regarding the origin and evolution of the ewer form.

So far in the writing of this thesis, remarks and discussions have largely been confined to the examination of individual objects, prototype or kiln sites. In this last chapter, an attempt will be made to draw some overall conclusions from the data presented in the chronology. Hopefully, these observations will help us to gain some insight to some unifying characteristics which may be unique

6. Mino, Y., Pre-Sung Dynasty Chinese Stonewares, Ontario, 1974, plate 31.

to ceramic forms of the Sui and T'ang periods.

Observations made and conclusions reached in this section are solely concerned with characteristics which can be directly related to ceramic form. These include elements such as structural components, body proportions, surface fixtures, and plastic decoration. All of these directly affect the form of an object. Two dimensional decoration, on the whole, will play a part in this section only if it can be considered as a vestige of a former plastic motif; for instance, an incised line which has taken the place of a raised ridge.

The first observation to be considered concerns that of basic forms. It can be seen that many objects, although belonging to different prototypes, do share a common basic structure. This tendency may best be demonstrated by comparing two objects belonging to different prototypes - I 3 and II 4. Both pieces share an identical basic structure of a bottle form with a tall dish mouth. Prototypal object I 3, however, has been given an additional dragon handle and a chicken-headed spout. These attachments have effectively changed a basic bottle form into a prototypal chicken-spouted ewer.

Other less obvious examples which can be singled out to share similarities in basic structures are the three objects I 5, II a, and V c; the pair of objects V 2 and VII B 3; and the two pieces, XI 8 and XVIII F 1. The three objects in the first group are sufficiently different in their body proportions as well as having dissimilar

surface fittings. Nevertheless, they all share a common basic structure of a bottle form with components such as a tall dish mouth, a straight neck decorated with two raised ridges, an ovoid body, and a prominent splayed base. The relation of VII B 3 to V 5 has already been noted in the discussion of Chapter III; the former is essentially a truncated version of the latter. The last pair of objects, XI 8 and XVIII F 1, are almost certainly the products of the Wa-chia-p'ing kiln site at Hunan (see discussion of this kiln in Chapter IV). The basic form structure of these two objects is the wide mouth jar of XI 8, which is equipped with two horizontally-set handles on the shoulder. The wide mouth jar in XVIII F 1 has been affixed with three vertical handles which connect from the shoulder to the collar mouth. Also on the shoulder is attached a short spout that effectively renders the former jar into a prototypal ewer. All of the above examples serve to illustrate an interesting tendency of Sui and T'ang ceramics; a tendency to take a basic structure and, with minor alteration and/or additional surface fixtures, change the structure into forms belonging to different prototypes.

The second overall observation which can be detected in the chronology is what appears to be an effort of the Five Dynasties potters to imitate forms of a much earlier date. This seemingly deliberate effort can be seen in a number of different prototypes. The chicken-spouted ewer, prototype I, may serve as the first example. This form

was very popular in the periods of Sui and early T'ang, as evidently shown in the first horizontal column of the chronology. The last datable piece, I 5, corresponds to a date of 668. Around this time, this prototype seems to have suffered a decline, as no reliably dated pieces can be attributed to the eighth or ninth centuries. Yet, the shard in I 6, unmistakably demonstrates a reoccurrence of the chicken-spouted vessel. This piece was excavated from a Szechuan tomb datable to 955, almost three hundred years after the last datable specimen.

Another case where a Five Dynasties object closely resembles a much earlier piece can be seen in prototype III of the chronology. III B 1, datable to 499, represents an early stage of evolution of a bottle form. The descendants of this form, although following a similar course of development, have also incorporated additional features. The new alterations consequently necessitated the establishment of new subgroups (see discussion of prototype III in Chapter III). The last datable example of prototype III in the T'ang dynasty is III C 5, a piece quite different in form to III B 1. Yet, in the Five Dynasties period, an almost identical form as III B 1 has surfaced. III B 3 was obtained from an Anhui tomb dated to 946 - almost four hundred and fifty years later than the piece III B 1.

The last prototype to be examined which follows this tendency is that of the stem cup, prototype IX. An early version of this form is seen in IX 1, consisting of a wide bowl form supported on an undecorated splayed stem. This

early version is then seemingly passed over in favour of another shape, characterized by a deeper bell-shaped form supported on a stem almost always decorated with a raised ridge. The occurrence of this prototype appears to have declined in number in the ninth century as none has been attributed to the late T'ang period. In the Five Dynasties, this form is again produced. IX 4, from Anhui and datable to 946, is structurally very similar to IX 1, an object deduced to around 600. Both pieces are basically composed of a wide bowl form supported on an undecorated splay stem. The affiliation of IX 4 to Sui forms finds further support when it is compared to fig. 55, a specimen from a kiln excavation (see comparison of these two objects in the discussion of Anyang yao, Honan Province, Chapter IV).

The existence of objects in the Five Dynasties which bear close resemblance to much earlier forms should not be taken as coincidental. This peculiar trait also reveals itself in the realm of plastic decoration. Although no-one has ever noted an occurrence of "archaism" in the Five Dynasties period, the excavated evidence revealed in the chronology strongly points to a conscious effort on the part of the early tenth century potters to produce forms that were popular in a much earlier time.

We may now examine the overall characteristics of decoration in the Sui, T'ang and Five Dynasties periods. Again, decoration is defined in this thesis only to mean qualities which are integral to the form of an object. Included in this context are features such as ridges, fluting,

lobing, and plastic modelling.

First to be discussed is plastic modelling⁷. This decorative feature is best exemplified in prototypal objects XII A 1 to XII A 4. The modelling of the upper body into inverted lotus petals creates a decorative theme which is an integral part of the organic form. Prototypal objects I 2 and XIII 1 also clearly belong to this group. Within the range of the chronology, the earliest datable piece modelled in this manner is XII A 1, from a tomb dated 485. This method of decoration seems to have peaked and rapidly declined during the late sixth century, as attested by the examples in the chronology. The demise of plastic modelling at this time was quickly replaced by another popular feature - the protruding ridge.

The ridge has both three-dimensional and two-dimensional qualities. It is in all respects a transition between plastic and linear decoration. This is its precise function in the evolution of prototype XII (see discussion of this prototype in Chapter III). The usage of the ridge as a decoration was most extensive from the late sixth century to a period shortly after the middle of the seventh century. It can be seen in prototypes I, II, IX, XII and XIII. As mentioned regarding its occurrence in prototype XII, the ridge may be a direct and natural evolution of plastic decoration. The raised ridge may also have the

7. Plastic decoration, as applied to this discussion, does not include elements such as appliqué, for these are ornamental in nature.

function of serving as a guideline for where handles are attached. This function can best be seen in the objects of prototype XIII (see discussion of this prototype in Chapter III).

Another decorative feature which often serves as a guideline for the placement of handles is the horizontal incised line. It has an early and independent development from the protruding ridge, as may be seen in prototypal object XVII B 1, an object datable to 499. In another context, however, the incised line may be interpreted as a direct evolution of the trend from plastic modelling to protruding ridge to incised line. This trend may be represented respectively by the prototypal objects XII A 4, XII B 2 and XII a.

Another example which illustrates the intimate relationship between plastic and linear decoration is the prototypal object XVII A 2. Attributed to the Southern Dynasty, this piece may be a contemporary of the objects XII A 1 to XII A 3, and XIII 1. The latter group of objects all have their upper body region modelled in three-dimensional inverted lotus petals. This exact motif also occurs on the upper body of XVIII A 2; however, the decoration is incised rather than modelled.

As mentioned earlier, the decline of plastic decoration took place probably in the late sixth century, as evident in the chronology. By the Five Dynasties period, however, this decorative method enjoyed a revival. This is unmistakably demonstrated in the examples of IV f and

X c. The reappearance of the lotus petals in a plastic form recalls its immense popularity in the decoration of the sixth century. A minor difference in orientation of this motif is noted on the tenth century forms: the petals are right side up rather than inverted. The return to plastic decoration may also include the stem cup of IX 4. The moulded surface of this specimen and its relationship to Sui ceramics has already been discussed in Chapter IV (fig. 55). This revival of plastic decoration in the Five Dynasties period adds supportive evidence to the theory that there existed a conscious effort on the part of the potters of the tenth century to imitate the wares of a much earlier period.

A new decorative feature was introduced in the latter part of the T'ang period. This is the technique of fluting. By the ninth century, the body of many objects show the semicylindrical vertical grooves that are the result of this technique. Examples of fluting can be found in the cup stands X 6, X 7 and the "chu-tze" ewers XVIII B 1 to XVIII B 3. Although most commonly found on the objects of the ninth century, the fluting decoration has a surprisingly early origin. A bowl from the tomb of Ch'eng Jen-t'ai, who died in 663 and was buried in the following year, already shows prominent characteristics of the fluting technique (fig. 84)⁸.



fig. 84

8. WW, 1972, no. 7, p. 33, fig. 12.

Developing at the same time as fluting is another decorative variation, that of the foliated rim. Fig. 84 already shows an early stage of this feature in the small notches taken out from the rim of the bowl. Further pieces may be seen in the ninth century examples of the cup stand. X 6 shows a well-developed example of foliation, where the treatment has been extended to the rim of the stand in the form of folded petals. In the object X c, the foliation becomes less stylized and more natural. In addition, an increase in the number and the complexity of the petals is noted.

Arthur Lane, in the book Style in Pottery, observes that a constant preference of Chinese pottery is an absence of handles. He qualifies this point by stating that when they exist, the handles are often nothing more than loops through which a cord could be passed, and they tend to be located near the neck or shoulder of a vessel. This characteristic generally holds true, as can be attested to by the objects plotted in the chronology.

This does not, on the other hand, imply that handles and related fittings are not significantly important enough to warrant a careful investigation. On the contrary, an examination of the various types of handles used in the Sui and T'ang periods reveals many interesting trends of evolution on their own.

An early type of handle used in the period covered by the chronology is the square variety. This ranges from an almost cubic lug, as seen in prototypal object I 1, to a

thin square, as in XII A 3. The square handles are almost exclusively found on the objects of a pre-seventh century date, and only a few have been found after this date (XVII A 3). Other examples of the square handle can be seen on objects I a, I 2, V a, XIII 2 and XVII B 1. Square handles are primarily horizontally orientated - meaning that the points to which the handles are attached to the body of the vessel lie in a horizontal line. Thus, a cord would pass vertically through the opening made by this type of handle.

The square handles on prototypal object XIII 2 are of special interest. These are grouped into three pairs, with each pair divided by a ringed double loop. The square handles are still horizontally placed, but they have been made narrower in order to be paired off. We shall return to this pairing shortly, as they later become differently arranged to form a new type of surface fitting.

The vertical placement of handles is also prevalent. This format also has a long history, and examples can be found commonly in the Six Dynasties period⁹. A peculiar trait of the vertically orientated handles is that none of them is square. They are usually fashioned from a coil of clay, with the two ends pressed onto the body of the vessel in a vertical line. The resulting opening of this type of handle is one in which a cord is horizontally strung.

9. For examples, see WW, 1976, no. 5, p. 916, plate 6 : 3, 4 and 5.

It is not uncommon to find objects which have handles attached in both directions. This trait is most popular on the jars of the sixth century, although the date may be even earlier. Prototypal object XVIII A 1, from Kwangtung and datable to 499, is the first of a series of jars with handles set in both directions. XIII 2 also belongs in this group. The combined orientation method of placing handles carried on into the early seventh century, as exemplified by XVII A 3, then gave way to the double-strand loop handles. These are exclusively vertically orientated, and their début probably took place some time in the late sixth century, as the earliest example, XII B 1, cannot have a date later than 581¹⁰.

The origin of the double-strand loop handle can be traced to a few possible forerunners. As noted earlier, vertical handles made from a single coil have existed from an early time. It takes a concept of pairing to produce the double strands. This concept started fairly early, and it is already evident in 485, exemplified by the object XII A 1. By the time of the late sixth century, the pairing becomes even closer, as seen in XII A 4. From that example, it takes only a replacement of the round lugs with the more easily made coils to produce a double-strand loop handle.

An example can be found which served as a bridge in the transition of the rather stiff paired-off loops

10. For attribution, see documentation of XII B 1 in Chapter II.

(XII A 1 and XII A 4) to the more spontaneous appearance of the double-strand loop handles as exhibited in XII B 1. It is safe to say that the attachment of the handles of the former two examples probably took considerable care, as no traces of the joining can be seen. On the other hand, the handles of XII B 1 appear to have been freely pressed onto the body of the vessel. The result of this carefree action can be seen in the flattened and widened areas where the joining took place. The link between these two different treatments may be provided by the unusual ringed double-strand handles found on object XIII 2, shown in detail in fig. 85. Simulating bronze features, this unique loop handle paradoxically reveals the dual characteristics of careful modelling and the flattened and widened "joint" which typifies the carefree attachment of later pieces. From the stage illustrated in fig. 85, it is not hard to see the subsequent evolution of handles to the more efficiently attached double-strand loop handles.



fig. 85

A less obvious trend of evolution which may have produced the double-strand loop handles is represented in the progression of prototype XIV. The handles on the first piece in this prototype are made from coils set in a horizontal direction. The handles on XIV 2 are also placed horizontally; however, these are of such length

that the high arches thus created convey a strong sense of verticality. From this example, it requires little imagination to pinch the arch together and attach them vertically to the vessel. This would effectively result in the double-strand loop handles.

A decorative feature remains to be discussed about this type of handle. This is the addition of a rivetlike stud to the lower joint of the handle. Objects plotted in the chronology show that this characteristic persisted for roughly one century. The earliest datable example, I 3, came from the tomb of Li Ch'ing-hsuan, who died in 608. The last dated piece with this decoration is XIV 3, from the tomb of Princess Yung-tai, who died in 701 and was reburied in 706.

A most astonishing type of surface fitting to appear in the ceramic medium is shown in fig. 86, a cover jar from Kwangtung Province and attributed to the Six Dynasties period¹¹. Six protruding clay slabs, each punched with a hole, are adhered to the shoulder



fig. 86

of the jar. These form two pairs and two singles, placed opposite to each other. The cover is equipped with similar protruding slabs, enabling a snug fit into the slots formed by the two pairs that are attached to the body of

11. KG, 1964, no. 6, p. 297.

the jar. The cover was probably held in place by wooden plugs or a cord of some description. The two free single slabs were no doubt used for the purpose of carrying. More will be said concerning the methods for the transportation of this sort of vessel.

This unique form of surface fitting is generally considered to belong to the tenth century, and another cover almost identical to that in fig. 84

has been discovered in another Five Dynasties tomb in Chêkiang¹².

This cover is shown in fig. 87;

note that one of the protruding

slabs is a reconstruction. A



fig. 87

close examination of another form,

however, suggests that this unique surface fitting was already popular in the late ninth century. Prototypical ewers XVIII D 1 and XVIII D 2 are both fitted with protruding slabs which form a similar fitting as the object in fig. 86. The difference is that only a single pair of slabs is attached to the body (see XIV D 1 in chronology). The existence of an object with only one pair of fittings implies that the cover should have only one instead of two slabs, as it can only be fastened on one side. This theory strongly suggests that perhaps the cover shown in fig. 87 did indeed fit onto an object like the ewer XVIII D 1; and that the reconstruction of a second slab

12. KG, 1975, no. 3, p. 186, fig. 11 : 2

to the cover is an unnecessary addition¹³.

The paragraph above argues that the "slot" fitting predates the tenth century. It can be established that although the utilitarian principles of this type of fitting were not realized and put to use until the middle of the ninth century, the basic principle and components existed as long ago as the late fifth and sixth centuries. As stated earlier, the first requirement for the establishment of this type of fitting is a slot formed by a pair of fixtures so that a cord can be strung horizontally. Such a pair of fixtures clearly exists on XII A 1 of the chronology. This pairing principle is seen again in the late sixth century, as exemplified by XII A 4.

At the same time that the principle of pairing was being experimented with, the components for the slot fitting of the ninth century were also born. Prototypical object XIII 2 contains the exact type of protruding slabs that are found on the cover jar in fig. 86. The only difference is that these early pairs of slabs are placed in a straight line rather than side by side.

The investigation above demonstrated that by the late sixth century there already existed the principle and components for the assemblage of the "slot" fitting as shown in fig. 85. It was a matter of time before the Chinese potters learned to combine the concept with the

13. The case regarding this cover is very unclear. The description mentions that there are two slabs on the cover, while the cross-section drawing clearly depicts a reconstruction.

component to synthesize the two into an ingenious form of cover fitting. In one respect, the surprise is that the process took as long as it did.

Having discussed the possible origins of some of the more common types of handles used in the periods covered by the chronology, it may now be an opportune moment to examine some of the ways in which they were used. Mentioned already is the use of a cord for fastening the cover to a jar. The object in XII B 2 may be used for discussion. A cord may be strung through the handles in a criss-cross manner, or twisted around the knob of the cover to secure it in place. As many of the jars excavated are not found with covers, it is quite likely that one made from wood may have been used. Clay covers tend to warp during baking unless great care is taken, while wooden ones can be easily made once the jar has been fired.

Regarding the transportation of these jars, a method is depicted in fig. 88, a detail of a handscroll attributed to Yen Li-pên of the T'ang dynasty¹⁴. The jar in this painting, not dissimilar in general shape to the one in fig. 86, is shown contained in a supplementary



fig. 88

"carrier sack". A cord is shown looped under the base of

14. "Foreign Envoy Arriving with Tribute", by Yen Li-pên, Ku-kung Ming Hua, Vol. 1, Taiwan, 1969, plate 1.

the vessel and strung through the horizontally placed handles. It is knotted immediately above the knob of the cover to secure it into place. Although it is unlikely that a supplementary carrier was normally used, especially for short journeys, the illustration in fig. 87 nevertheless provides some insight as to the role which the handle may have played.

Returning to fig. 86, we may deduce that the single slabs, each punched with a hole, were used in a similar manner to that depicted in fig. 87. The difference with this piece is that the cover would have been fastened separately to the jar by wooden plugs or another cord. The horizontally placed fittings in objects XIII 2 and XVII A 3 may have also been used for carrying. These are much more solidly made and securely attached than the vertical loops; perhaps for the purpose of withstanding stress during the carrying of the vessel. Therefore, it is conceivable that as in the examples of XIII 2, XVII A 2 and XVII A 3, where handles orientated in both directions are found, the smaller vertical ones were used for the fastening of a cover, while the sturdier horizontal squares were used for hanging or transporting.

A last observation regarding handles is that there seems to have been a general phasing out by the tenth century. The decline of handles may be traced in the evolution of prototypes IV and V. The handles on the objects of prototype IV never seemed obviously functional, and by the mid-ninth century, represented by IV 2, they

are more ornamental than functional. In the example of IV f, handles are totally discarded. The phasing out of auxiliary handles is also seen in the "chu-tze" ewers. Unlike the chicken-spouted vessels of the early T'ang period, many subgroups of the "chu-tze" ewers are not attached with auxiliary lugs. The case is especially true in specimens of a later date, which tended to dispense with surface fittings in favour of decoration. Noted already is the evolution of the auxiliary lug into a decorative plaque (compare fig. 44 to fig. 48). A proportionate increase of decorative elements such as lobing, fluting, painting (IV e), moulding and modelling also took place in the late T'ang and Five Dynasties period. All of these provided a foundation which nurtured the development of decorative techniques in the Sung and subsequent dynasties.

SUMMARY

To summarize, the main intent of this research, to present an objective and systematic study of T'ang ceramic forms, has been achieved to some extent. The thesis started with a brief history of the scholarship and collection of Chinese ceramics. The contention was then put forward that there exists a need for more studies to be carried out that would utilize on a larger scale the reliable sources of primary material, such as tomb and kiln excavation reports, that are being published by the Chinese archaeological journals. Chapter I justified the intent of the thesis.

Chapter II represents an exercise both in the collection and systematization of the excavated material published in Chinese. A chronology of eighteen T'ang ceramic prototypal forms, graphed in three separate charts, is presented. Also contained in this chapter is the formal documentation of the prototypal objects, pieces which were excavated from dated tombs. The chronology provided an evolutionary and stylistic framework from which art historical conclusions are drawn and from within which objects of unknown or questionable origin may be examined.

The analysis and interpretation of the objects of the chronology are found in Chapter III. The emphasis placed here is on the origin, textual mentions, and possible functions of the prototypal objects. Relevant

comparisons to other contemporary T'ang media, appearing in figures next to the text, are also included. This examination has considered and exposed some contradictions among the various source materials. It has also provided some fresh information in regard to the trend of evolution of certain popular T'ang ceramic forms.

Chapter IV is another exercise in the utilization of primary Chinese material. The body of wasters relevant to this study which was excavated from known T'ang kilns is examined. These wasters are compared to the tomb excavated objects and some possible sites of their production. In addition, this chapter yields some information on the distribution and influence of certain T'ang forms. The concluding chapter began with a comparison of the findings of this study to two related studies done by Chinese authors. In addition, Chapter V contains some observations on the overall evolution of T'ang ceramic forms. The trends regarding plastic decoration and surface fittings are also noted here.

In conclusion, this thesis must be considered only as an initial study on the subject of T'ang ceramic forms. Due to the vastness of the topic, the attention given to the examination of individual prototypes had, necessarily, to be limited. Consequently, it is believed that more detailed work can expand greatly the knowledge on the topic of ceramic forms. As demonstrated in the thesis, each prototypal form has its own trend of evolution, its

own function, and its own history of being. Many forms have links with the world outside China and an import history. Others are intimately related to other contemporary T'ang media, as shown in the occurrence of metal counterparts and the appearance of the forms in T'ang paintings.

Most of the material evidence represented in this thesis was obtained from Chinese archaeological journals. In this respect, this collated study may be viewed as a new body of translated and processed material which may now be of future use. The chronology can claim a degree of authority in the sense that it contains almost exclusively objects which have been obtained from dated tombs. As excavations in China continue to bring to light more objects, any datable specimens may be added to the framework of the chronology. An increase in reliable data would no doubt in the future also increase the usefulness of this thesis.

The map of the provincial distribution of ceramic forms shows that the concentration of excavated material comes primarily from the North. In view of the small quantity of excavations carried out in the southern provinces, it would be premature to compare or draw conclusions regarding the regional characteristics of the prototypical forms.

ABBREVIATION OF PERIODICALS

1. FECB Far Eastern Ceramic Bulletin (1948-1960). Reprinted by B. M. Israel, NV, Amsterdam, 1975.
2. HJAS Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, Cambridge, Mass., 1936 -
3. KG Kaogu, Science Press, Peking, 1959 -
4. KGXB Kaogu Xuebao, Science Press, Peking, 1936 -
5. KT Kaogu Tongxun, Science Press, Peking, 1951 - 1958.
6. OA Oriental Art, The Oriental Art Magazine Ltd., London, 1948 -
7. WT Wenwu-can kao-Ziliao, Wenwu Press, Peking, 1951 - 1958.
8. WW Wenwu, Wenwu Press, Peking, 1959 -

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Chart I of Chronology

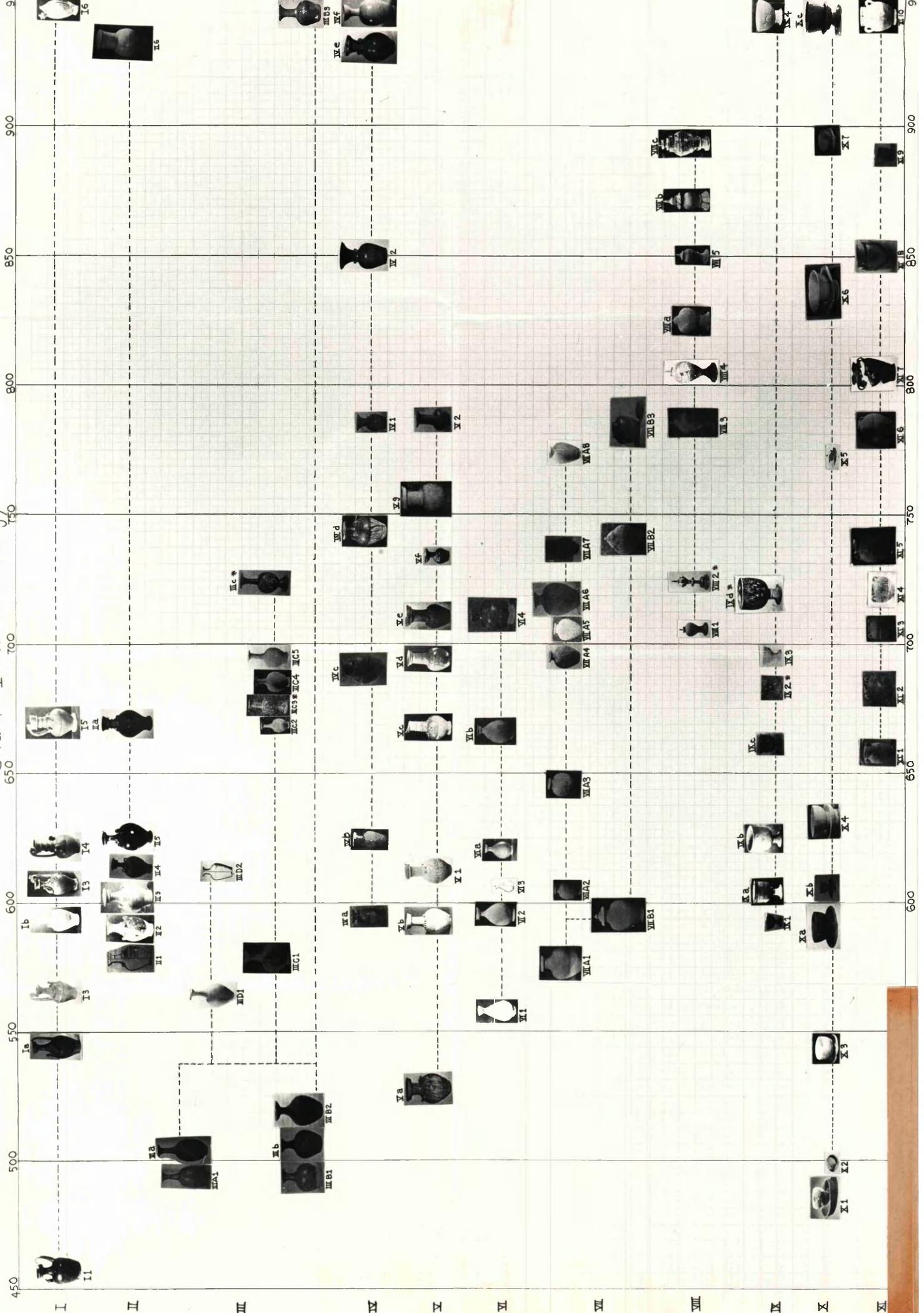


Chart II of Chronology

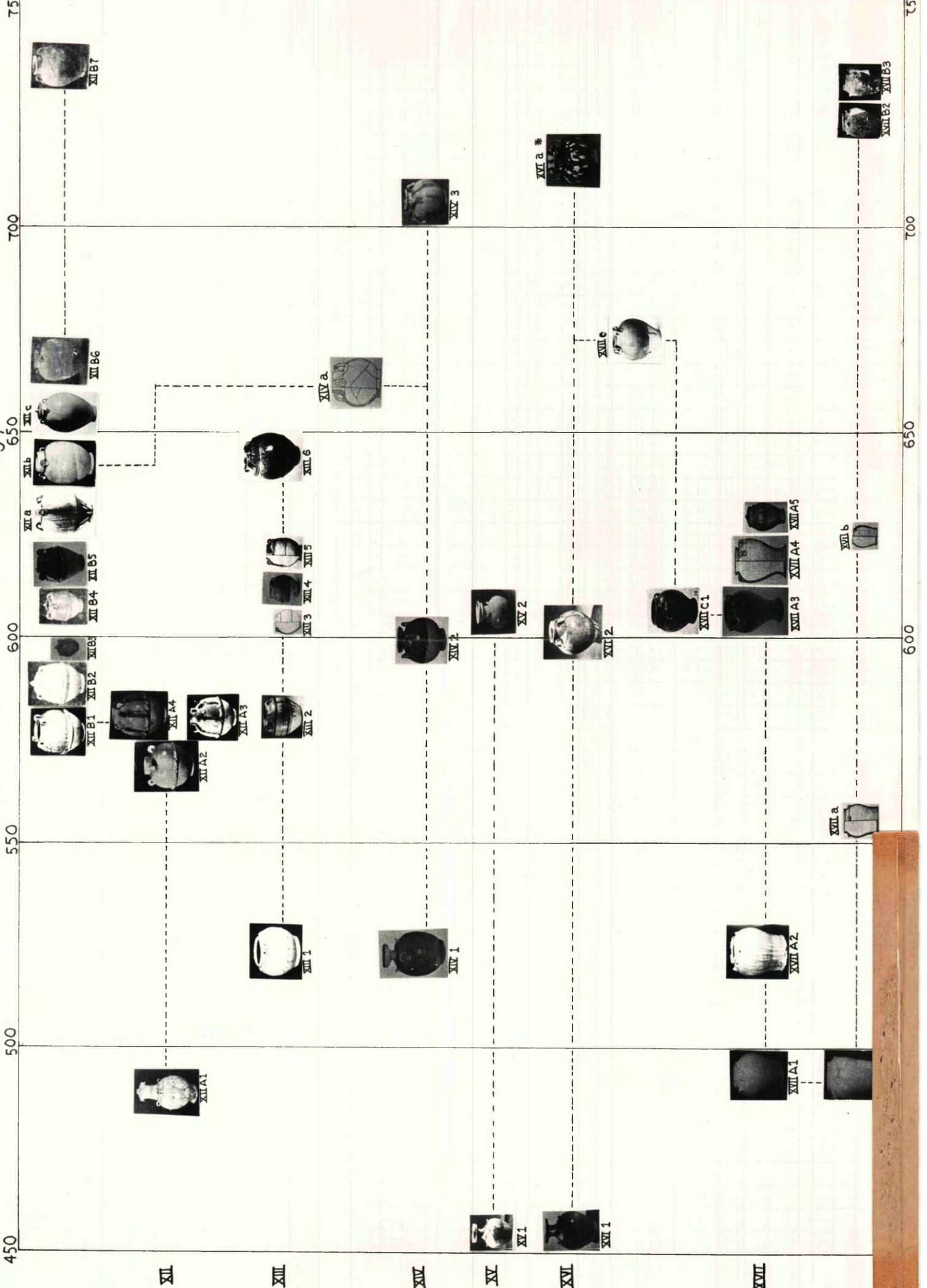
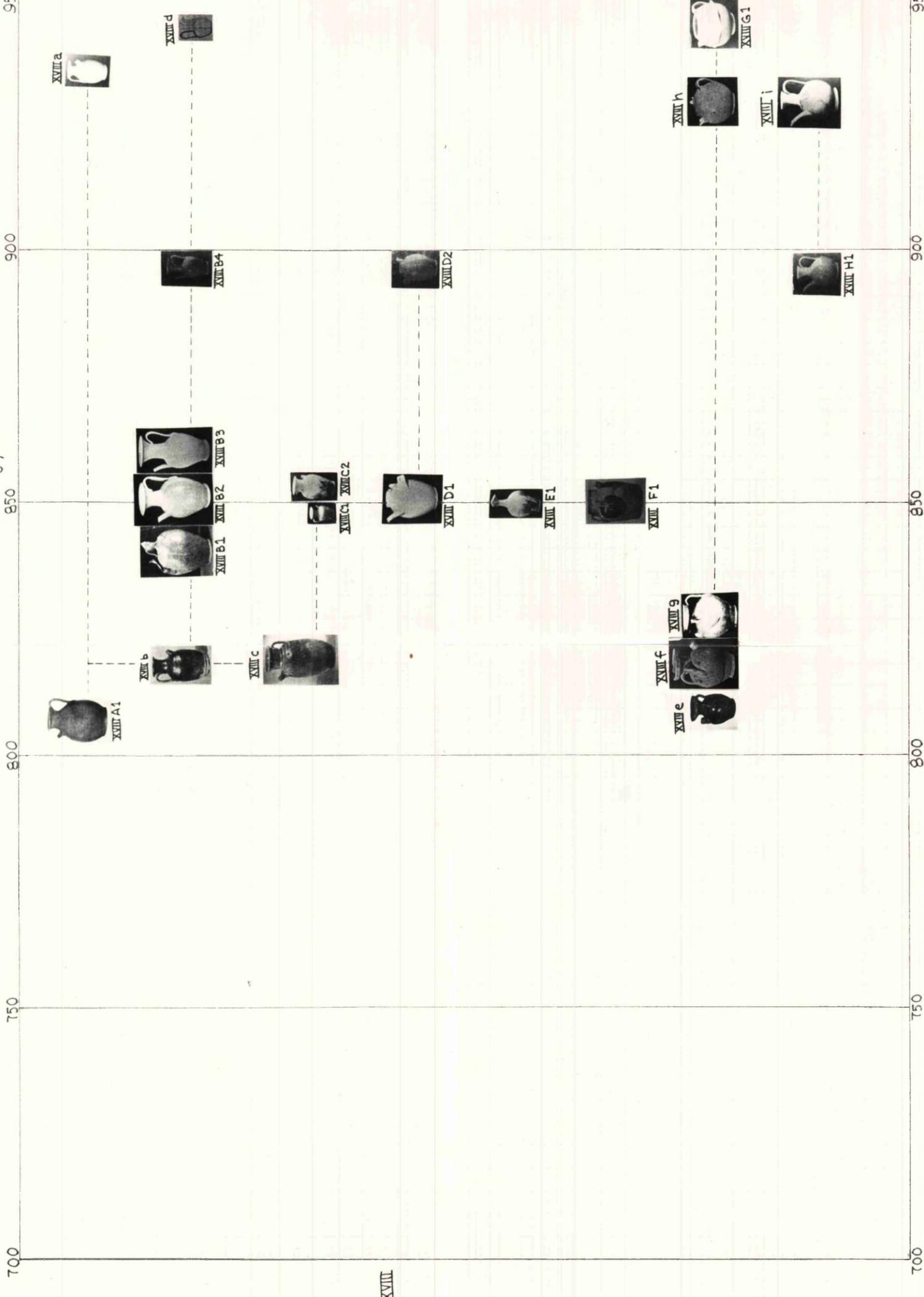


Chart III of Chronology



Map of Provincial Distribution of Forms

Based on Documentation in Chapter II

