

Western Zhou Ritual Bronzes From The Arthur M Sackler Collections Volumes Iia And Iib

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The Problem of Meaning in Early Chinese Ritual Bronzes
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the supreme art form of ancient china was the bronze ritual vessel kings and nobles offered food and drink to their ancestors in spectacular cast bronze containers which served to advertise the owner's wealth and power no less than his piety many of the bronzes eventually found their way into the tombs of their owners where they lay undisturbed for centuries or millennia until accidental discovery or the archaeologist's spade brought them once more to light the vast collection of chinese bronzes formed by the late dr arthur m sackler ranges over the entire bronze age the bronzes of the eastern zhou period 8th to 3rd century bc are the subject of this third and concluding volume of the comprehensive catalogue of the collection in a thorough and up to date introduction dr jenny so

assistant curator of ancient chinese art at the arthur m sackler gallery smithsonian institution gives a detailed account of the history of eastern zhou bronzes particularly valuable is dr so s systematic use of the latest archaeological discoveries to trace regional and chronological developments and to study the political context in which bronzes were made and used an especially valuable supplement to the volume is a major study of bronze bells coauthored by an archaeologist and an acoustical physicist professor lothar von falkenhausen of ucla and professor thomas d rossing of northern illinois university the sackler collection includes twenty one bells which were employed in the same offering rituals as the bronze vessels ninety color plates provide full documentation of the sackler bronzes and over 560 black and white comparative illustrations help to set them in the context provided by archaeological research scholarly appendices report elemental composition data on the bronze alloys lead isotope ratios and thermoluminescence dating tests of clay core material

this is the first book in a series wherein late shang to zhou dynasty ritual bronze vessels with inscriptions that have been found in the philippines will be documented including details background photographs inscriptions relevant and historical information part 1 focuses on bronze ritual wine vessels with inscriptions that have been unearthed in the philippines

the vast collection of chinese bronzes formed by the late dr arthur m sackler ranges over the entire bronze age

this set is the second installation in a three volume catalog of the sackler collection of ancient chinese bronzes at harvard university undertaken by some of the premier scholars in the field robert w bagley s shang ritual bronzes in the arthur m sackler collections arthur m sackler foundation 1987 and jenny f so s forthcoming eastern zhou ritual bronzes from the arthur m sackler collections complete the set rawson s contribution starts with volume iia a survey of western zhou c 1050 771 b c bronze types with more emphasis on dating of shapes and designs than on the use or meaning of the vessels a wealth of appendixes include information on archaeological sites inscriptions and detailed laboratory analyses of bronze samples volume iib is the catalog itself with a full page color photograph of each vessel followed by a detailed description and comparisons with relevant pieces from other collections although probably not of much interest to the general public this work gathers a tremendous amount of information for specialists and researchers

the thousands of ritual bronze vessels discovered by china s archaeologists serve as the major documentary source for the western zhou dynasty 1045 771 b c these vessels contain long inscriptions full of detail on subjects as diverse as the military history of the period the bureaucratic structure of the royal court and lawsuits among the gentry moreover being cast in bronze the inscriptions preserve exactly the contemporary script and language shaughnessy has written a meticulous and detailed work on the historiography and interpretation of these objects by demonstrating how the inscriptions are read and interpreted shaughnessy makes accessible in english some of the most important evidence about life in ancient china

volume i of ancient chinese bronzes the bronze ritual vessel the defining artifact of early chinese civilization is the subject of this monumental study of shang ritual bronzes in the arthur m sackler collections a comprehensive introduction the most thorough treatment of shang bronzes in any language lays the foundation for 104 catalogue entries many of which explore in greater detail specific problems in casting technology epigraphy vessel typology and provincial bronze styles color plates of all the sackler bronzes are supplemented by rubbings details and more than 500 comparative illustrations

drawing on a wealth of archaeological data this study gives a succinct yet comprehensive survey of ancient chinese bronzes the book discusses the alloy and mining processes the casting techniques and the evolving historical and social background over a two thousand year period during which the tools

weapons vessels musical instruments and other bronze pieces were produced and used

this work investigates the craft production system in the western zhou china through a case study of a jue earrings workshop at qijia in the predynastic capital site of zhouyuan excavated in 2002 2003 conclusions are drawn from several lines of evidence including spatial relationships of material remains in archaeological context various stages of jue production wasters the author s experimental replication of jue manufacture and written texts and bronze inscriptions

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