

TWO COLOSSAL STONE CHIMERAS FROM A CHINESE TOMB

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A FEW years ago the attention of archæologists was called to the remains of an old cemetery about six miles south of the city of Nanking where rulers of the Southern dynasties of Sung, Ch'i, Liang, and Ch'en had been buried in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. The tomb mounds themselves had disappeared for the ground had long ago been levelled for cultivation, but here and there, standing among the houses of the tiny village or half buried in the mud of the barley fields near by, were the forms of huge stone lions and chimeras, shapes battered and weather worn but still full of majestic dignity and power. These stone animals, together with a few of the columns and tablets which once formed a sort of court in front of each mound, are all that remain of at least twelve princely tombs.

Père Mathias Tchang wrote about these "Tombs of the Liang" in 1912. In 1917 M. Segalen visited the region and studied the sculptures very carefully, taking many fine photographs which have since been published. The discovery of these great stone beasts still standing guard, although the tombs themselves no longer exist, has thrown a new light upon the story of Chinese sculpture and has proved that the ages before the advent of Buddhism were not devoid of stone monuments but produced works of art worthy to rank with those of other countries. Recent discoveries are bringing forth conclusive evidence that, long before the religion of Buddha swept through China, inspiring thousands of Buddhist statues, there had flourished what is called the school of early animal sculpture, which had been much influenced and contributed to by contact with the art of Central Asia and the far west during the Han period but which had its roots back in the earliest prehistoric culture of China itself. The climax of this early animal art, at least as regards work in stone, was reached, apparently, in the fourth or fifth centuries. The sculpture of the Liang tombs seems to represent the peak and the beginning of the decadence of the style, just before it merged with Buddhistic art.

Two enormous stone animals similar to those of the tombs at Nanking are now in the University Museum, where they have been acquired for the permanent collection. They are probably the largest pieces of stone sculpture that have ever been brought out of China. One recognizes immediately their close relationship to the winged lions and chimeras of the Liang Tombs. They represent a pair of animals, one male, the other female, of the winged, horned, lion-griffin type, chimeras they may be called for want of a more accurate name, for their like has never been known to Zoölogy. They are standing; or perhaps it would be more correct to say running, for the position of the stumps of the legs would seem to indicate this, and besides, every line of the body contributes to the impression of tremendous forward motion. They are, or were before the loss of their legs and tails, about nine feet long and must have stood seven feet high above their pedestals. These chimeras are splendid majestic creatures with lithe horse-like bodies winged at the shoulders, enormous bulging chests, powerful arched necks that proudly carry huge horned heads, and tails thick and heavy like those of lizards. The legs were probably like those of the Liang Tomb animals, short and stocky with large clumsy cat-like paws, legs designed to carry the heavy weight of stone above.

The heads are of a type most extraordinary. The skull is squarish and high and the face rather flat with round bulging eyes, pug nose, and puffy cheeks. The huge square jaws open in a ferocious grin which discloses strong canine teeth of which the points are now broken off. A beard hangs like a broad ribbon from the chin and forms a slight flat scroll on the chest. Just behind the eyes the ears appear like funnels clipped in front, with rings on the stem of the funnel to indicate that the ears were horny near the base. Most interesting are the horns. They spring from the top of the head and extend straight back, lying on the skull and following its curve to the neck. Where they emerge from the skull they are fairly large and are ringed with lines as if to represent a hard substance, the rest appears to be soft and smooth, tapering to a slight knob at the end. The female has two of these horns lying parallel on her head, the male has only one. Another difference between the two is in the decorative treatment of the great bulging chest. In the male the lines which form a sort of broad ribbing over the chest run vertically from the neck down over the front, while in the female they run horizontally over the breast, curved like necklaces.

Both sculptures have lost all four feet and part of the leg above the foot, tails have been broken off a few inches from the body, tips of horns are missing, ends of ears, and even the point which extended back from the jaw. In spite of all this, however, the great bodies are full of rhythm. What Dr. Siren says of the Liang Tomb animals is true also of these and even to a greater degree, "The long sweeping lines are alive with a tremendous energy which is rolled up, so to speak, in the spring like ornaments at the wings and the loins." The modelling is of the simplest kind, big and broad and displaying no particular knowledge of anatomy—except indeed in the treatment of the muscles at the haunches. All is subordinated to the great springing curve of the animal as a whole and to the impression of massive strength it conveys. These chimeras were designed on lines suggesting irresistible forward motion; their huge chests plough ahead like the bows of ancient war vessels, "Viking ships" is Dr. Siren's comment. All these beasts were intended to be seen from a distance. As long as the eye could distinguish them it would receive the impression of swift sure power conveyed by the very outline of them. At close range each detail is seen to contribute to the fundamental idea. In the two chimeras at the Museum the wings are very small, merely "a concession to the animal's ancestry" as Mr. Ashton says of the wings of one of the Liang tomb lions, but these rudimentary appendages add greatly to the feeling of rhythm by repeating the curves of chest and of back and concentrating the force of line as if in a huge steel spring. Flat scrolls and volutes radiating from the spine decorate the surface and go to enforce the sweep and movement of line.

As has been indicated, the chimeras of the University Museum are very evidently of the same type, tradition, and general period as those of the tombs at Nanking. But they did not come from that region. Information with them states that they are from Honan, a fact borne out by the material of which they are composed which is the hard grey stone of that province. There is no doubt that they have stood out in the open for centuries, abused and neglected, for they have weathered a light grey and the surfaces are worn and storm beaten and spotted minutely by moss and lichens. When found only their heads and backs were visible above the ground which seemed to be slowly swallowing them. Probably the feet and pedestals are still in situ, buried close by.

We know nothing now about the tomb which these beasts guarded but from the close similarity which they bear to the animals at Nanking we should conclude that the other arrangements may have been the same.

What were the tombs at Nanking like? M. Segalen found that each grave had consisted of the usual tomb chamber covered with a mound of earth. These mounds had been levelled. But of the more unique feature of these Liang tombs a good many remains could still be seen. This feature was the short avenue leading to the mound, an avenue bordered by eight sculptures (this was the typical number) in pairs facing each other across the way of approach. First came the pair of great stone chimeras or lions, one on each side, then a pair of stone stelae carried on the backs of sculptured tortoises and bearing the name and titles of the deceased, then a pair of fluted columns with mushroom capitals supporting figures of lions or chimeras, finally another pair of stelae. The avenue was so short and wide that the result was more a square plaza or court in front of the mound than a long road lined with statues such as became fashionable later, in Sung and Ming times. The famous avenue of the Ming tombs north of Peking, 15th to 17th century, is, of course, a development of this same burial tradition, but the idea of the approach is carried to great elaboration and as for the statues of animals, the Ming examples are stolid and lifeless stones as compared with these glorious rhythmical creatures of the Liang tombs. The Liang scheme must have developed from the simpler custom of the Han dynasty, of placing a pair of animals face to face in front of two gateway pillars which stood before the burial mound. Such was the arrangement in front of the burial mound and chapel in the case of the famous Wu tombs in Shantung, which are of the second century A. D. Many mortuary pillars of Han times are known, for instance those at the foot of Sung Shan in Honan and at Chü Hsien in Ssüch'uan. Earlier still there seem to have been no pillars, only the actual doorway of the small chapel or sacrificial temple which backed against the mound and before which stood the two guardian animals facing each other. The tomb of the famous Han general, Ho Ch'ü-ping, near Sian Fu is an example of this and is, moreover, the earliest tomb of which any such sculptures are known. However there may have been more than just the two horses at this grave. De Groot has found a reference in the Books of the Early Han Dynasty which states that "many

grave statues were made and arrayed in the mountains for Ho Ch'ü-ping." At any rate the Liang tombs, and those similar and of the same period, represent an important middle stage in the development of mortuary art, especially as regards the sculptures in front of the graves. Of the mounds themselves, and their contents we have no archæological evidence but this may be supplied in the future by a further examination of the tombs in Honan, unless those mounds also have been razed. A number of sculptures besides the two now in this Museum, small but similar, are known to have come from near Honan Fu, but the royal cemeteries there have not been studied as have those at Nanking.

We have no information as to the identity of the occupant of the tomb before which stood the two chimeras now in this Museum. But we cannot help suspecting that he was either of the family of Lui or Hsiao, in fact that this type of mortuary sculpture, huge walking or running animals, developed in close association with the romantic fortunes of those two powerful Chinese families, from which came the emperors of the Southern dynasties who were buried at Nanking.

It is very likely that he was an emperor. M. Segalen observed the fact that at Nanking chimeras were always reserved for the tombs of the emperors, while the tombs of princes of the royal family were guarded by winged lions. The mortuary beasts still in situ near Nanking consist of:

6 chimeras from the tombs of:

Emperor Wen Ti (Liu I-Lung, d. 453), Sung dynasty.

Emperor Wu Ti (Hsiao Tsê, d. 493), Ch'i dynasty.

Emperor Yü Lin Wang (Hsiao Chao-Yeh, d. 494), Ch'i dynasty.

Emperor Wu Ti (Hsiao Yen, d. 549), Liang dynasty.

12 winged lions from the seven tombs of brothers, cousins, etc., of Emperor Wu Ti of the Liang dynasty.

2 hybrid "chimera-lions" from the tomb of the usurper Ch'ên Pa-hsien, who seized the throne of the Liangs and made himself emperor and founder of the Ch'ên dynasty in 557 A.D.

Thus at Nanking it appears to have been an established rule that chimeras should guard the graves of emperors, winged lions those



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Male, Length about 7 feet.



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of princes. Similar chimeras, though found in Honan, probably marked the grave of an emperor.

As a matter of fact, some members of the Hsiao family are known to have been buried in Honan. Further search of the native records should reveal their position and relationship to the throne. There are ten emperors of the Hsiao family (Ch'i and Liang dynasties) unaccounted for in the cemetery at Nanking. And of the nine emperors of the Liu family (Sung dynasty) only one has a tomb there. Probably we shall never be able to assign these sculptures with any certainty unless somewhere there exists a record of their precise provenance. In style they seem at first glance to be later than the animals of the Liang tombs, which belong mainly to the first half of the sixth century A.D.; they are less clumsy and archaic, showing a certain litheness and ease of movement and more grace and sophistication of such details as the volutes on back and flanks. But certain features rather indicate that they are earlier than the Nanking beasts; for these latter show a certain decadence, a certain conventionalization due to imitation. The heads of the Nanking animals are exaggerated in size, tails seem lifeless appendages, wings have ceased to be at all functional, the decoration of volutes on the surface no longer has any meaning, the great underslung bodies are sluggish. In the development of the type they seem further removed from the truly archaic vitality of their ancestors, the winged "tigers" of Ya Chou-fu and Lou Shan Hsien, than do the two chimeras of this Museum. However, the difference may be due to the fact that Nanking was not the great sculpture center that Loyang was and the greater beauty of the Honan animals mean little more than that better sculptors were employed. It is probably a point that could soon be settled by any one who had access to the Chinese records which must exist. At present we are justified only in supposing that these two chimeras once guarded the tomb of an emperor of the fifth or sixth century A.D. who was buried in Honan, and that he was perhaps the ruler of one of the Southern dynasties.

The origin and symbolism of this beast which we call a chimera is obscure. We cannot with certainty connect it with any one of the fabulous creatures mentioned in Chinese legend. The lion may have always been "a kingly beast" in the west but apparently in the minds of the Chinese these fantastic animals were higher and were symbolic of something connected with the Emperor alone. Could they be a species of dragon and represent some stage in the

evolution of that imperial creature? Did they belong exclusively to the Liu family while it was in power, only to be adopted by the Hsiao when the latter assumed other royal prerogatives? Even if we were to learn its name and meaning we should still be in the dark as to its artistic origin.

The use of stone statues of animals to stand before the graves seems to have begun in the Han dynasty but very few examples are known. There is the horse of Ho Ch'ü-ping (117 B.C.) but that is hardly a stylistic ancestor of our chimeras. The ones which come the nearest being that are in Ssüch'uan, the great stone statue of a winged tiger or griffin at Ya Chou Fu (209 A.D.), and the pair of winged tigers at Lou Shan Hsien near Ya Chou, which belong also to the early third century. In Shantung at the Wu tombs may be seen a pair of winged lions that date from 147 A.D. from which are derived without doubt the winged lions of the princes' tombs at Nanking. But as yet no links have been established between these Han animals and the chimeras and lions of the fifth and sixth centuries.

We have spoken of the romantic history of the two families Liu 劉 and Hsiao 蕭. From very early times their fortunes seem to have been interwoven. The original home of both was P'ei, in Kiangsu Province. In the third century B.C. a young man of P'ei, Liu Pang by name, led a rebellion of laborers against the oppression of the powerful Emperor Shih Huang Ti, builder of the great wall, and in this he was aided by one Hsiao Ho, his great friend and staunch follower. Together the young adventurers held out with their motley crew in the mountain strongholds of eastern Honan until the death of Shih Huang Ti. The people of P'ei made Liu Pang their leading magistrate with the title of Duke of P'ei and from this time on his rise was steady. He was put in command of the southern army and Hsiao Ho remained at his side to advise and help. His ambitious and strong willed wife constantly urged him on to plots, intrigues, battle after battle, treachery, deception, more battles and finally the throne itself. In 202 B.C. Liu Pang was declared First Emperor of the Han dynasty and established his capital at Chang-an, the present Sian Fu. Hsiao Ho had become a marquis. He seems to have been something of a character for it is told of him that although he held the high position of chief minister he "built himself a very small house saying that if his descendants were worthy men it would be to them an example of thrift; if unworthy then they would not quarrel for its possession."

For four hundred and twenty two years the descendants of Liu Pang sat on the throne of Han and ruled all China. They were men of indefatigable energy, patrons of learning, seekers after knowledge of lands beyond their borders. Under them explorations were made to the far West and trade routes were opened up. China was not isolated, far from it! Foreign influences poured in during the Han period, as we are beginning to learn, and some can be traced back into very distant lands for their origin. The reign of the famous Emperor Wu Ti, a great grandson of Liu Pang, was unequalled as a period of material and mental growth through contact with distant peoples. Han Wu Ti reigned for fifty four years (from 140 to 86 B.C.) and gathered together at his court all the great men of his realm. It was during this reign that the well known mission to Bactria was undertaken. Chang Ch'ien, the envoy, after many adventures, returned in 126 B.C. having been gone thirteen years. He brought back with him the grape vine, the pomegranite, the knotty bamboo and other things which he introduced into China from the far west, including the art of making wine "which he had learned from the Persians." He was instrumental in further establishing the trade routes over which came articles from Central Asia, Fergana, Sogdiana, Bactria, Kashmir and even distant Parthia (which included Persia then). Wu Ti of Han was noted for his anxiety to find the Elixir of Life and it was said that many of his expeditions and missions to distant states had as their secret purpose the discovery of the peach, fountain or formula whereby he might attain immortality. However that may be the result of his efforts was to open China to a tremendous inpouring of new and potent influences from Central Asia and the far west.

Other members of the Liu family to follow Wu Ti were only less famous. In 25 A.D. the throne passed to another branch of the family which established its capital at Loyang (Honan Fu) but the contact with outside countries did not cease. In 61 A.D. during the reign of Ming Ti (Liu Chuang) Buddhism was introduced into China from India. During the reign of Ho Ti (Liu Chao) an embassy arrived from Parthia with some real lions (about 100 A.D.). As lions had been unknown in China since the beginning of the historical period, these beasts were regarded with special interest. In 91 A.D. the general Pan Chao conquered Central Asia to beyond Kashgar and Bactria, compelling more than fifty of the small kingdoms of Turkestan to submit to Chinese rule. There was continual

friction and constant intercourse between the Chinese and those middlemen, the Hsiung-nu on the north, especially between the years 126 and 145 A.D. In 158 an embassy arrived at the Chinese court from India, and in 166 came envoys from Rome sent by Marcus Aurelius who was known in China as An Tun.

The Han dynasty fell in 220 A.D. Liu Pei, a descendant of Liu Pang, seized the power in the province of Ssüch'uan where he declared himself Emperor of Shu. But his dynasty lasted only forty three years. A dark period of constant civil strife followed during which the whole of North China was in the hands of the Tartar tribes and there was no staple government in the south. The Luis were still to be heard from however. In 399 A.D. Liu Yü, a descendant of the brother of Liu Pang, appeared in the army of Eastern Chin. In 416 he became Commander in Chief, and four years later he mounted the throne at Nanking as first Emperor of the dynasty of Southern Sung. Thus China, although now a sadly reduced empire, was once more ruled by a member of the House of Liu.

Liu Yü was succeeded by two sons, the second of which, Wên Ti (Liu I-Lung) had a long and prosperous reign of thirty years and was buried south of the capital, where the two great stone chimeras which guarded his tomb may still be seen.

Again the names of Liu and Hsiao are closely linked. For the last emperors of Southern Sung were weakings under the regency of Hsiao Tao-ch'eng who claimed descent from the famous Hsiao Ho, friend and advisor of Liu Pang seven hundred years before! When the Sung dynasty fell it was this Hsiao who succeeded to the throne and established the dynasty of Southern Ch'i. Of the seven emperors of this line two are represented at Nanking by stone chimeras. In 502 after various disorders, the throne passed to a distant cousin, Hsiao Yen, Prince of Liang, who became Emperor under the title of Wu Ti and called his dynasty Liang. He is the Wu Ti so famous in Buddhist history and it is he who was responsible for the majority of the "Tombs of the Liang" south of Nanking. His reign lasted forty eight years during which he reduced taxation, founded colleges, encouraged learning, and was known as a great lover of peace. Many stories hover around the name of this kind old emperor and his immediate family. He was a devout Buddhist and twice adopted priestly garb when he was with difficulty restrained from retiring into a monastery. His eldest son, Hsiao T'ung, was a

boy of brilliant mind and of extraordinary beauty of character, one of the most loveable persons in history, but he never succeeded his father on the throne, for at the age of thirty he died of a malady brought on, it was said, by extreme grief over his mother's death after he had nursed her through a long illness. There was a brother of Hsiao Yen who was a great miser and used to put red and yellow labels on his piles of money. One of the tombs at Nanking is that of this famous miser. But probably Liang Wu Ti is known best of all for the fact that Bodhidharma, the Indian patriarch, came to Nanking during his reign. Having offended his royal patron by telling him that his good works would not count for merit the Indian saint crossed the Yangtse on a reed and went to dwell at Loyang where for nine years he sat in Shao-lin Temple with his face to the wall and never returned to Nanking.

Although a devout Buddhist, Hsiao Yen seems to have made no changes in the details of the burial customs which had been established by the Liu and Hsiao emperors before him. Many of the members of his family died before he did and for them he erected mounds guarded by walking winged lions. For his own tomb chimeras were carved. Of the tombs of the five Hsiao emperors who came after him there are no remains at Nanking. The only later sculptures are the two chimera-lions at the tomb of Ch'ên Pa-hsien, the usurper already mentioned, who evidently wished to imitate his noble predecessors.

The questions raised by these great stone chimeras opens a tremendous field for speculation. But it can be little more than speculation at present. That there *was* an early school of animal sculpture which flourished in China from before the third century B.C. to the sixth century A.D. can no longer be doubted but the matter of its origin and development is very uncertain. A number of isolated monuments point to the fact of its existence but there are too many gaps in the chain for the story to be drawn even in outline. The best that one can state at present is that there appear to be four distinct elements to be reckoned with in studying this fascinating problem. First there were the ancient traditions of the Chinese concerning fabulous and symbolic animals, giving rise to what was apparently an indigenous school of animal art which expressed itself mainly in bronze. Secondly there was the powerful influence of Scytho-Sarmatian art and customs which poured into China from the fourth century B.C. on through the Han dynasty.

Thirdly, came another influence, that direct from Bactria and Persia, which came in as a result of the expeditions to the far west made during the Han dynasty and the subsequent establishment of trade routes between those countries and China. Finally, there is the question of the use the Chinese made of these first three elements in their art and how each contributed to the growth and development of this early school of sculpture.

The Scytho-Sarmatian influence seems to have been very powerful. Mr. Yetts has pointed out that records show that in the fourth and third centuries B.C., and even before, Tartar customs were openly adopted by the Chinese and that intermarriage with the Hsiung-nu, barbarians on the north and north west, was common. The Kozl6v excavations of the Selenga tombs in Mongolia prove that the Hsiung-nu served as middlemen in the exchange of articles between East and West during the first century B.C. The correspondence between the burial customs of the Chinese and the Scythians is striking, especially in the matter of interring alive or sacrificing at the grave a number of horses and retainers. That this custom was not a native Chinese one we can infer from the intense feeling against it. The scenes at the funeral of Shih Huang Ti flavor of the barbaric and not of pure Chinese culture. The earliest example of Chinese grave sculpture known to us is the stone horse trampling upon a barbarian which stands before the burial mound of General Ho Ch'ü-ping who led so many expeditions against the Hsiung-nu and who died in 117 B.C. It was one of a pair. Did these horses standing before the tumulus represent the horses slain and buried in front of the mound in the barbarian custom? Was the beginning of this school of mortuary sculpture due to the revulsion of feeling of the Chinese against the cruelty of certain details of the burial customs which they had borrowed from their Tartar neighbors? The horse is of the same type as those seen often on Scythian bronze horse trappings. It seems unlikely that the small bronze plaques could have served as models for large stone sculptures however. The similarity can be regarded only as a clue, pointing to some other monuments not yet discovered. The idea of the animal trampling upon the barbarian seems to have somehow come from Babylonia! But how, or when, or through what medium it is impossible to say.

During the earlier Han dynasty Sarmatian influence was so strong in Chinese life that its power was felt even in the reorganization of the army. Many of the details of equipment were the same.

In the fourth century B.C. the Chinese had learned the art of riding horseback from the Tartars, what more natural than that they should adopt also their style of horse trappings—which they in turn had received from the Sarmatians. Prof. Rostovtzeff points to the great influence that the Scytho-Sarmatian art had upon details of Chinese art. Whether it affected the “main stream” is hard to tell. However, it appears to be very strong in the sculpture of some of the funeral pillars in Ssüch’uan, especially in the motive of the great panther-like animal which springs with ferocious savagery upon another. A peculiar feature here is that a third creature tries to restrain the panther by laying hold of its tail! This strange motive appears on nearly every pillar at Chü Hsien and Mien Chou. And there are other animals, dragons, tigers, t’ao-t’ieh’s, phoenixes, horses, stags and proud prancing chimeras all in vigorous movement. One motive seems in some remote way to be connected with the great stone chimeras of the Liang tombs. It is that of the head and fore paws of a peculiar monster which appears to be scrambling over the beam on the lower part of the entablature. It has bulgy eyes, heavy brows, a pug nose, and small wings. But it is the horns which are particularly striking. They are of the type familiar to us on the horned lion-griffins of Siberian ornament, such as the running griffins of the gold collar in the Hermitage, and even the horns of the “horses” represented on Siberian plaques, for instance a bronze one in the British Museum, and a gold one in the Hermitage. It occurs on the griffins of the gold armilla and the silver rhyton of the Oxus Treasure. It is a type which may be seen on the griffins of the glazed tiles at Susa! These horns begin just behind the brows and curve straight back over the head; they are large and ringed for a short distance but then taper smoothly to a turned up knob. And—it is this type of horn that we find on the chimeras of the Liang Tombs and of this Museum. The relationship between these monster heads of the Ssüch’uan pillars and the chimeras is further suggested by another fact, namely, that where both pillars still remain—as with the pillars of Chen—we see that there is one of these animals on each, and that they evidently represent a pair, the one having one horn, the other two.

Another detail which points to the influence of Scytho-Sarmatian art in the stone chimeras is the manner in which the vertebrae of the backbone are made to form an ornamental ridge. The same characteristic is seen in the gold plaque of a lion attacking a horse in the

Hermitage, a work of the first century A.D. from western Siberia. This feature too can be traced back to Susa.

Central Turkestan and Northeastern Persia, the region known as Bactria, seems to have been the homeland of much of the Scytho-Sarmatian art which entered China through Siberia. But there was also the direct influence of Bactrian and Persian art which made itself felt in the Han dynasty. Certain motives in Chinese art have long been recognized as Bactrian, such as the running animals on Han bronze and pottery jars, and the designs of the so called "grape and sea-horse" mirrors of the fifth and sixth centuries. Whether some of the strange winged running animals represented on the Wu tomb slabs of the second century A.D. can be regarded as due to direct Bactrian or Persian influence is an interesting question. They too must be links in the chain of development of the tradition which culminated in the Liang tomb animals, especially the chimeras. However, Prof. Rostovtzeff traces the origin of the Liang animals directly to Indo-Persian art, not necessarily Bactrian.

The huge stone chimeras acquired by the Museum are not only artistic works of the highest order but are important also because of their place in the early Chinese school of animal sculpture of which we really know so little. What may be the relationship of the chimera to the winged lion or that of both to the earlier mortuary tiger at Ya Chow or lions at Chia Hsiang the next few years will perhaps disclose. But it will be a long time before the tangled strands of the problem of foreign influences can be straightened out and the origin and name made clear and the artistic development traced of these fabulous beasts which guarded the tombs of the Emperors in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D.