

CHINA

William
Watson

William
Watson

CHINA



Ancient Peoples
and Places
General Editor
GLYN DANIEL
Thames & Hudson

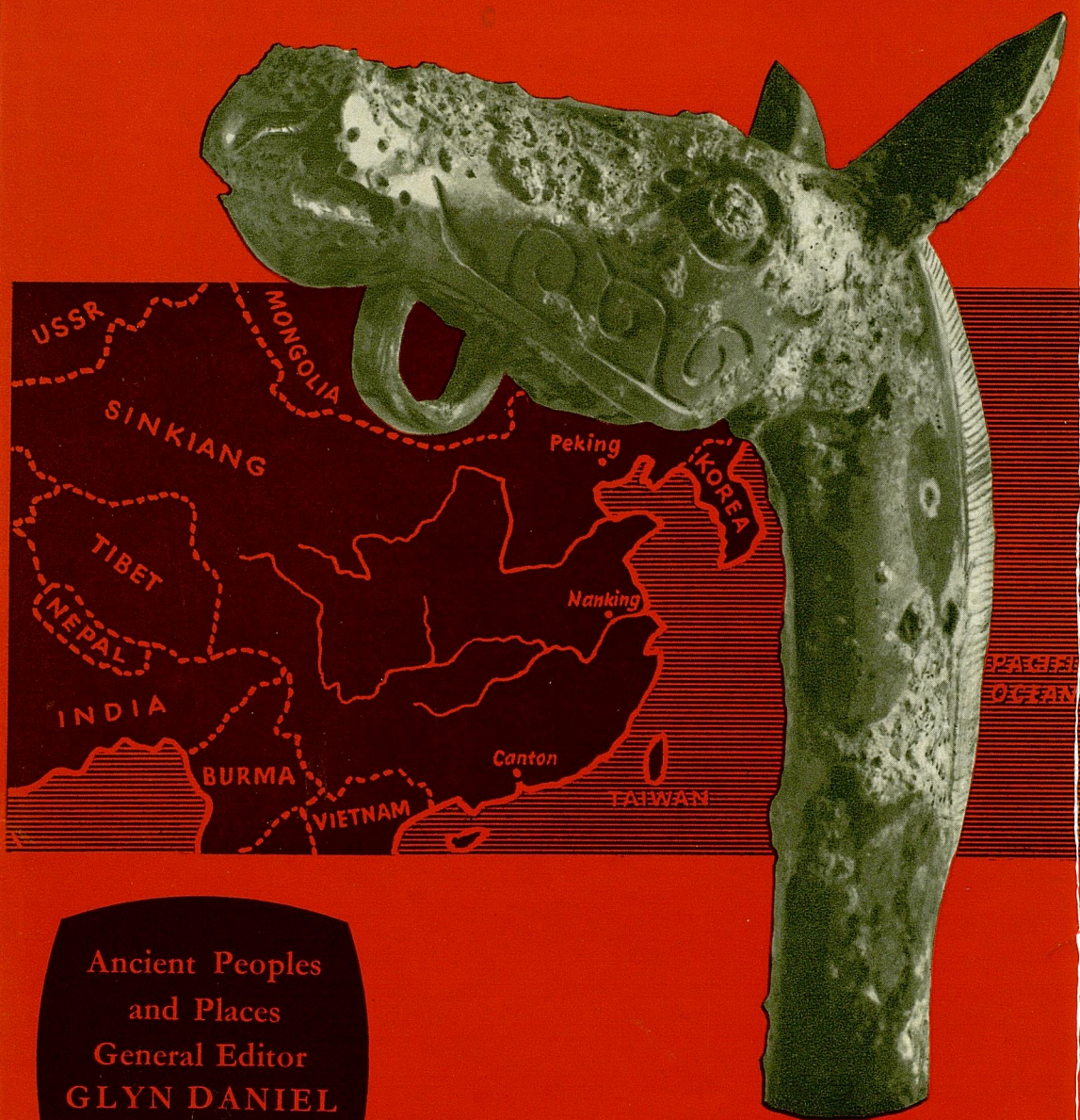
THAMES



HUDSON

William
Watson

CHINA



Ancient Peoples
and Places
General Editor
GLYN DANIEL
Thames & Hudson

CHINA

Until the last few years the archaeology of China has been a matter of fragmentary knowledge, speculation and uncertainty. Since the war, however, much new information has come to light and above all, the results of research have been organised so as to be available to scholars—in this branch of the subject previous books have become more rapidly out of date than in any other. A new picture is being built up of early China, which is now presented to the English reader for the first time.

There are two reasons for this spectacular progress. Firstly, excavation in China had lagged far behind the West in the techniques of digging and recording, so that many of the finds—valuable and often very beautiful in themselves—were unlocated and undated and so of limited value to the archaeological historian. Now, however, controlled excavations are conducted there with standards of precision comparable to those expected in the West. Secondly, the results of this research have, especially since 1949, been more and more fully documented in learned periodicals. The task of assembling the evidence and comparing material relics from all over the vast territory of China is now much easier than hitherto. Sites previously excavated inadequately and objects already forming parts of museum collections are being reinterpreted and are gradually falling into place in the general pattern.

Mr. Watson's expert knowledge of Chinese enables him to keep pace with this advance. Much of the information contained here has never before been published in English. To the new material, moreover, he has been able to apply the critical standards current in European and American archaeology, and so to produce a book which the specialist will find an important addition to knowledge, and which will be a source of pleasure to every reader interested in Chinese history and its background.

See back flap for information on the author

30s net

—○—β² ↗
62

Ancient Peoples and Places

CHINA

BEFORE THE HAN DYNASTY

William Watson

77 PHOTOGRAPHS
65 LINE DRAWINGS
AND 3 MAPS



London
THAMES AND HUDSON

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	7
INTRODUCTION	II
I THE PALAEOLITHIC AND NEOLITHIC PERIODS	22
<i>The Palaeolithic sites</i>	28
<i>Microlithic Cultures in the Gobi Desert, Mongolia and Manchuria</i>	31
<i>The Yang Shao Neolithic Culture</i>	37
<i>The Kansu Neolithic Culture</i>	41
<i>The Lung Shan Culture</i>	48
<i>Neolithic Cultures in the South-East</i>	54
II THE EARLIER BRONZE AGE: THE SHANG DYNASTY	57
<i>The Chronology of Shang Sites</i>	58
<i>Storage Pits</i>	67
<i>The Great Shang Tombs</i>	69
<i>Ritual Bronze Vessels</i>	75
<i>Bronze Casting</i>	79
<i>Arms</i>	82
<i>Pottery</i>	94
<i>Augury</i>	99
<i>The Shang State</i>	103
III THE LATER BRONZE AGE: THE CHOU DYNASTY	109
<i>Religion and Feudal Ceremonial</i>	114
<i>Fortified Cities</i>	120
<i>Architecture</i>	122
<i>Tombs</i>	126
<i>Arms and the Chariot</i>	131
<i>Iron</i>	140

IV THE ART OF THE BRONZE AGE	148
<i>Motifs of the Shang Period</i>	150
<i>Innovations of the Early Chou Period</i>	157
<i>The Middle Chou Period</i>	160
<i>Interlacery and local Northern Styles</i>	162
<i>Bronzes of the Ch'u State</i>	168
<i>Some Unorthodox Funeral Art</i>	178
<i>An Independent Bronze Art in Yunnan</i>	180
<i>Sculpture and Jade Carving</i>	184
TEXT REFERENCES	187
BIBLIOGRAPHY	192
SOURCES OF ILLUSTRATIONS	204
THE PLATES	205
NOTES ON THE PLATES	253
INDEX	261

of bronze and even survived for some time after iron had become the normal material for tools in the most advanced parts of the country. What is more mysterious in the light of the early economic history of the West, iron itself was slow to replace bronze in the manufacture of weapons. Bronze-casting first appears in a form which would correspond in the West to a relatively advanced stage of the technique, having many points comparable to the 'Late Bronze Age' of Europe; and iron was cast some centuries before it was forged, thus confounding our Western preconception of the natural development of this technique. The period here designated the Later Bronze Age comprises also a stage equivalent to the Early Iron Age of Europe.

Western archaeologists were surprised to learn of these departures from the cultural sequence established by long study in the West. They were sometimes inclined to account for it by supposing that China had been subjected to the same kind of acculturation from without that so often determined the course of events in Central and Northern Europe. Here influences spreading ultimately from the higher civilisations of the Near East and the Mediterranean, at particular times and by determinable routes, created fairly well defined and intelligible cultural successions. The development of culture in China did not depend on such parcels of external influence. To Chinese archaeologists it appears unnecessary to stress the evidence against diffusionist views which brought civilisation to China from Egypt, Mesopotamia or the Caucasus.

We should also note at the outset that a description of early China that is confined to information which the archaeologist can provide, and disregards the literary tradition, necessarily forgoes much that the latter can contribute to cultural history. For example, we get a jejune picture of the lives of the Neolithic and Bronze Age farmers unless we take into account peasants' songs which were anthologised in literary and

The contrary theory is defining a hard death.



41



42



About the Author

William Watson studied Arts at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, taking his Degree just before the outbreak of the Second World War.

From 1940 to 1945 he served in the Intelligence Corps, attaining the rank of Major. On his return to civilian life he joined the staff of the British Museum, working first in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities, and later in the Department of Oriental Antiquities where he is now Assistant Keeper.

THAMES AND HUDSON

30 Bloomsbury Street London W C 1