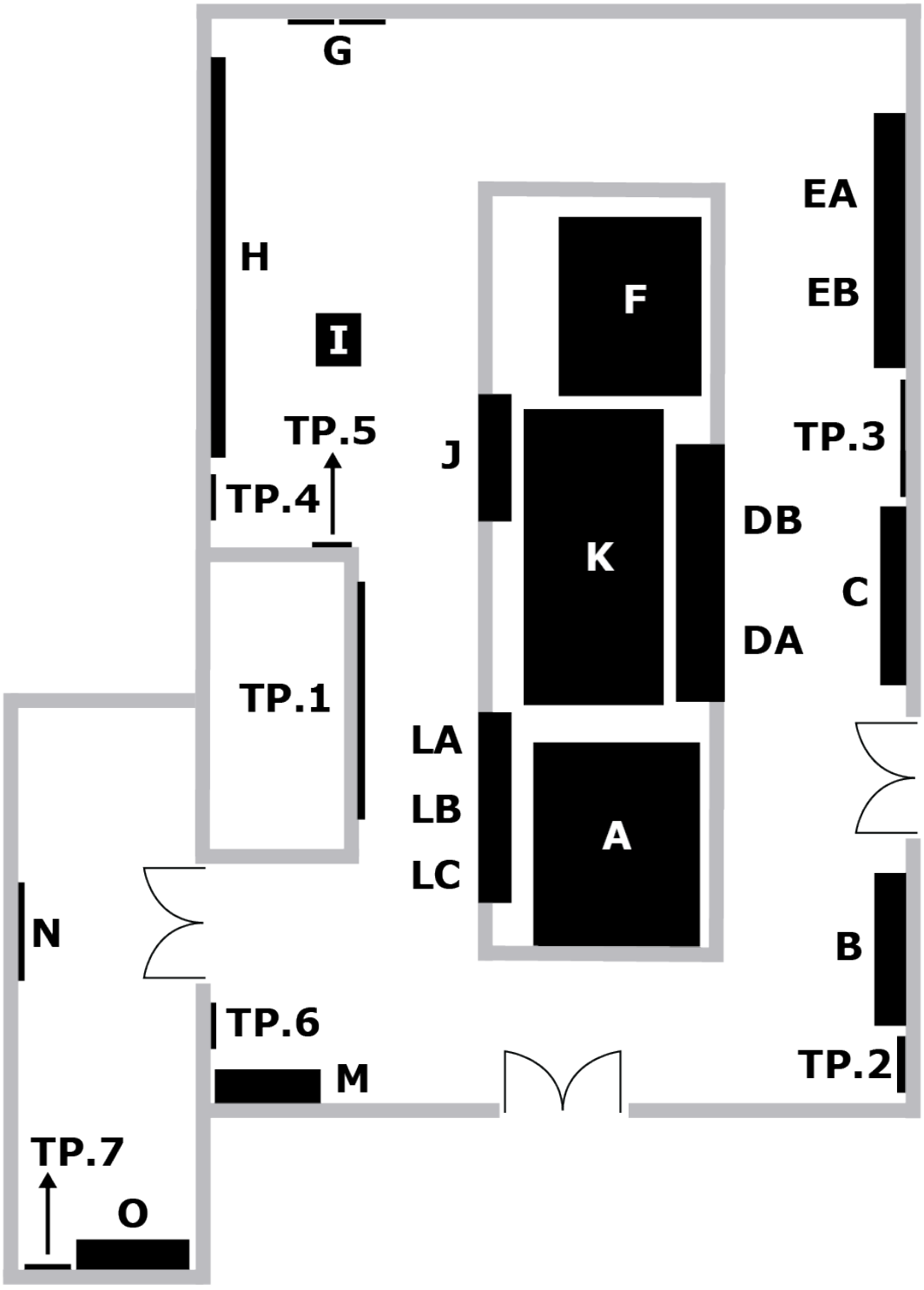
Large Print Guide

Scholars Gallery

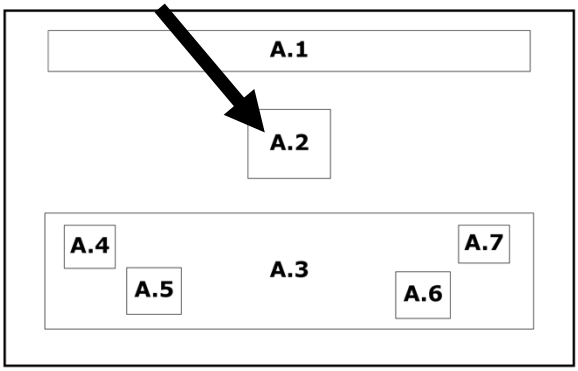
Level 2
Permanent Galleries
Faith & Belief

Floorplan of Gallery and User Guide



How to read display case and floorplans

A.2



A.2

To find object label text, match A.2 to A.2, then A.3 to A.3 and so on.

A.2

Chair

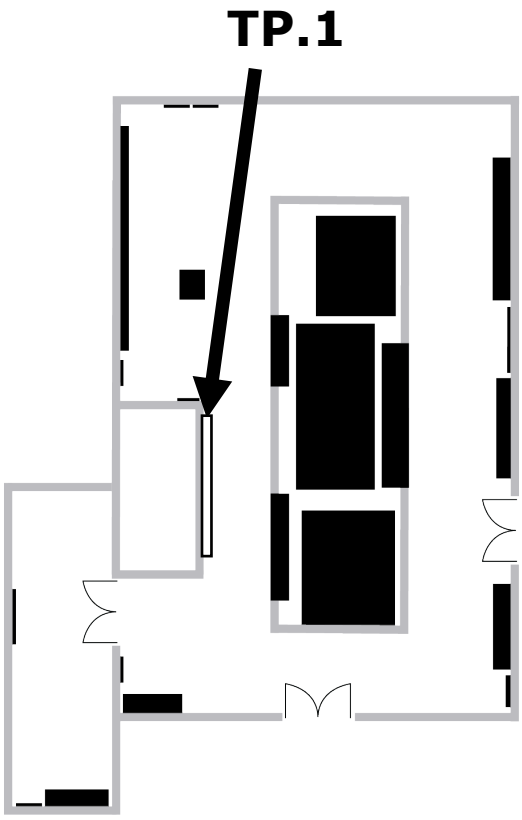
China

Late 17th century

Wood, painted and gilded

2000-03503

How to read text panels and floorplans



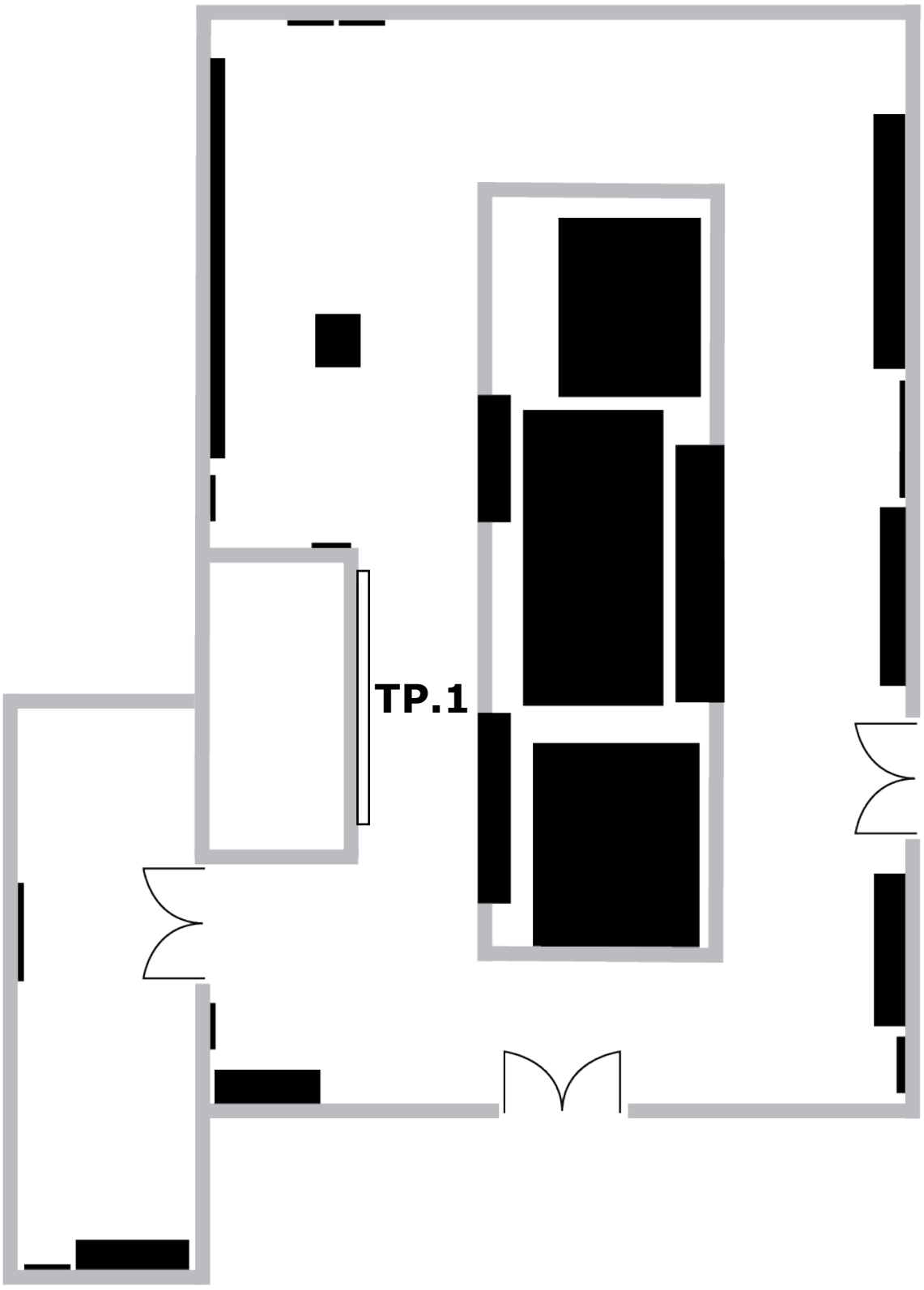
To find text panel, match TP.1 to TP.1, then TP.2 to TP.2 and so on.

TP.1

The Scholar in Chinese Culture

Literati, Officials, and Merchants

For centuries, the scholar represented an ideal in Chinese culture. Great respect was accorded to individuals


TP.1

TP.1

The Scholar in Chinese Culture

Literati, Officials, and Merchants

For centuries, the scholar represented an ideal in Chinese culture. Great respect was accorded to individuals who could read classical texts, write, and paint, play music, and pursue academic studies. Whether a civil servant, a successful merchant, or an overseas Chinese, learned individuals played a key role in Chinese culture.

The Ideals of Confucius and Social Hierarchy

The ideal of the scholar is derived from the texts attributed to Confucius 孔子 (551–479 BC). In response to the political chaos and war of his time, Confucius developed a social order that would stabilize society. Beginning in the Tang dynasty (618–907), social mobility was possible through an examination system, which tested candidates on their knowledge of the Confucian

classics. Scholar-officials, also called mandarins, were placed at the top of the social hierarchy. However, the definition of the scholar class changed over time, and it became fused with the wealthy merchant class by the late Ming dynasty (early 17th century).

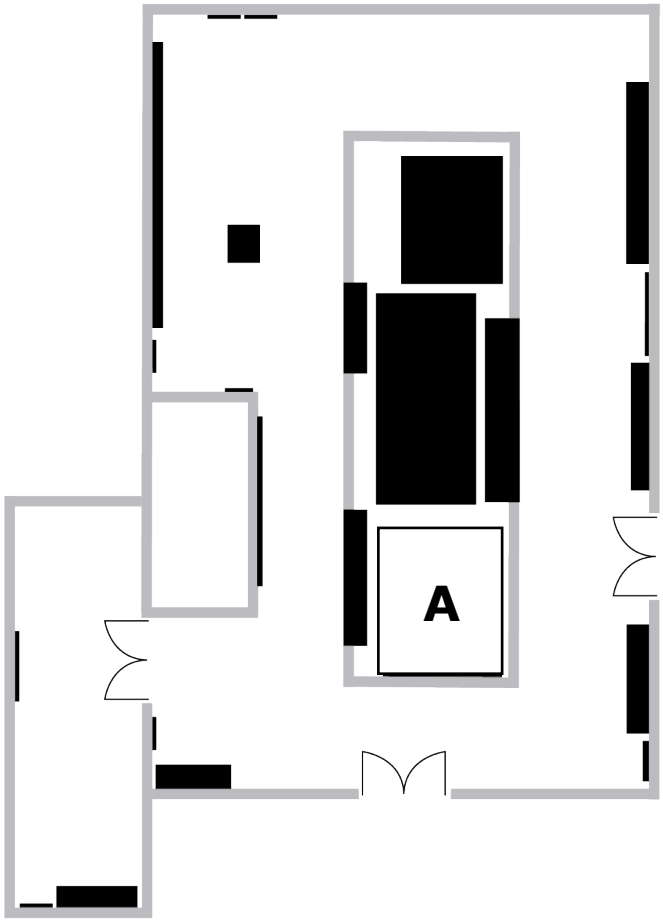
Genuine or Aspiring

True scholars devoted their entire lives to improving literary skills and inner morality. Many more people wanted to become scholars, and adopted aspects of this ideal. The ethical behaviour of a scholar was encouraged in order to improve society as a whole.

Scholars in Singapore

Between the 17th and 19th centuries, many Chinese ventured to Southeast Asia to make their fortunes. Successful businessmen sometimes turned to scholarly pursuits, and the traditional social distance between merchants and scholars become less distinct. An early

leader of the Teochew community in Singapore, Seah Eu Jin, took up painting and calligraphy late in life. Lim Boon Keng, an English-educated Peranakan, became a leader of the Confucian Revival Movement as well as president of Amoy University in China. Wealthy overseas Chinese often purchased titles and wore the robes and badges of mandarins. Others wore them although they were not technically entitled to these insignia.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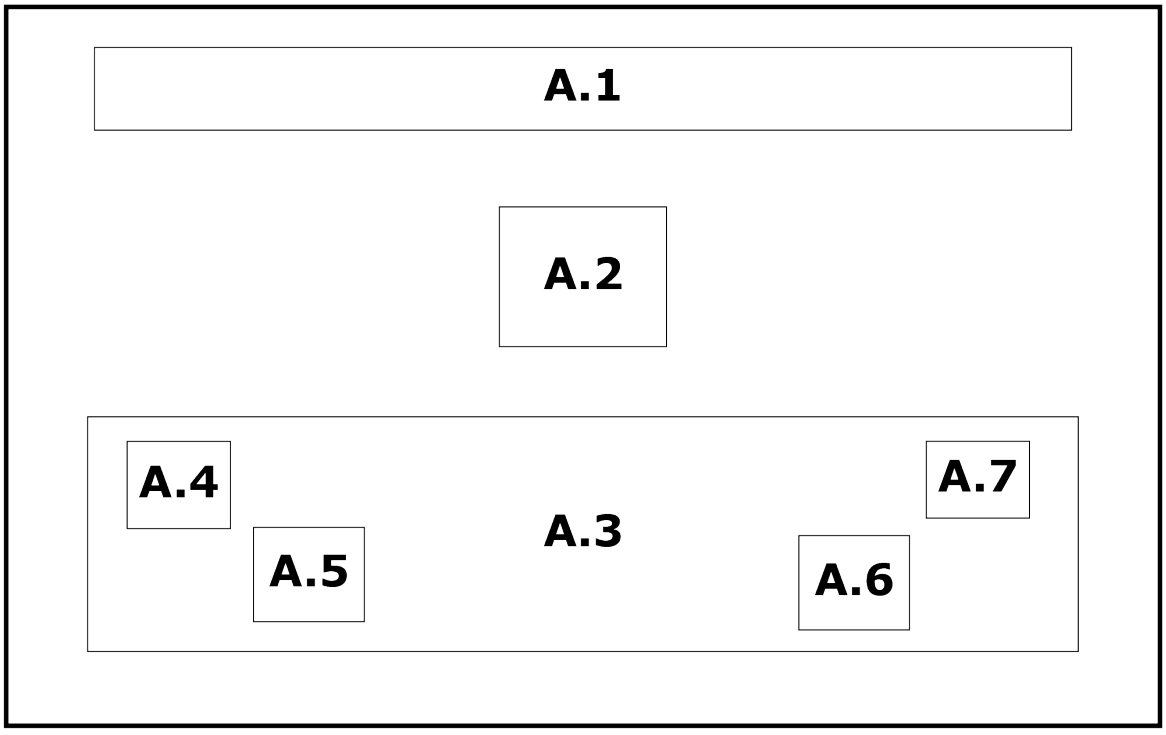
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A.7

A

The Scholar’s Studio

An elite scholar of the Ming or Qing dynasty would design a studio 书斋 where he could study, meditate, practise calligraphy and painting, enjoy small treasures, as well as socialise with other scholars. The essential tools for writing were known as the Four Treasures of the Study 文房四宝 – brush, ink, paper, and inkstone.

In connoisseurship books from the late Ming period, scholars carefully described their studios, including furniture and objects. These texts form the basis for our concept of the scholar’s studio. The studio was a physical expression of the aesthetic aims of the individual – it was often minimally furnished, so that the scholar would not be distracted by clutter.

The studio was also a space of retreat and even reclusion. A view onto a garden was regarded as important for allowing inspiration from nature.

The most sought-after furniture for the studio was made of rare timber, such as huanghuali 黄花梨, much of it imported from Southeast Asia. Foreign hardwoods became available in the late Ming period when restrictions on trade were lifted.

A.1

Door panels

China, Huizhou, 17th century

Wood, painted and gilded

2000-03503

A.2

Chair

China, late 17th century

Huanghuali wood

2001-00345

This chair has a projecting crest rail (at the top of the chairback) and curved arms. Sometimes called an “official-hat” chair 官帽椅, its shape

resembles the headgear of government officials. The simple design imparts a sense of dignity.

A.3

Painting table

China, 19th century

Tieli and other wood

2000-03502

A.4

Scroll pot

China, 18th or 19th century

Chinese yew

2009-03610

This pot was carved from a piece of Chinese yew wood (hong dou shan) to resemble a section of gnarled tree trunk. It would have been used to hold rolls of paper or handscrolls.

A.5

Miniature mountain

China, 17th century

Jade

This object has been adopted by Lam Soon Cannery Private Limited

1999-01394

This miniature mountain was fashioned from a piece of white jade, the surfaces carved to simulate the craggy terrain of an actual mountain. In Chinese culture, mountains are revered for their mystical associations and as home of the immortals. Atop a scholar’s desk, this artwork would inspire contemplation on the freedom and tranquility of mountain landscapes.

A.6

Brush pot

China, 18th century

Hongsuanzhi wood

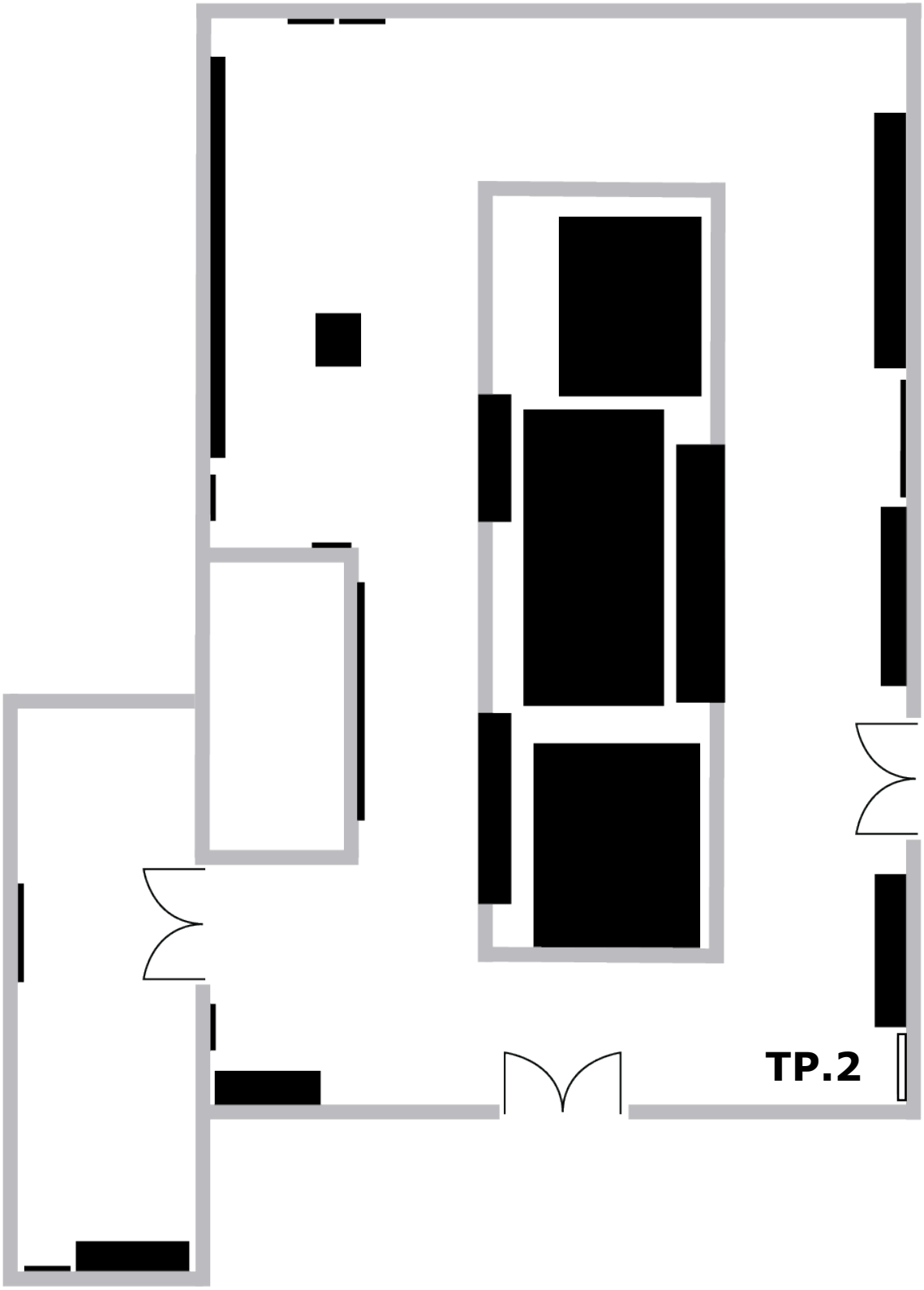
2000-05643

A.7

Brush stand with brush

China, 1552–1644

2007-00885-001, -002


TP.2

TP.2

Dreams and Fantasies

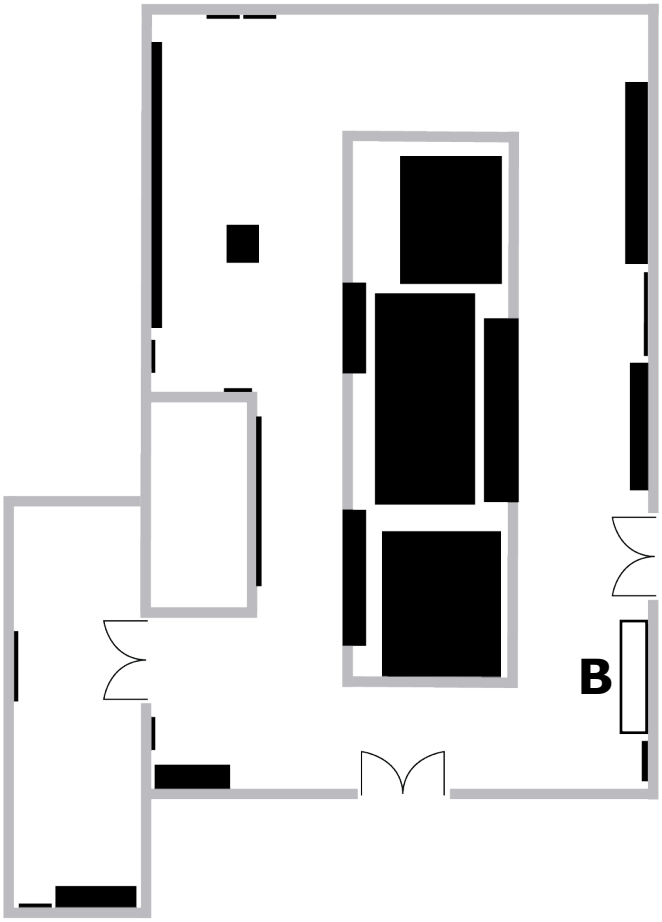
The Ideal Image of a Scholar

Many people respected scholars but could not devote all of their time to cultivating their minds. However, they took up some aspects of the scholarly life.

In the Ming dynasty, images of scholars became immensely popular. This was facilitated by the commercialization and technical improvements in the production of porcelain and lacquer. These objects often showed scholars in landscapes writing and painting, drinking wine, or playing music. Such items were not only collected by the elite, but even but those who could not read or write.

Foreigners were greatly fascinated with the Chinese scholar as an exotic figure. Around the 17th century, export objects were often decorated with scholarly images taken from

painting manuals and novels, and were sometimes combined with European designs.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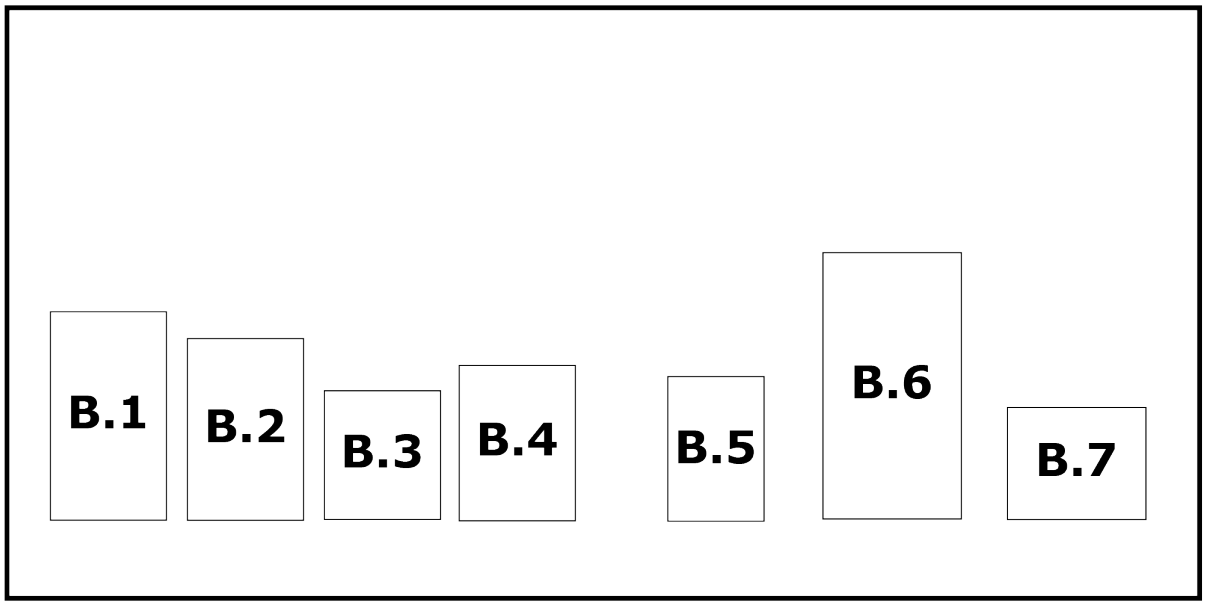
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B.1

Vase

China, 15th century

Porcelain

Gift of Tan family in memory of their late father, Dr Tan Tsze Chor

2002-00076

A scholar is accompanied by an attendant carrying a zither.

B.2

Vase with scene of Seven Sages in the Bamboo Grove 竹林七贤

China, mid-17th century (Transitional Period)

Porcelain

Gift of Tan family in memory of their late father, Dr Tan Tsze Chor

2002-00087

B.3

Jar with depictions of the four cultural pursuits

China, 1522–66 (Jiaqing reign)

Porcelain

Gift of Tan family in memory of their late father, Dr Tan Tsze Chor

2003-00220

Each of the four sides depicts a scholar engaged in one of the four cultural pursuits, namely zither, weiqi, calligraphy, and painting.

B.4

Vase with a scene of scholars and officials

China, mid-17th century (Transitional Period)

Porcelain

Gift of Tan family in memory of their late father, Dr Tan Tsze Chor

2002-00088

B.5

Scholar with wine jar

China, Dehua, mid-17th century

Porcelain

Gift of Frank and Pamela Hickley

2000-03464

B.6

Daoist Immortal

China, 16th or 17th century

Bronze

2017-00536

This figure is perhaps Lü Dongbin 吕洞宾, a Tang dynasty (618–907) poet and scholar who is venerated as one of the Eight Immortals in Daoism. Lü is regarded as the most influential of the Eight Immortals and is revered as the patriarch of the Daoist Quanzhen 全真 (“Complete Perfection”) Sect.

The double-gourd hanging at the waist suggests he is an immortal. In traditional Chinese culture, the gourd is associated with longevity as well as protective and magical properties.

B.7

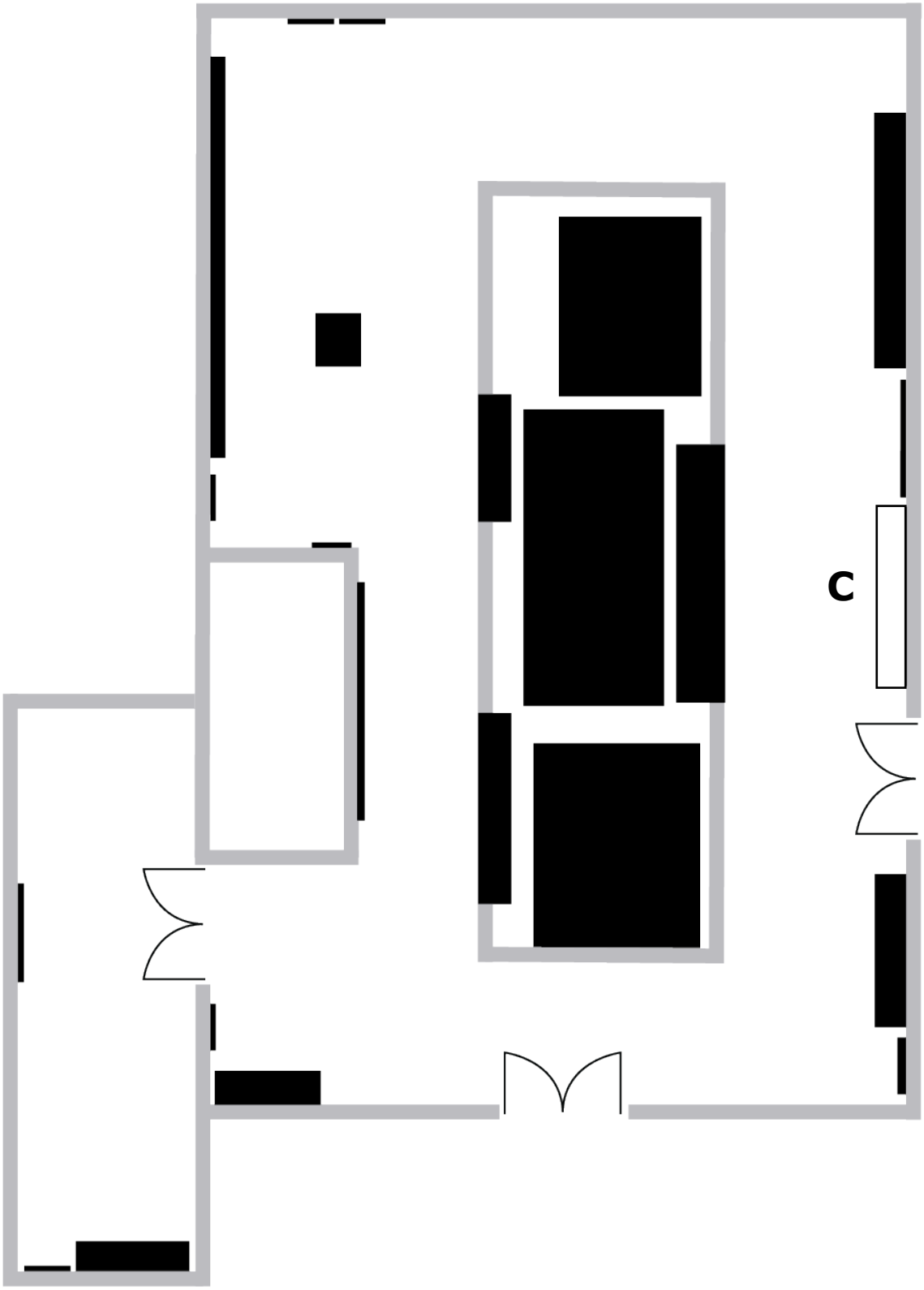
Octagonal covered box

China, 14th or 15th century

Lacquered wood with mother-of-pearl and silver inlays

2014-00954

The inlays depict two scholars in a garden pavilion who await an attendant approaching with bowls of refreshment. Subtle facial expressions are vividly revealed by the skillfully engraved details.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C

Elegant gathering in the Western Garden

China, 18th century

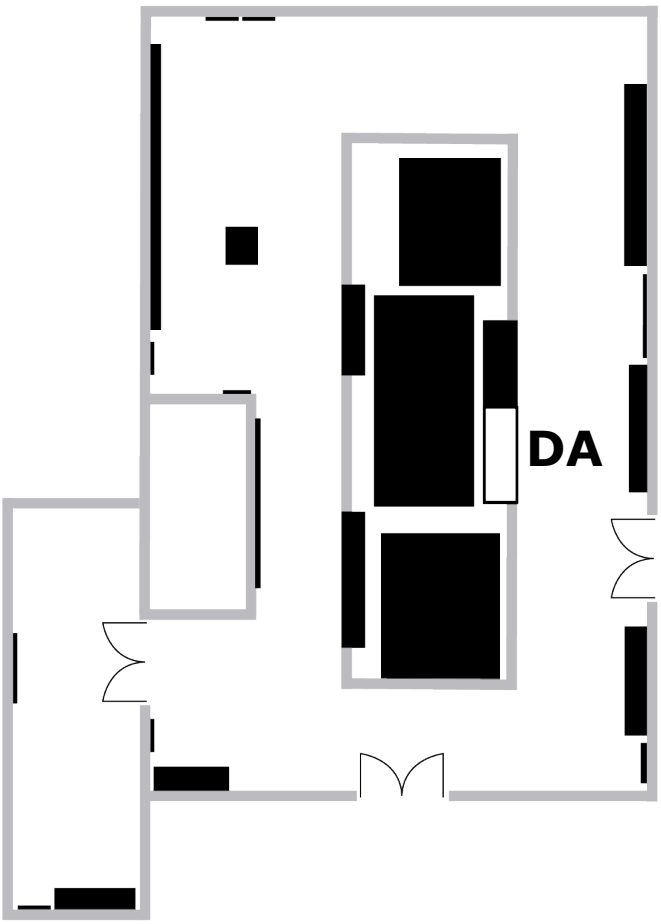
Ink on paper

1997-03626

Chinese scholars enjoyed pursuing artistic interests, often at elegant gatherings called yaji 雅集. They composed poetry, created and admired art, and held lofty conversations. This scroll illustrates a famous 11th-century gathering in the garden of Wang Shen, son-in-law of Emperor Yingzong, in present-day Kaifeng, Henan province.

This event became a popular theme in Chinese art and was later also taken up by Japanese and Korean painters. Esteemed Northern Song literati present included poet Su Shi (1037–1101), and artists Li Gonglin (around 1041–1106) and Mi Fu (1051–1107).

The artist is unknown, but the painting is executed in the baimiao style 白描 (line drawing in ink with no colour). On another part of the scroll, calligraphy by literati painter-calligrapher Wen Zhengming (1470–1559) describes the theme of the painting.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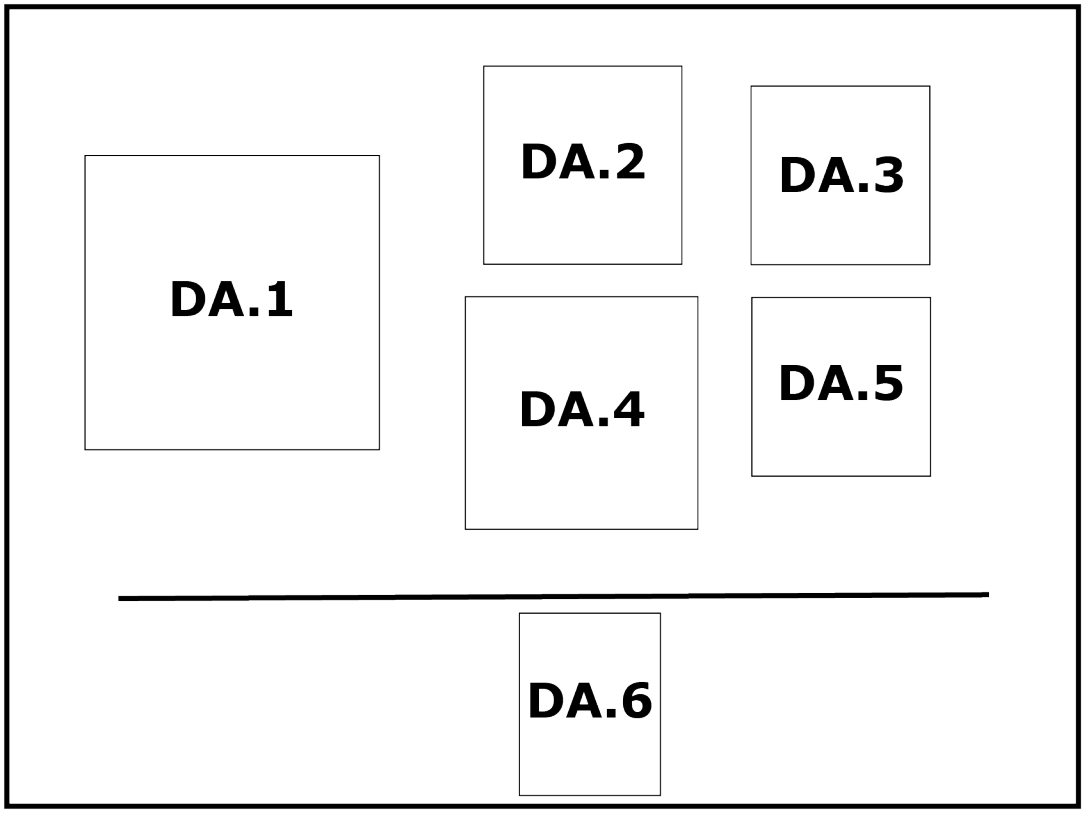
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Scholar-officials – The examination system

From the 7th into the 20th century, the Chinese government was run by educated scholars who were chosen through highly competitive examinations based mostly on Confucian texts. This bureaucracy was designed to be loyal to the emperor. These scholar-officials 士大夫 are sometimes called “mandarins”, and the rank badges they wore on their coats are sometimes called as “mandarin squares”.

Indicators of rank

The rank and position of a scholar-official were displayed through sophisticated attire first developed in the Tang dynasty (618–907). Strict regulations during the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing dynasties (1644–1911) governed the types of motifs and accessories that could be used. For instance, birds – associated with literary elegance – were used for the nine ranks of civil officials, while mammals and mythical animals

that symbolised courage were used for badges of military officials.

Not always popular

The examination system was attacked for being inflexible, and it was interrupted during times of political turmoil. It was suspended by the Mongol rulers for part of the Yuan period, from 1279 to 1315. In the 19th century, the system was thought to stifle innovation and modernisation, and was abolished in 1905.

All badges displayed here are on loan from the Chris Hall Collection.

DA.1

Badge for censor

China, 15th century

Silk (slit tapestry weave, kesi 缂丝)

This badge features the xiezhi 獬豸, a deer-like mythical creature with a single horn. The flames

around its body underscore its supernatural powers. The xiezhi is surrounded by cloud scrolls and stands on a rocky outcrop, waves crashing against it. A sprig of lingzhi fungus, signifying longevity, sprouts near its hind feet.

The xiezhi was believed to be able to distinguish between good and evil. It was thus used as the court insignia for officials from the Censorate during the Ming and Qing dynasties. Censors were tasked with investigating wrongdoings and weeding out corruption in the government.

DA.2

Badge for eighth rank civil official

China, late 19th century

Silk (embroidery and appliqué), coral beads

The eighth civil rank is represented by the quail. This badge is appliquéd onto a sea of clouds rendered as stylised ruyi-shaped scrolls. This was a clever cost-saving measure, as only the patch

needed to be changed when the wearer rose through the ranks.

Embedded among the clouds and waves are the Eight Buddhist Emblems (endless knot, conch shell, lotus, double fish, standard of victory, vase, canopy, wheel), auspicious motifs in Chinese decorative arts. Bats symbolising happiness, the stylised character of shou (longevity), and the implements of the Eight Immortals (such as Han Zhongli's palm leaf fan) frame the edge, to invoke great blessings for the wearer of the badge.

DA.3

Badge for fourth rank military official

China, first half of the 18th century

Silk (brocade)

Either the tiger or leopard could represent the fourth rank during the Ming dynasty, but after 1664, only the tiger was used. Here it is depicted

baring its teeth and claws. Its ferocity and prowess are further highlighted by the flames around it. Near its front paw is another fiery element – the flaming pearl, a symbol of wisdom and enlightenment (a motif more typically associated with dragons).

Rank badges were made and worn in pairs, attached to the front and back of robes. The seam in the middle of this badge indicates that this was made for the front of an official's surcoat.

DA.4

Badge for sixth rank civil official

China, 16th century

Silk (embroidery)

Rank badges of the Ming dynasty were larger than those of the Qing period. They also featured bolder motifs, as demonstrated by the cloud clusters rendered in striking orange, green, and

blue on this badge. Egrets are distinguished from the other white birds used as rank insignia by their wedge-shaped tails and wisps of feathers on top of their heads.

During the reign of the Jiajing emperor (1522–66), regulations on rank insignia were changed. Egrets became the insignia of sixth rank civil officials. Previously, either the egret or mandarin duck could be used.

DA.5

Badge for sixth rank military official

China, late 19th century

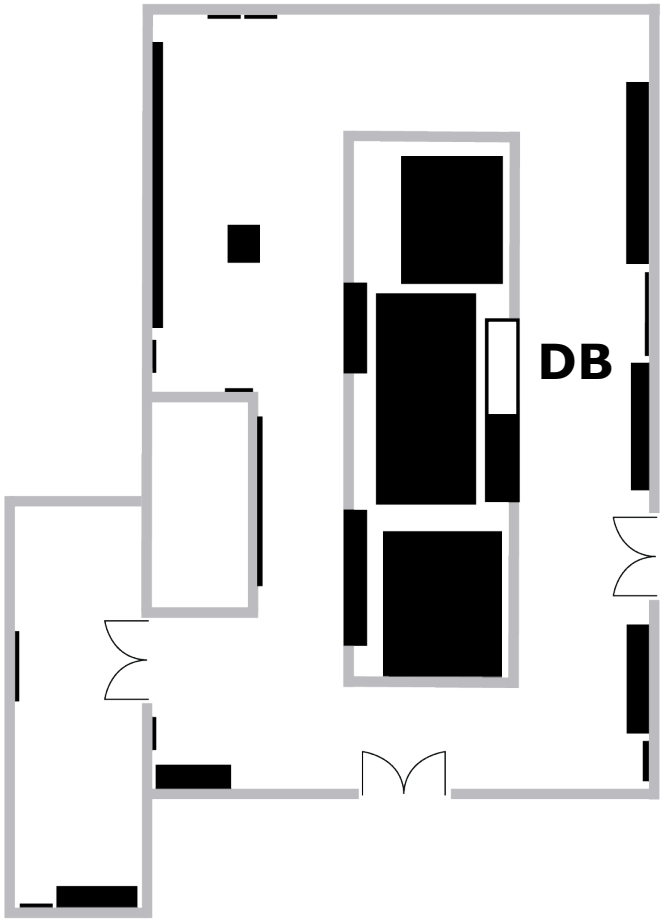
Silk (embroidery), coral beads

This badge features a panther, the insignia of both the sixth and seventh military rank during the Ming and Qing dynasties. It was used for the sixth rank exclusively after the Qianlong emperor revised dress regulations in 1759. Rank badges of the Qing dynasty were designed to be a

microcosm of the universe, with elements of the sky, land, and sea on each square. As with the panther on this badge, most rank creatures are depicted gazing at the red sun disc, symbolically highlighting the officials' loyalty to the emperor. The sun is represented by red coral beads on this badge; a feature that is also seen on the eighth rank civil official badge displayed nearby.

DA.6

Peranakan bride and groom dressed in mandarin robes. Java, Surabaya, around 1900. Albumen silver print. Peranakan Museum, Gift of Mr and Mrs Lee Kip Lee 2015-00646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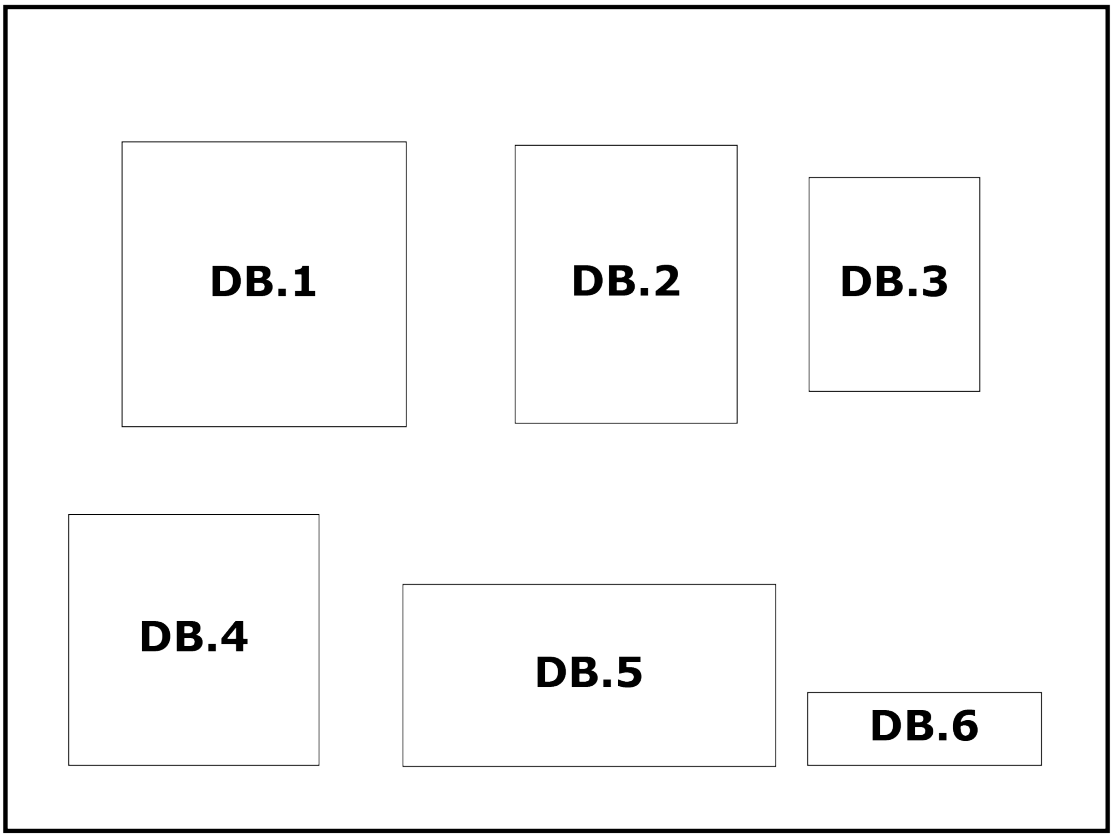
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DB

Imperial status for sale

In the 19th century, some southern Chinese immigrated to Southeast Asia, America, and Hawaii. Despite achieving great wealth, they desired status symbols from their homeland. Through a consulate set up in Singapore in 1877, the Chinese government sold titles that conferred the right to wear rank badges. The prices of titles were listed in newspapers.

In practice, many overseas Chinese wore mandarin robes whether they had purchased the titles or not. Official robes and rank badges were worn at important events such as weddings and colonial ceremonies.

DB.1

Crib sheet with the Analects of Confucius

China, 19th century

Ink on silk

2008-06658

In order to cheat on the imperial examinations, the Analects 论语 have been written in tiny characters.

DB.2

Portrait of a Chinese man

Attributed to Lamqua (1802–around 1860)
or his studio
China, Guangzhou, 19th century
Oil on canvas
2016-00464

This unidentified sitter is portrayed in a civil official's attire (complete with hat and court necklace). But the unusual bird motif on his rank badge suggests that he might have been harbouring ambitions to be a court official instead of actually serving as one. The artist probably intended to depict the red-crowned crane (emblem of a first rank official) but mistakenly added a red wattle, which created an imaginary species instead.

Lamqua was famous for his outstanding painting skills, in particular, for making European-style works with realistic compositions. Lamqua owned a popular workshop, with assistants that helped produce portraits, harbour views, and other subjects that appealed to foreign customers.

DB.3

A 9th-rank military official

China, 19th century

Ink and colour on paper

On loan from the Chris Hall Collection

DB.4

Official's hat and summer hat

China, 19th century

Wood, leather, lacquer (hat box); bamboo, silk (hat)

Acquired with funds from J. P. Morgan Chase Bank

2008-06655, 2008-06656

DB.5

Official’s winter hat with feather

China, probably 19th century

Fur, silk, jade, feather

On loan from the Chris Hall Collection

Hats were a part of the dress regulations the imperial family and officials in China had to follow. During the Qing dynasty (1644–1911), two forms of official hats were used – a winter hat and a summer hat. Custom-made boxes were used for storing these hats. This one contains an upper tray for a summer hat and lower compartment for a winter hat.

A system of coloured hat finials was introduced during the Qing dynasty to differentiate rank. The clear glass hat knobs seen on these hats indicate that they were worn by a fifth rank official. The emperor also awarded peacock feathers to officials who served with distinction. These plumes could boast one, two, or three

“eyes”; the more “eyes” a feather had, the higher the honour it conferred.

DB.6

Court necklace

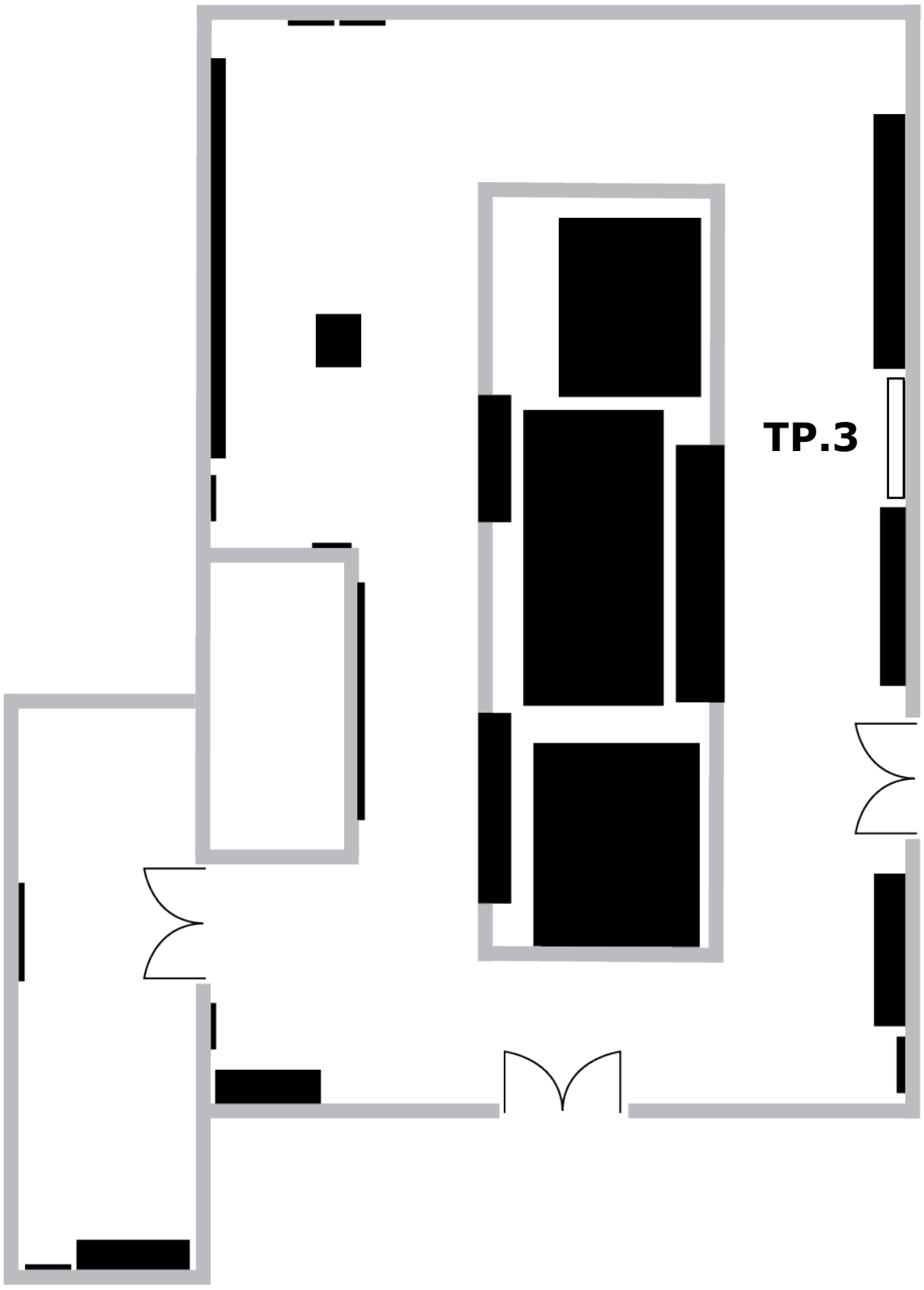
China, 19th century

Jadeite, amber, coral

Gift of the family of the late Mr and Mrs Sua Jin Juan 蔡人养 贾月菊夫妇暨家人同敬赠

2015-00638

The court necklace 朝珠, together with official robes, indicated rank. The materials of the necklace changed with the calendar and ceremonial occasion. This example is composed of amber beads spaced with three green jade “Buddha’s head” beads 佛头塔, a jade plaque and pendant.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TP.3

Imperial Pretensions

Many Chinese emperors sought to portray themselves as scholars – perfect gentlemen who could write poetry, paint, and play music. To further cultivate the bureaucracy, emperors presented their own calligraphies to leading scholar-officials. These activities elevated the level of artistic accomplishment in court life. The court also commissioned inksticks, paper, and fine scholar's objects to be given away to solicit loyalty.

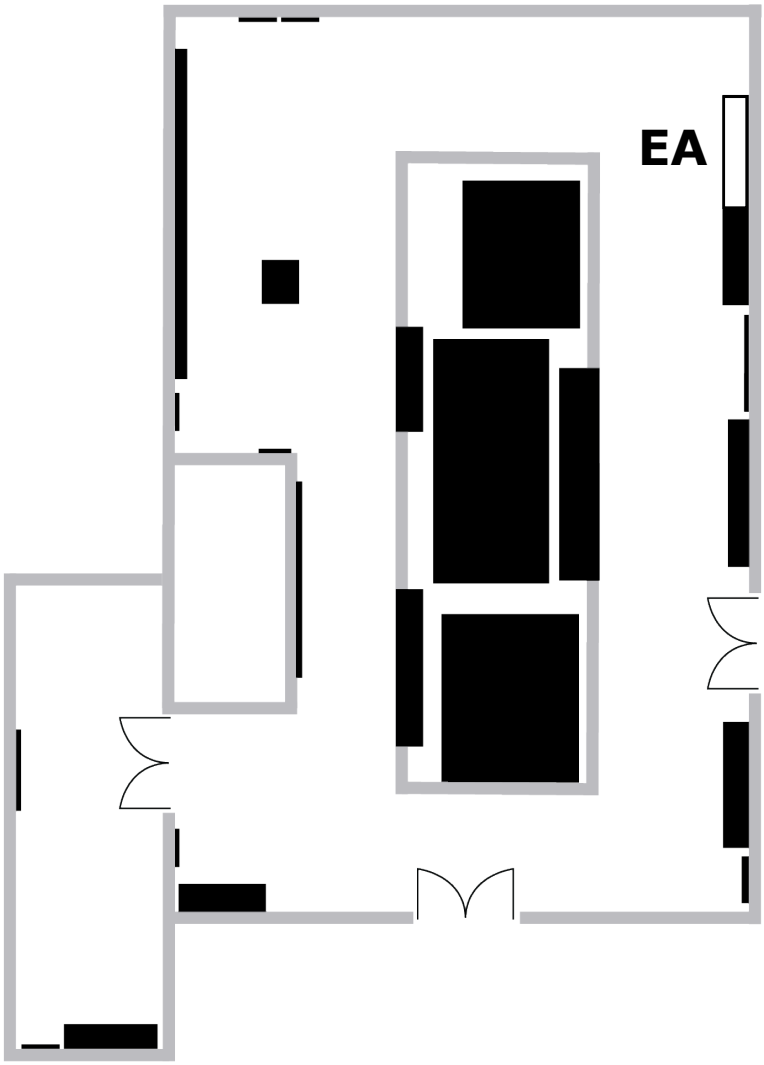
The emperor began his relationship with the scholars at a very young age, when a learned scholar was appointed to be his tutor. Some emperors adopted a scholarly lifestyle. The famous saying, kaijuanyouyi 开卷有益 "reading enriches the mind", originated with the Song emperor Taizong 宋太宗 (939–997), who read voraciously, earning the respect of his ministers.

The Kangxi Emperor as a Scholar

The Kangxi Emperor 康熙 (reigned 1662–1722) gained acceptance from the Han Chinese scholar-officials for his foreign Manchu dynasty through his keen interest in Confucianism and traditional Chinese culture. He personally took up calligraphy and painting, and sponsored the compilation of the Kangxi Dictionary 康熙字典 and Complete Tang Poems 全唐诗.

Defining the Scholar

The cultivated scholar has been a role model in Chinese culture for more than two thousand years. Confucius called these individuals "perfect gentlemen" 君子. The prototype of the scholar developed in the 10th century, mainly through Song paintings connected with literature (士人画). In the late Ming dynasty, scholars focused greater attention on literature and literary painting, and were therefore termed "literati" 文人.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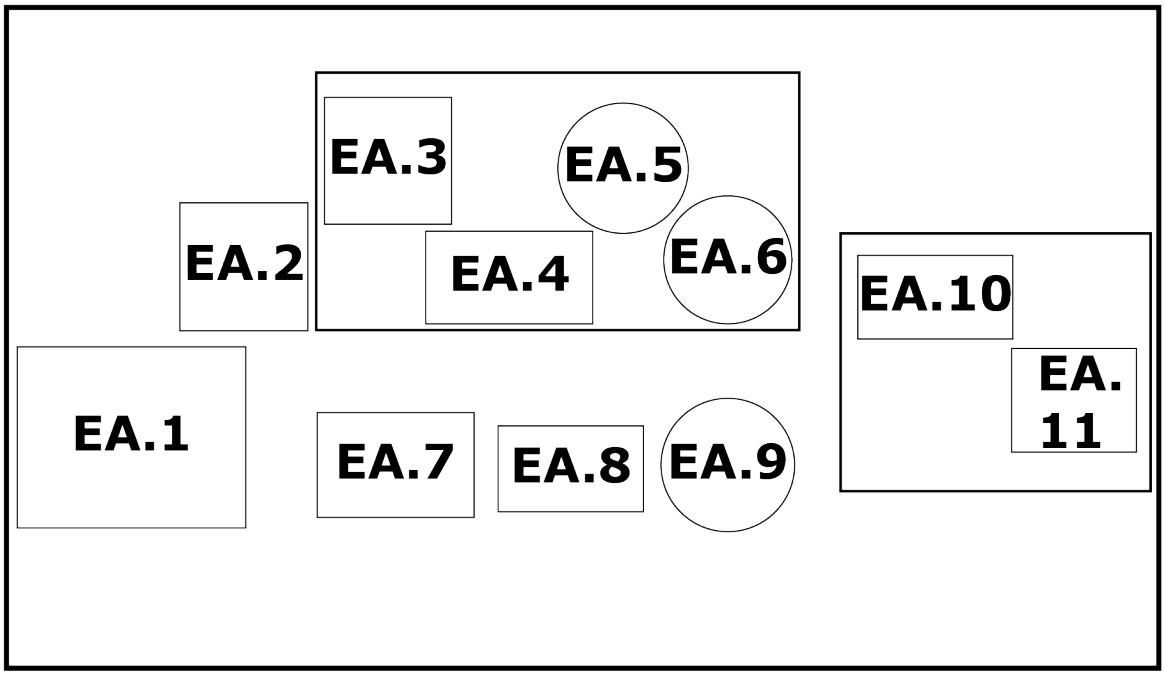
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EA.1

Armrest or display stand

China, early 18th century

Cloisonné enamel on metal

2015-00499

Shaped as a handscroll, this armrest is decorated with a crossed pattern of flowers, a design also seen on textiles and lacquer from the same period. Patterns in cloisonné enamel decoration, like on this object, are formed by pouring melted glass into sections separated by wires.

EA.2

Tubular fitting

China, 1662–1722 (Kangxi reign)

Gilded metal, enamel

Inscribed: 大清康熙年製 (Made in the Kangxi reign of the Qing dynasty)

2009-01433

EA.3

Cup

China, 1640–99

Rhinoceros horn

Gift of Frank and Pamela Hickley

2000-03493

EA.4

Cup

China, 18th century

Rhinoceros horn

On loan from Yuan Shao Liang Collection

EA.5

Brush holder: monk

Signed: Wu Zhifan

China, 18th century

Bamboo

1999-02652

EA.6

Brush holder: Vinegar tasters

China, 18th century

Bamboo

2009-01808

EA.7

Two cups

China, 18th century

Coconut, lined with silver

Gift of Olivier and Nicolas Chow in memory of Edward and Virginia Chow

1997-02597.

EA.8

Crab

China, late Qing dynasty

Jade

1996-00872

EA.9

Water dropper with peach bloom glaze

China, 1662–1722 (Kangxi reign)

Porcelain

Inscribed: 大清康熙年製 (Made in the Kangxi reign of Qing dynasty)

1995-02414

EA.10

Brush rest

China, Jingdezhen, 1506–21

Porcelain

2011-00669

Marked: 大明正德年製 (Made in the Zhengde reign of Ming dynasty)

One side of this mountain-shaped brush rest is inscribed in Arabic: khamah (pen); while the other side reads dan (holder). Together these words mean “brush rest”.

The Zhengde Emperor (1491–1521) was greatly interested in foreign cultures. An object like this may have been made for his personal use, or for any of the Muslim administrators known to have served at his court.

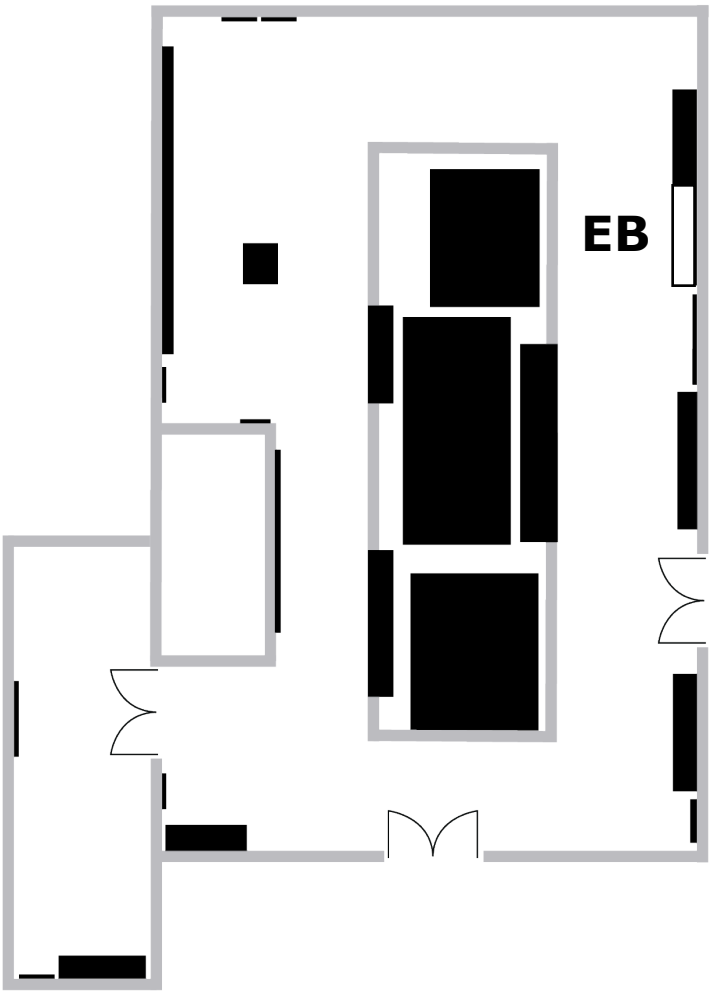
EA.11

Brush rest

China, early 17th century

Rock crystal

1997-02619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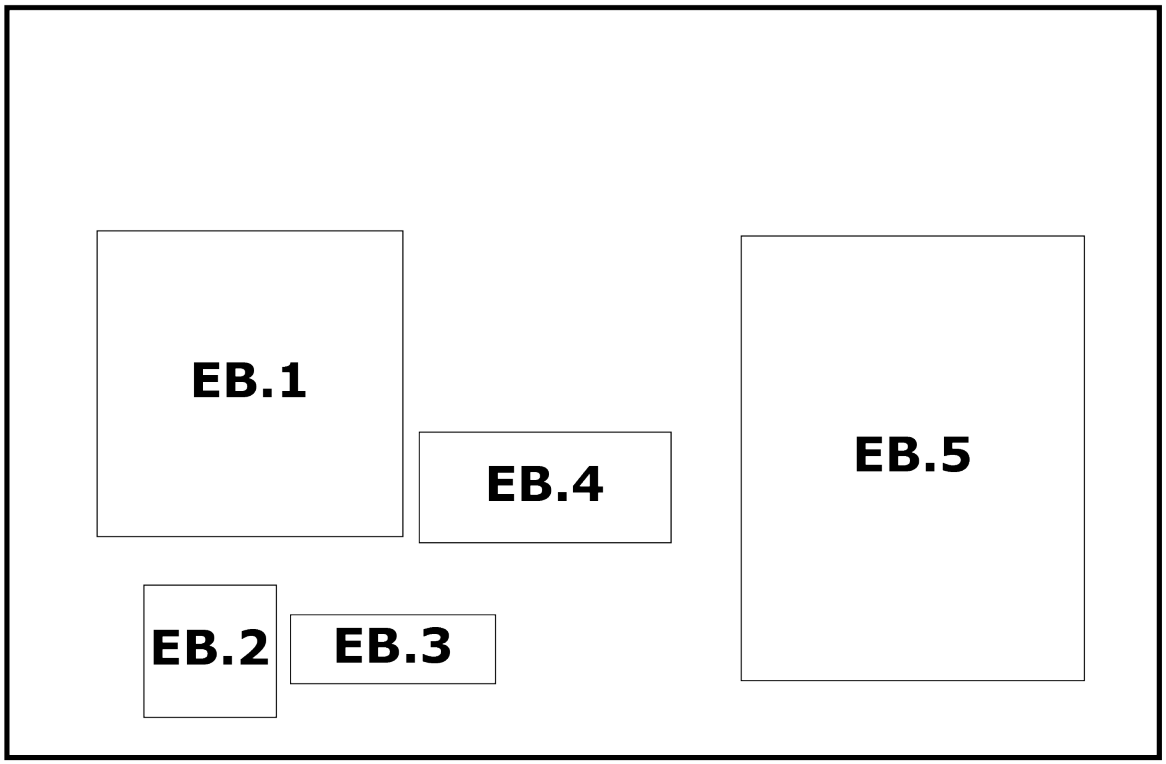
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EB.1

Table screen: Gathering of scholars

China, mid-18th century

Lacquered wood

2009-01530

This screen shows the refined scholarly taste during the Qianlong reign 乾隆 (1736–95). The narrative scenes are carved through thick layers of red, green, and ochre lacquer. The object is small enough to be set on a scholar's table for detailed study.

One side depicts a 4th-century gathering of scholars. The famous calligrapher Wang Xizhi 王羲之 is shown at his writing desk, while other scholars compose poems along the river. Wang's most famous work, Lanting Xu 兰亭序, commemorates this event. Wine cups on lotus leaves float along the river. Wang Xizhi reared geese and is said to have developed the

technique of rotating his wrist while writing by watching the neck movements of the birds.

EB.2

Covered box with lychees

China, 1522

Lacquer

Inscribed: 大明嘉靖壬午年製 (Made in the Renwu year of Jiajing reign of the Ming dynasty)

2010-04952

EB.3

Sceptre (ruyi 如意)

China, 1736–95 (Qianlong reign)

Gilded metal, enamel

2009-01525

EB.4

Four inksticks

China, Qing dynasty

Ink

On loan from the Yuan Shao Liang Collection

EB.5

Set of 22 inksticks depicting silk making

Cao Sugong workshop

China, 18th century

Ink

This object has been adopted by Lam Soon Cannery Private Limited

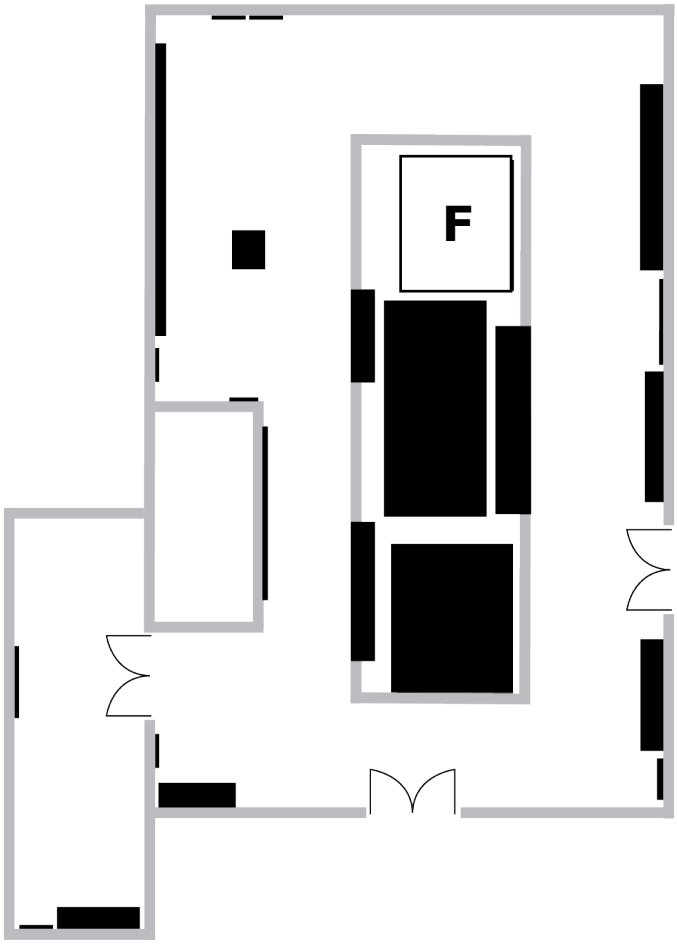
2009-02962

Each image on the inksticks depicts a stage in silk production. They are based on images from the book Pictures of Farming and Weaving 耕织图, which was commissioned by the Kangxi emperor in 1696.

The decoration of inksticks rose to become an art form prized by scholars and the court. Cao Sugong 曹素功 (1615–1689) was a master ink artist whose descendants still make the finest inksticks in China. One stick in this set is signed "Respectfully made by Cao Sugong" 曹素功謹製, which refers to the workshop.

Stages of silk making as seen on the inksticks:

1. Yu can 浴蚕 (Bathing silkworm eggs)
2. Cai sang 采桑 (Picking mulberry leaves)
3. Ze jian 择茧 (Harvesting cocoons)
4. Lian si 练丝 (Boiling raw silk)
5. Lao si 络丝 (Spooling)
6. Zhi 织 (Weaving)
7. Ran se 染色 (Dyeing)
8. Cheng yi 成衣 (Tailoring)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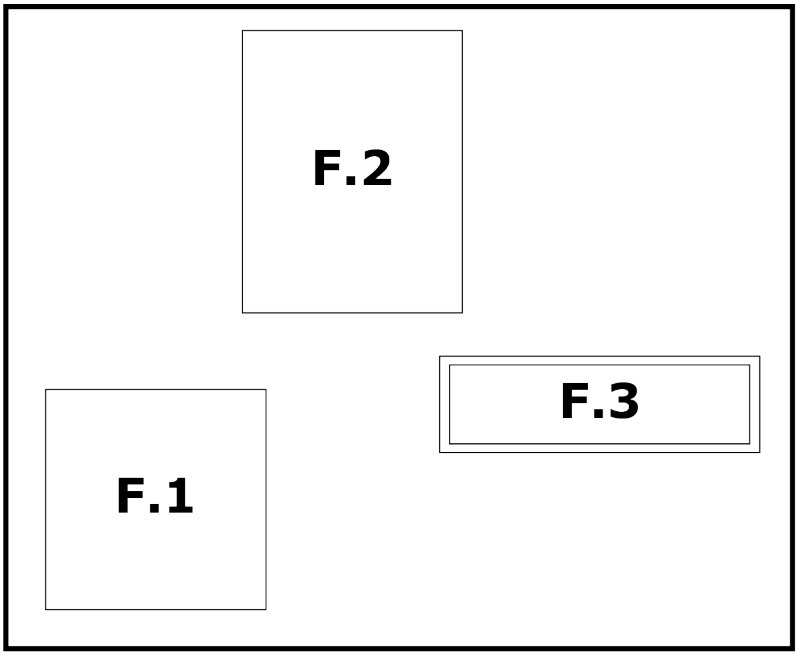

F.2
F.3
F.1

F

THE FOUR CULTURAL PURSUITS

Cultivated men and women in China were expected to take part in four cultural pursuits: qin 琴 , weiqi 围棋, calligraphy 书 shu, and painting 画 hua. These activities were intended to improve one's behaviour.

The qin was thought to be a sacred instrument that gave the player clarity of mind and the spiritual strength to ward off negative energies. The game of weiqi 围棋 (known as "go" in Japan and in English) provided training in strategic thinking and patience. Calligraphy required a fusion of mental and physical abilities, and was regarded as a reflection of inner virtue. Finally, careful study of classical paintings helped a scholar appreciate the subtleties of art. This end of the platform features two of the four pursuits. Painting and calligraphy can be seen in other parts of the gallery.

F.1

Weiqi 围棋 – game of Go

Go originated in China, where it is called weiqi. It is one of the oldest games in the world, dating back at least 2,000 years. The game spread to Korea, where it is called baduk, and to Japan, where it is igo or simply go. Today go, as it's called in English, is enjoyed around the world.

The game is played by two players on a board marked with a gird (now standardise at 19 x 19 lines). Each player uses a set of gaming pieces (usually white vs black). The object is to surround more territory on the board than your opponent.

Gaming board

China, 19th century

Wood; game pieces of seashell and slate

2015-00645

This gaming board is double-sided – one side for weiqi, the other for Chinese chess (xiang qi).

Pair of containers for weiqi pieces

China, 1662–1722 (Kangxi reign)

Porcelain

2002-00100

These containers are made in Chinese porcelain with underglaze blue decoration. Historically, materials used for weiqi pieces (called “stones”) differed: stones or clam shells or even ivory was used for white pieces; black stones were usually made of slate.

Games of Blood and Tears

The board is set up to show a crucial moment in the 5th game of a 10-game match between legendary Chinese player Huang Longshi 黃龍士 (1651/54–ca 1700) and his pupil Xu Xingyou 徐星友 (born 1644). Xu won the match, but Huang had given him a 3-stone advantage in each game. According to their levels of play, Xu only deserved a 2-stone advantage, but Huang

insisted on giving three. Even though Huang lost, the games were of very high quality, and are studied to this day.

Xu went on to become a national talent and mentored the next generations of players, including Fan Xiping and Shi Xiangxia, two of the leading Chinese players in the 18th century.

F.2

Bookcase
China, early 20th century
Elmwood
1996-01740

The doors of this cabinet are inscribed with the titles of the Twenty-Four Histories 二十四史 (Ershisi Shi), a collection of historical documents beginning with Sima Qian's Records of the Grand Historian (91 BC) and ends with Zhang Tingyu's History of the Ming (1739). These are considered authoritative sources for traditional Chinese

history and culture, and were used for research on literature, art, music, science, military affairs, geography, ethnography, and other subjects.
In 1775, 40th year of the reign of the Qianlong emperor, the first compete set was produced.

F.3

Qin 琴 – revered Chinese instrument

The qin (also called guqin, Chinese zither) has existed for over 4,000 years and is one of China's most important musical instruments. Qin playing developed as an elite art form, practised by noblemen and scholars in intimate settings. It was not originally intended for public performance. During the Han dynasty, playing the qin was thought to cultivate character and morality, supplicate gods and demons, enhance life, and enrich learning. The qin and its music were inscribed in 2003 on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

Qin table

China, 19th century

Jichi wood (“chicken wing” wood)

2001-00346

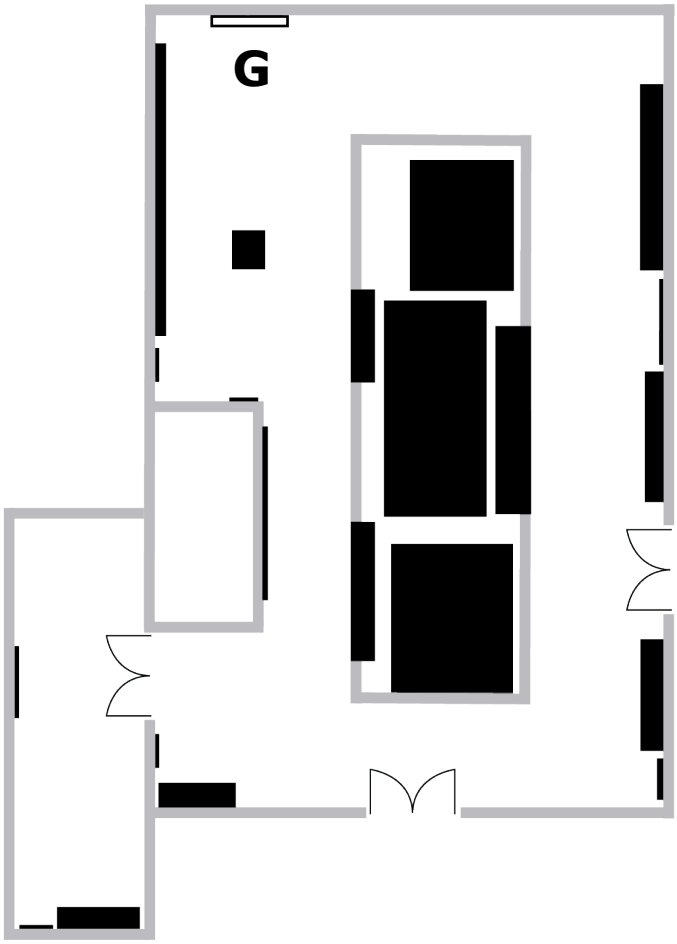
Qin

China, 1662–1722 (Kangxi reign of Qing dynasty)

Wood, lacquer, mother-of-pearl

1999-02686

Each part of a qin has a human or animal part name, and parts also relate to cosmology. For example, the upper board symbolises heaven, the bottom symbolises earth. In Chinese classical paintings, “bringing the qin to visit a friend” (携琴访友) is a common theme. The qin is symbolic of cultural accomplishment, as well as mutual recognition between like-minded individuals.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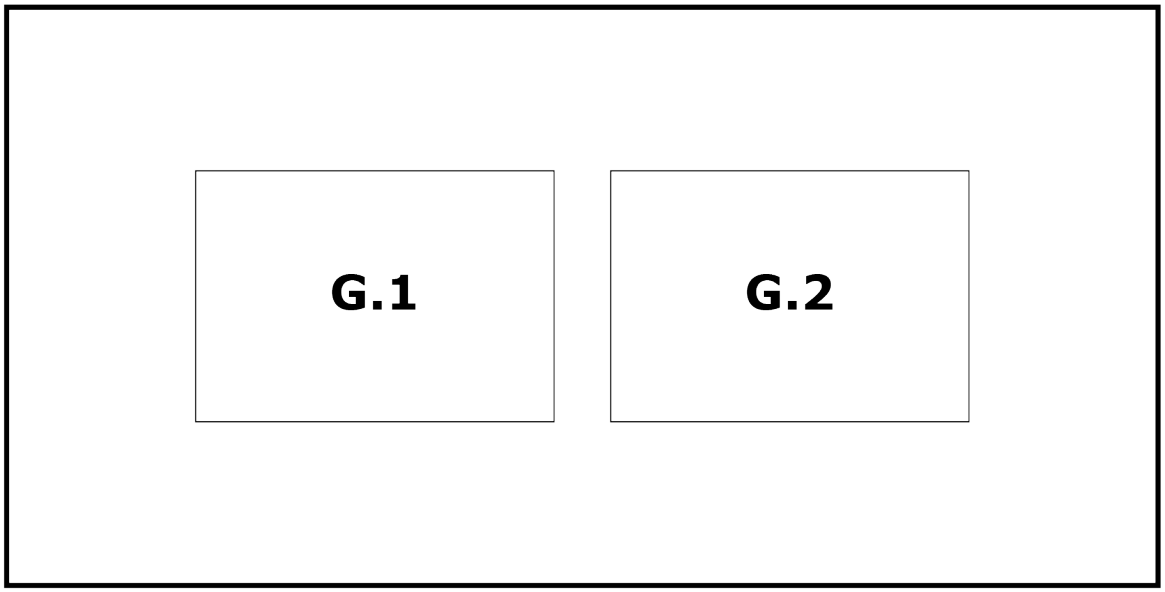

G.1
G.2

G

Fan paintings

Folding fans were probably first imported from Japan into China during the Northern Song dynasty (960–1127). But they only became fashionable during the Ming dynasty after the Yongle (reigned 1403–24) and Xuande (reigned 1426–35) emperors took a fancy to them. Fans were regarded as elegant gifts. They were presented by emperors to court officials and exchanged among educated elites.

Mountainous landscapes, pavilions, trees, flowers, stones, birds, and water are frequent subjects, as they represent a spiritual and inspirational realm yearned for by literati. The composition on a fan has to be thoughtfully planned to fit the unusual shape.

The fan paintings displayed here are on loan from the Franklin Chow Collection.

G.1

Chrysanthemums

Yun Shouping 恽寿平 (1633–1690)

China, Qing dynasty, 17th century

Ink and colour on paper

Chrysanthemums are regarded as a symbol of longevity, and included in the Four Gentlemen, plants thought to possess virtuous qualities. Because the chrysanthemum flowers in autumn, it also signifies resilience for its ability to withstand the cold.

Yun Shouping is regarded as one of the Six Masters of the Early Qing. Although adept at landscapes, he is best known for his delicate rendering of flowers without ink outlines, a style called mogu 没骨 (“boneless”). Yun derived his style from Xu Chongsi 徐崇嗣, a Northern Song artist renowned for his “boneless” flowers, and from observing nature first-hand. Yun’s elegant portrayal of flowers was well-received in the

17th century and influenced generations of Qing artists.

G.2

Butterflies and plum blossom

Gu Yide 顾懿德 (active around 1620–30)

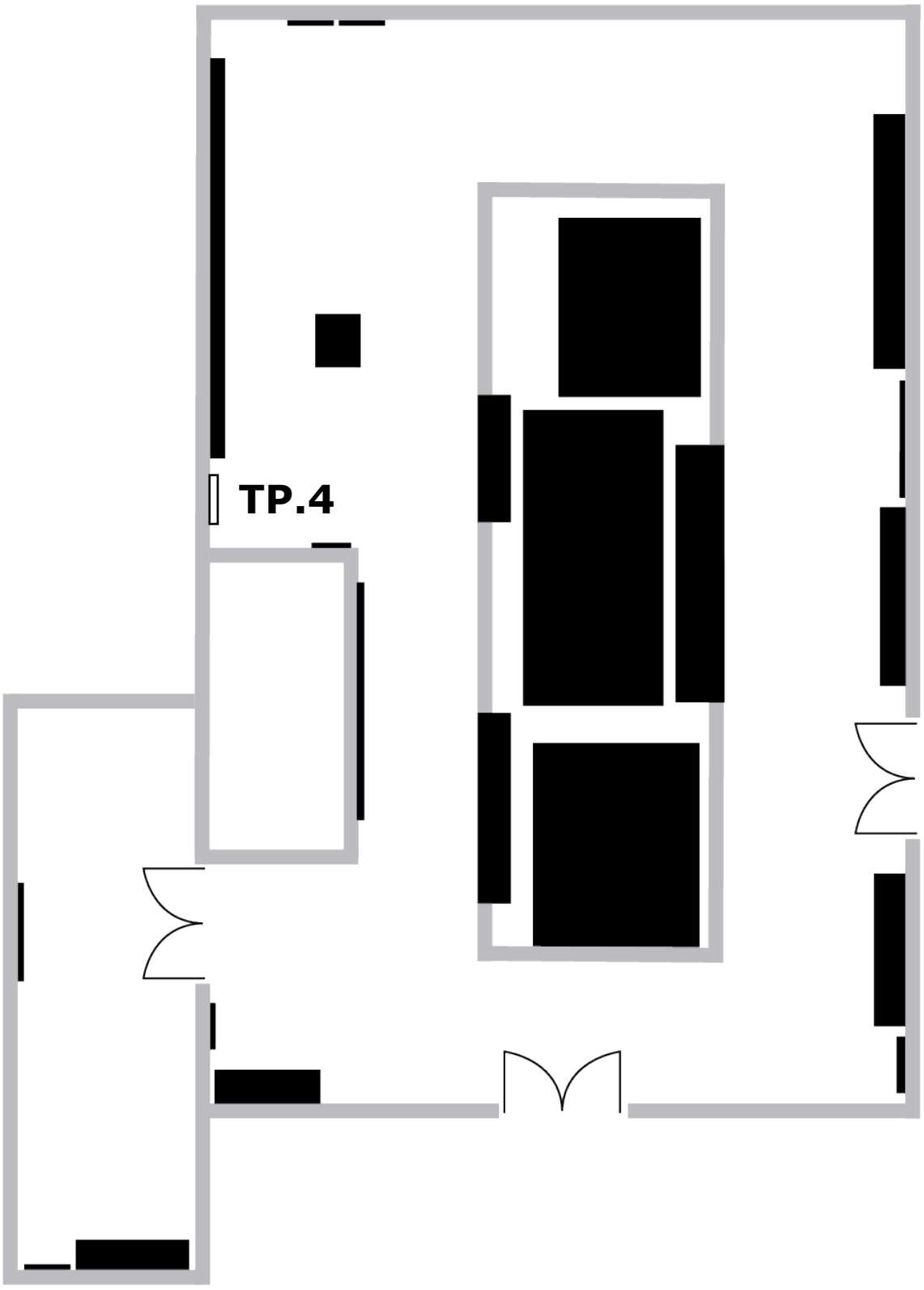
China, dated 1627

Ink on paper

Gu Yide, a native of Huating (in Shanghai today), was a friend of the famous Ming master Dong Qichang 董其昌 (1555–1636). Gu indicates in his inscription that this painting was inspired by the new blossoms sprouting from a plum tree in front of his studio. He portrays the plum tree here as a herald of spring. Butterflies (symbol of joy and regeneration) gather around as if to celebrate the arrival of the new season.

It appears that Gu was well-regarded in the literati and artistic circles of his time. This painting bears an inscription by Chen Jiru 陈继儒

(1558–1639), fellow native of Huating who was an esteemed critic, artist, and writer. Chen praises how Gu's work possesses the bearing of Yang Wujiu 扬无咎 (1097–1169), a Song artist renowned for his ink paintings of plum blossoms.


TP.4

TP.4

Personal letters, private matters

Letters, especially the ones penned to family, relatives, friends, or acquaintances, are a window into the feelings, interests, and aspirations of their authors. They foster bonds, reinforce social relationships, and provide us with clues about prevailing social norms. Letters were written to convey well-wishes and express gratitude for a gift or letter – to extend or decline an invitation for a visit – to express grief or happiness – to report on one's health.

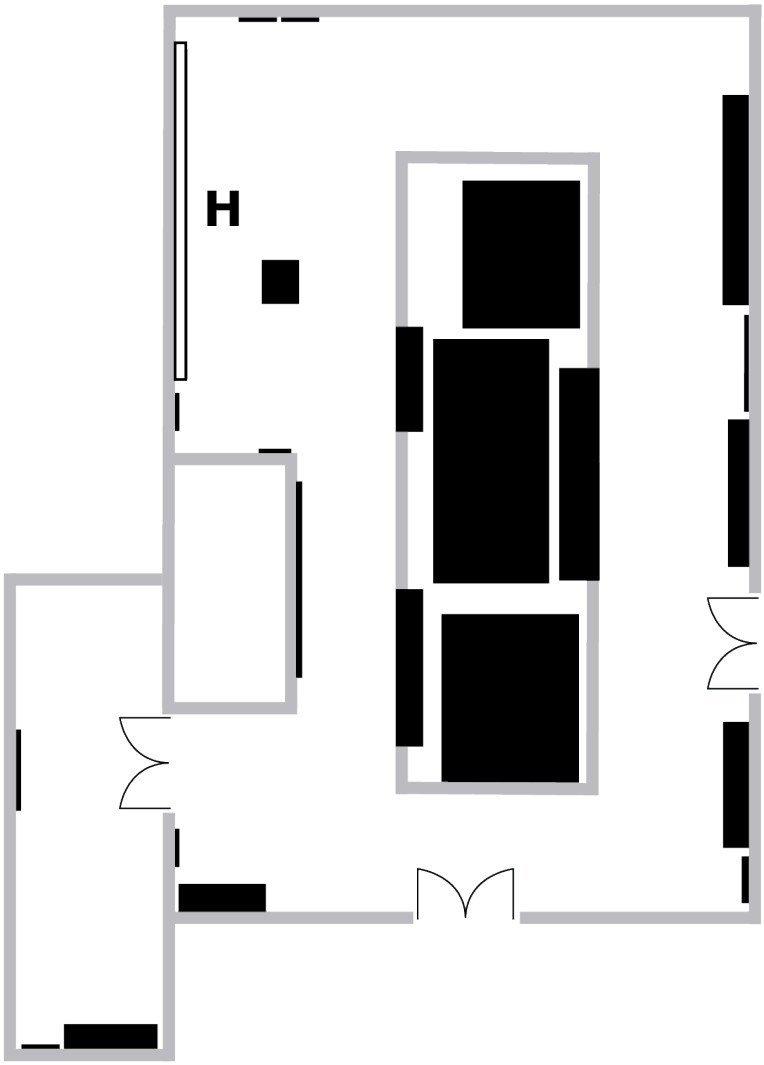
Letters in Chinese history

The earliest personal letters (written on boards and strips of wood) discovered in China date to the Qin dynasty (221–206 BC). From at least the Eastern Han (AD 25–220), letters written by educated elites were collected as examples of fine calligraphy. Chinese emperors, such as Tang Taizong 唐太宗 (reigned 626–49), were among the earliest and most prominent letter collectors.

During the Song dynasty (960–1279), letters by contemporary calligraphers and by calligraphers from earlier dynasties were compiled and published.

Exemplars and reflections of character

Letters were appreciated as exemplary samples of calligraphy and served as models for emulation and imitation of their calligraphic and literary styles. As art historian Amy McNair notes, "Typically, to contemporaries, the style is admired as sophisticated and cutting edge....while to later collectors, the style represents the epitome of the age in which it was produced." Letters were also valued for their perceived ability to reflect the personality and moral character of the author. According to Han dynasty scholar-official Yang Xiong 扬雄, "writing is the portrayal of the mind" (书，心 画 也). Thus, superior calligraphy was generally thought to be the product and mark of a virtuous person.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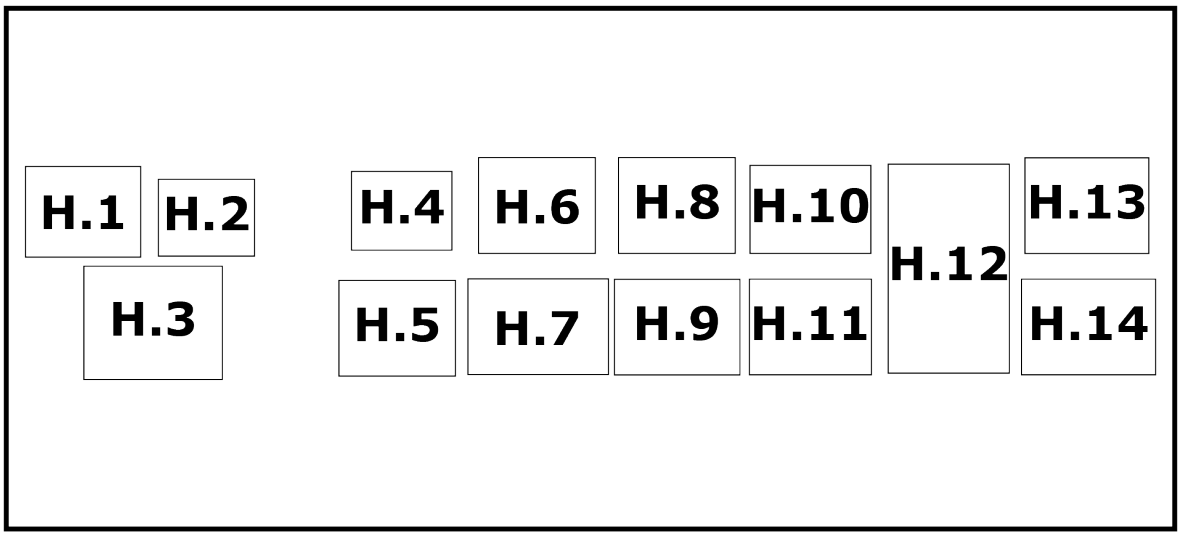
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H.14

H

The Yuan collection

The letters displayed here belong to the Yuan Shao Liang Collection. Dr Yuan Shao Liang 袁绍良 (born 1945, in Beijing), a long-term lender to ACM since 1997, is a Chinese physician and Tai Chi master currently based in Hong Kong. Dr Yuan inherited a large part of the collection from his father, Yuan Di'an 袁涤庵 (1881–1959). Yuan Di'an graduated from a technical college in Osaka and began his career as an educator. He was involved in many industrial projects during the early decades of China's Republican Era (1912–1949).

Ming and Qing treasures

A bibliophile and lover of antiquities, the late Mr Yuan was able to amass an impressive collection of scholarly materials through his wide network of artist and dealer contacts. The letters shown here, penned by some of the key personalities in the literati circles of Ming China, were selected

from over 200 Ming and Qing period letters, which are the most treasured part of the Yuan collection.

Delightful insights

They provide candid insights into the friendships and links between different scholar-officials (for instance, Wu Kuan features in three letters), as well as their skills (Fei Hong was engaged to write an epitaph for a friend) and interests (Liu Lin reveals he’s a food connoisseur). Letters penned by members of one the most influential literati families in Ming China – Wen Zhengming, his eldest son Wen Peng, and great-grandson Wen Zhenmeng – are also featured here.

All letters in this case are on loan from the Yuan Shao Liang Collection

H.1

Letter from Wen Peng 文彭 (1498–1573), recipient unknown

China, 16th century

Wen Peng was famous for carving seals, mostly in soapstone. He was the son of the artist Wen Zhengming.

H.2

Letter from painter, calligrapher, poet Wen Zhengming 文征明 (1470–1559) to Wang Guxiang 王谷祥 (1501–1568)

China, 16th century

Wen Zhengming, from Suzhou, is one of the Four Masters of Ming painting. He studied under another of the Masters, Shen Zhou, and both were gentleman-artists of the Wu School. After 1527, Wen spent his retirement years pursuing painting, poetry, reading, and socialising with his wide circle of friends.

Wang Guxiang studied painting under Wen after he retired from his official duties in the Ministry of Personnel. He is best known for his landscape and flower paintings.

H.3

Congratulatory birthday poem by artist Wen Zhenmeng 文震孟 (1574–1636)

China, first half 17th century

Wen Zhenmeng passed the civil service exams with the highest honours. An avid gardener, he was the great-grandson of Wen Zhengming.

H.4

Letter from artist Zhang Bi 张弼 (1425–1487) to scholar-official Lin Han 林瀚 (1434–1519)

China, 15th century

H.5

Letter from scholar-official Wang Ao (1450–1524) to Chen Ji 陈霁 (born 1465)

China, around 1518

From Suzhou, Wang Ao rose to the rank of Grand Secretary, one of the highest offices in the Ming government.

H.6

Letter from artist Lu Zhi 陆治 (1496–1576) to landscape painter Qian Gu 钱穀 (1509–around 1578)

China, 16th century

Lu Zhi was a student under Wen Zhengming. Born in Suzhou, later in life, he retired to the mountains of his hometown, where he gardened, wrote poetry, and painted.

H.7

Letter from scholar-official Liu Lin 刘麟 (1474–1561), recipient unknown

China, late 15th or 16th century

H.8

Letter from poet and calligrapher Shao Bao 邵宝 (1460–1527) to Yu Tai 俞泰 (died 1531)

China, 1516

Shao Bao was an official in the Bureau of Rites, which oversaw ceremonies at the imperial court.

H.9

Letter from Fei Hong 费宏 (1468–1535), recipient unknown

China, 15th or 16th century

H.10

Letter from Qian Pu 钱溥 (1408–1488), recipient unknown

China, 15th century

Qian was born near Shanghai and worked as a scholar-official in Nanjing.

H.11

Letter from Xiao Xian 萧显 (1432–1506) to Lu Yi 陆鈰 (1439–1498)

China, second half of 15th century

H.12

Letter from Shen Zhou 沈周 (1427–1509) to Wu Kuan 吴宽 (1435–1504)

China, 1497

Shen Zhou was from a family of wealthy scholar-officials, but he never took the civil service exams himself. Instead, he devoted his life to art and contemplation of nature. The Wu School of painting grew out of the example set by him and his colleagues – dedicated to personal enrichment and gentlemanly artistic pursuits,

outside the scholar-official career path. Shen is one of the Four Masters of Ming painting.

H.13

Letter from Wu Kuan 吴宽 (1435–1504) to scholar-official Wu Wendu 吴文度 (1441–1510)

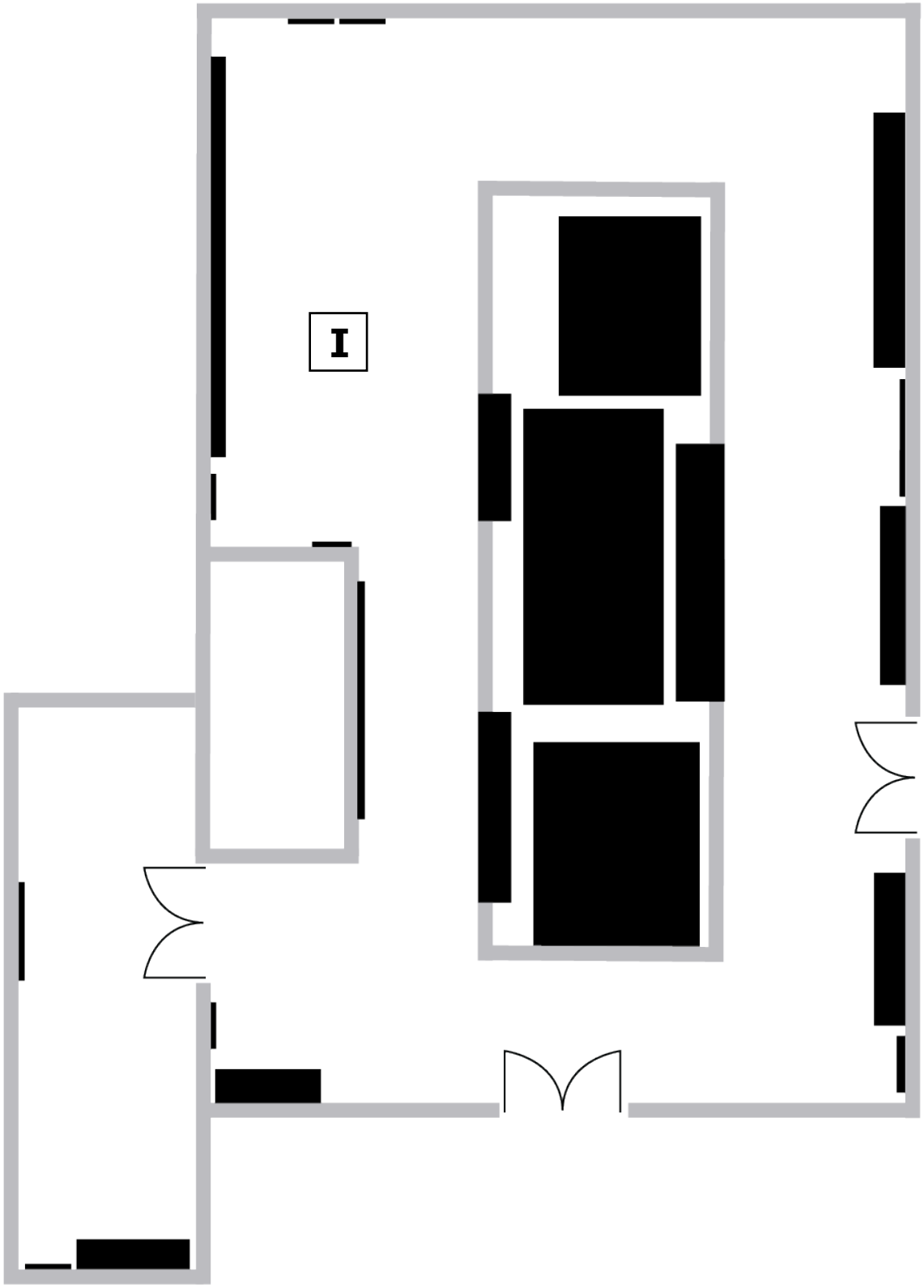
China, second half of 15th or early 16th century

Wu Kuan placed first in the civil examinations in 1472, and had a long government career, serving at the Bureau of Rites in Beijing, among other posts. Originally from Suzhou, he is another poet-calligrapher associated with the Wu School.

H.14

Letter from Wang Wen 王汶 (1433–1489) to Wu Kuan 吴宽 (1435–1504)

China, second half of 15th century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Ritual food vessel (gui 簋)

China, Shaanxi province, around 10th century BC

Bronze

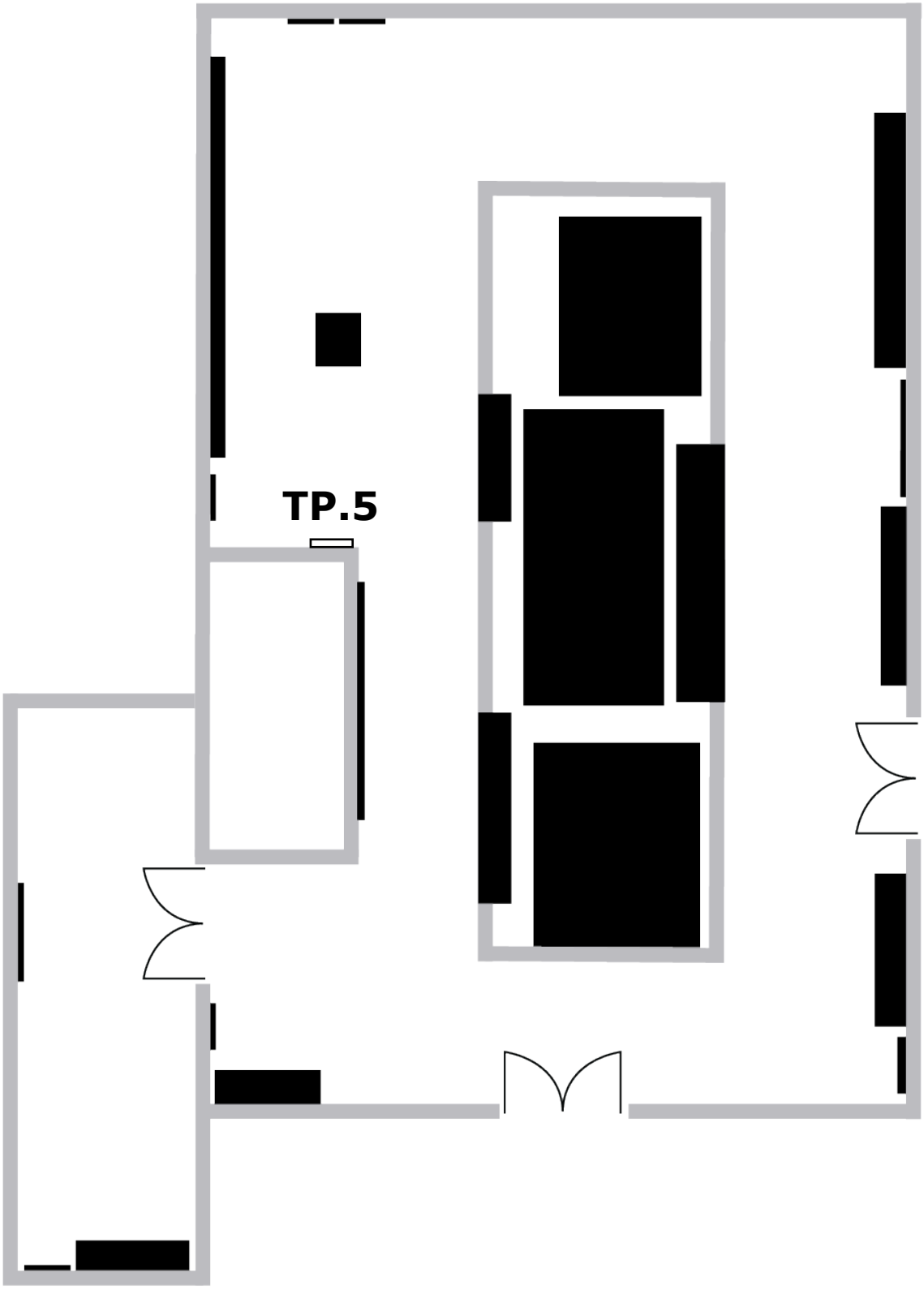
2012-00391

Inscribed on the interior: 芮公為旂宮寶簋 (The Duke of Rui made this precious gui vessel for the Qi palace)

Bronze vessels were used in ancient China for ceremonies to honour ancestors and gods. Vessels of this type were used to offer sacrificed animals. Rulers performed their ancestral ceremonies before the court. The inscription on this Western Zhou vessel identifies it the property of the duke of Rui, a region in present-day Shaanxi province.

This round vessel sits on a square base, which gives it an architectural grandeur. The circular bowl rising above a square platform recalls the

symbols of heaven and earth in Chinese cosmology.


TP.5

TP.5

The Foundations of a Stable Society

Confucianism

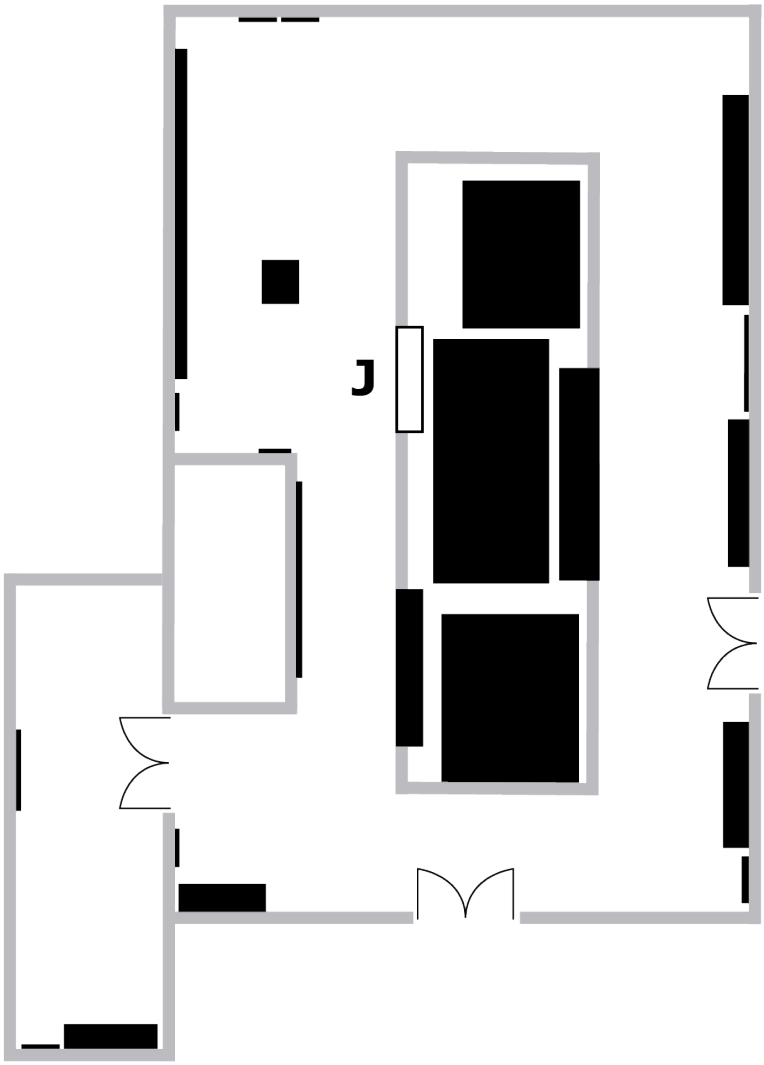
Confucius lived through a period of civil war and political corruption at the end of the Zhou dynasty. In an attempt to stabilize society, he advocated a system of rites and music (礼乐制度). His essential teaching revolved around “five human relationships” 五伦, based on benevolence for parents, siblings, spouses, friends, and rulers. These ideas are recorded in texts written by his followers and historians after his death. Confucianism continues to play a strong role in China, Japan, Korea, and many overseas Chinese communities.

The rise and fall of Confucianism

While Confucianism has exerted a strong hold on China, there were periods when it fell out of favour. The First Emperor 始皇帝, who unified China in 221 BC, was reported to have burned Confucian books and tortured scholars who

resisted his reforms. The following Han dynasty, however, enshrined Confucianism as the state philosophy.

Neo-Confucianism 理学 became prominent in the Song and Ming dynasties as a rational movement that rejected folk superstition. Around 1900, a new Confucianism absorbed elements of Western philosophy as a means of modernizing traditional Chinese society.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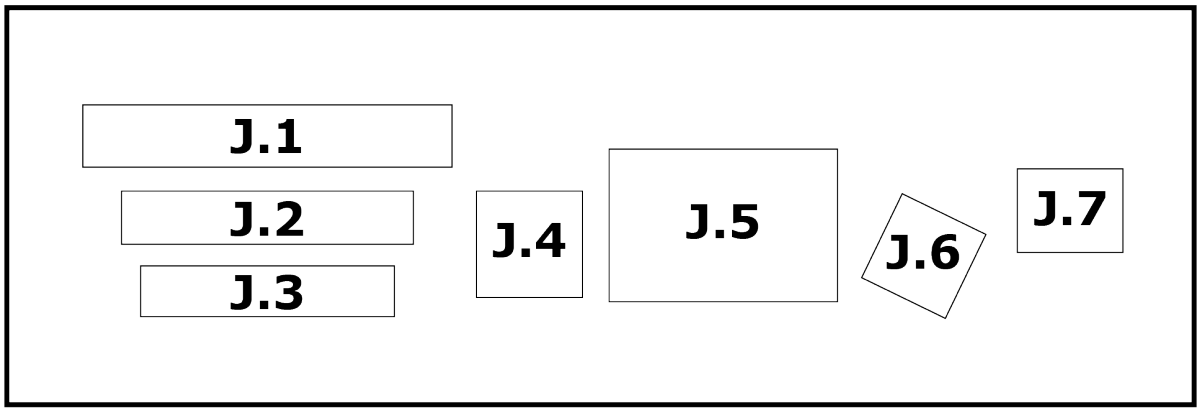
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J.1

Pair of flutes

China, 1644–1911 (Qing dynasty)

Bamboo

2009-01531

J.2

Flute

China, mid-17th century

Porcelain

2002-00078

J.3

Zither-shaped ink rest

China, 19th century

Lacquered wood

1994-05392

J.4

Inksticks: zither, flute, scrolls

China, 1644–1911 (Qing dynasty)

Ink

On loan from the Yuan Shao Liang Collection

J.5

Three-tiered box

China, 15th century

Lacquered wood

2011-00613

This large box belongs to a type of carved lacquer known as tixi, literally, “carved rhinoceros” in Chinese. Many layers of lacquer in brown and red were applied and then carved deeply to reveal the layers.

J.6

Box: scrolls and albums

China, 18th century

Lacquer with mother-of-pearl and bone inlay

This lacquer box inlaid with bone and mother-of-pearl is made to simulate prized possessions of a scholar-artist. This fool-the-eye illusionism was intended to delight and fascinate the viewer, and invite close looking.

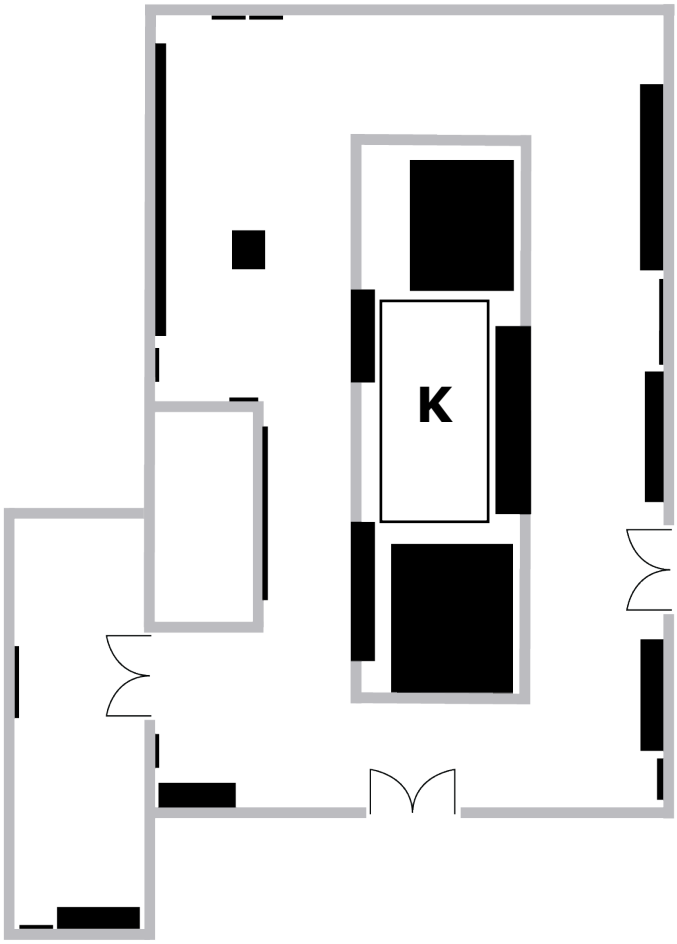
J.7

Covered box

China, 14th century

Lacquer with mother-of-pearl inlay

2014-00948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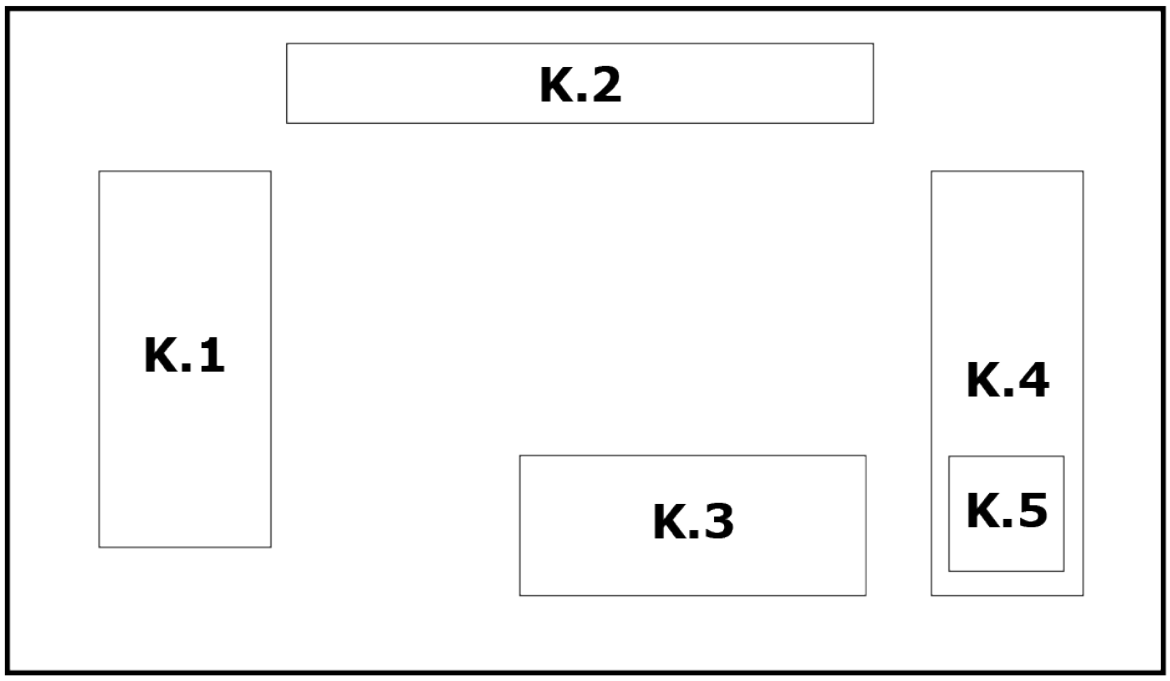
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Fujian Furniture

The simple designs of Ming furniture created in the Jiangnan 江南 region of southern China were not only aesthetically appealing, but also very practical. Tables and chairs could easily be taken apart for transport.

Furniture made in Fujian province was inspired by these examples, but was made in dark wood native to the region, for example, “chicken-wing” wood 鸡翅木.

K.1

Daybed

China, 19th century
Longyan wood
Gift of Richard Loo Leong Choi and family in memory of their parents, Mr and Mrs Loo Choon Hean
1999-01398

K.2

Couplet in running script

Pan Shou 潘受 (1911–1999)

Singapore, 1988

Ink and colour on paper

2011-01726

Born in Fujian, Pan Shou moved to Singapore in 1929 to be a deputy editor of the newspaper Lat Pau 叻报. He was principal of Tao Nan School and a key supporter of the Chinese-language Nanyang University.

A renowned calligrapher, Pan started by emulating Tang-dyansty examples. His famous running script was stylistically inherited from He Shaoji 何绍基 (1799–1873), a scholar-official who once worked in Fujian. Pan Shou's calligraphy remains on the masthead of the Singapore daily newspaper Lianhe Zaobao 联合早报.

Couplet

He Shaoji 何绍基 (1799–1873)

China, 19th century

Ink and colour on paper

This object has been adopted by Lam Soon Cannery Private Limited

1993-00017

Text:

How green is the shade beneath the willows, shrouding the zither.

Red petals float in the air and flutter gently to the inkstone.

Zizhen, He Shaoji

柳陰兮綠籠琴岳

花片飛紅點硯池

子貞 何紹基

Couplet in combined regular, running, and cursive scripts

Tan Tsze Chor 陈之初 (1911–1983)

Singapore, 1979

Ink and colour on paper

Gift of Tan family in memory of their late father, Dr Tan Tsze Chor

2002-00766

The Singaporean collector and calligrapher Tan Tsze Chor received his early education in China. Tan used coloured inks and combined various types of scripts to create innovative calligraphies. Many of Tan's works are stamped with seals carved by Qi Baishi 齐白石.

Text:

Every citizen bears responsibility for the life and death of the nation. Tan Tsze Chor

國家興亡，匹夫有責。陳之初

K.3

Two chairs and table

China, Fujian province, 19th century

Blackwood

1999-02651-001, 002, 003

K.4

Trestle table

China, Fujian province, 16th or 17th century

Huanghuali wood

2000-05592

K.5

Miniature cabinet

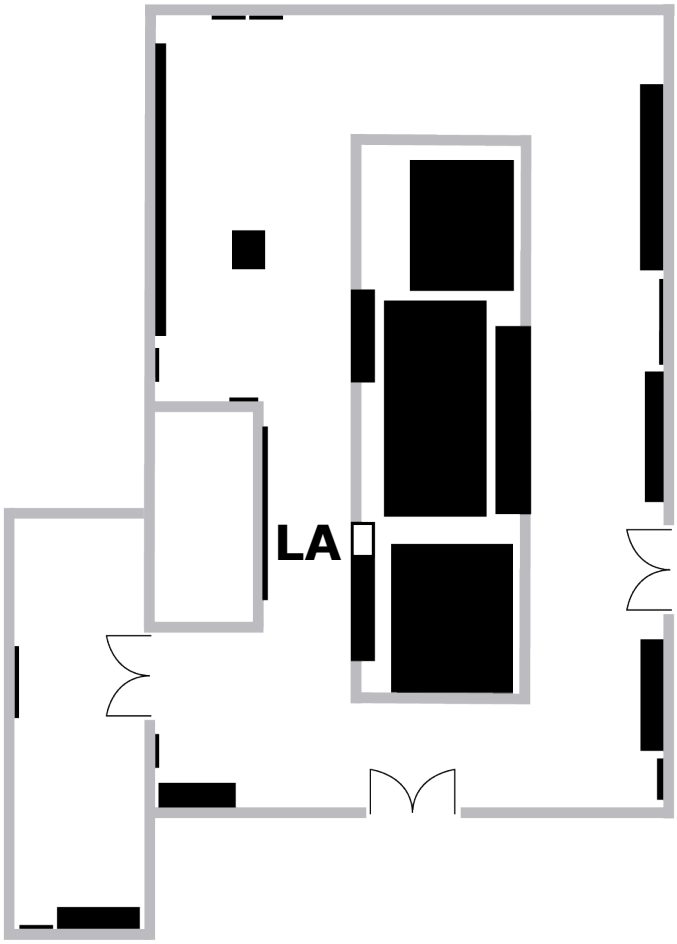
China, Fujian province, 18th century

Longyan wood, brass

2009-03608

Cabinets like this were probably used to store seals and other small objects. The wavy grain of the wood enhances its appeal. The doors open to

reveal shelves and drawers inside. The use of longyan wood, as well as the rectangular lock-plates and pulls, indicates that the piece originated from Fujian province. Most furniture and small objects made of longyan come from there.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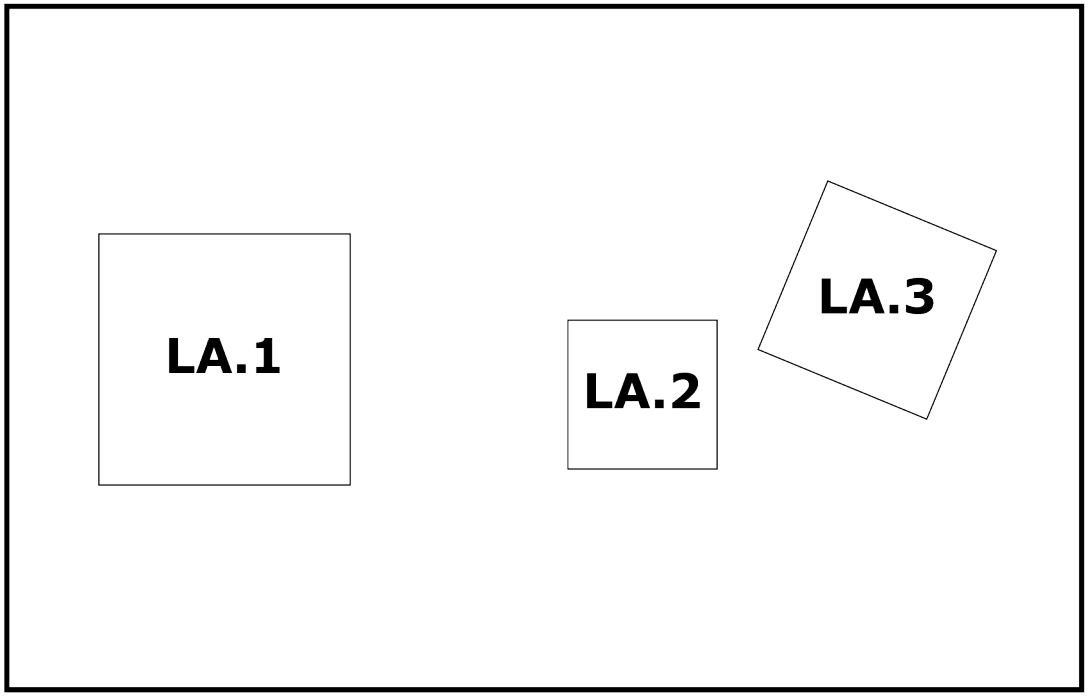
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LA.1

Two ink seals

Qi Baishi 齐白石 (1864–1957)

China, 20th century

Chicken-blood stone and Shoushan stone

From the Xiang Xue Zhuang Collection in memory of Dr Tan Tze Chor

2005-00296, 2005-00294

The seal carver Qi Baishi was praised for his rough strokes and strong compositions. This seal was often used by Tan Tsze Chor on his calligraphy. The seal on the right was often used by Tan Tze Chor on his calligraphy.

A. Inscribed: 兆藩 (Zhaofan) and 白石 (Baishi) on the side

B. Inscribed: 陈之初印 (stamp of Tan Tsze Chor) and 白石 (Baishi) on the side [not pictured here]

LA.2

Seal with cord

China, early Qing dynasty (1644–1911)

Jade

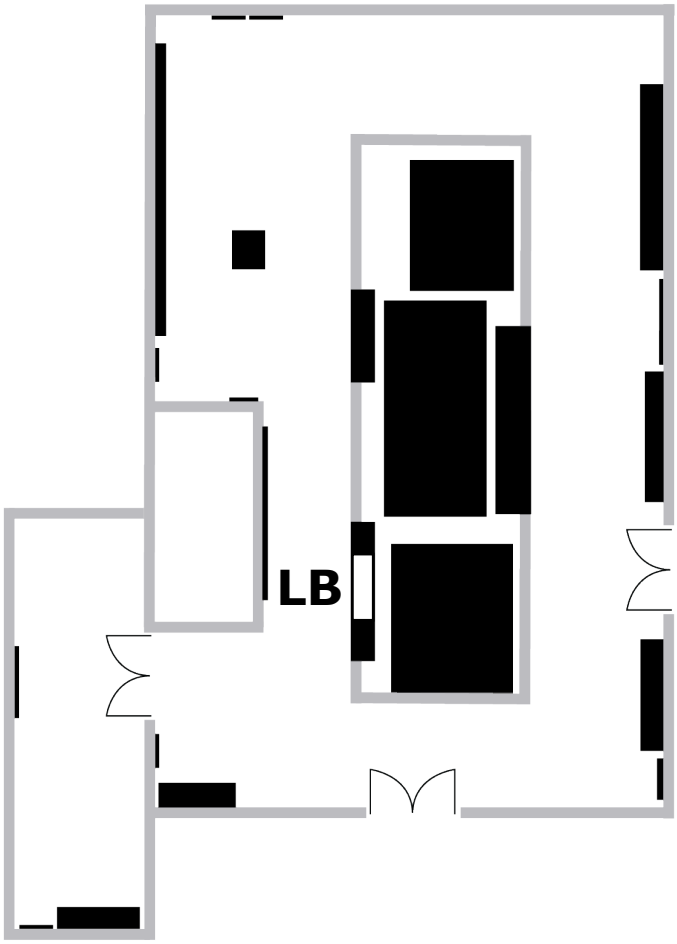
On loan from the Yuan Shao Liang Collection

LA.3

"Ba Bao" (Eight Treasures) ink paste container with box

Porcelain, with carved wooden box

On loan from the Yuan Shao Liang Collection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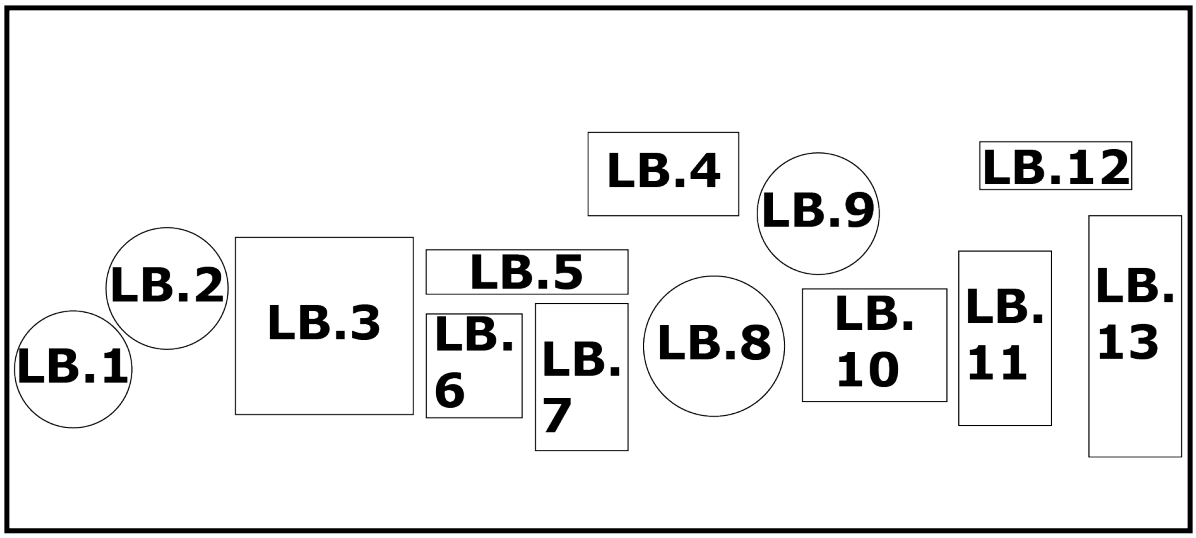
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LB.11
LB.12
LB.13

LB.1

Water dropper

China, 18th or 19th century

Gourd, boxwood, metal

On loan from the Yuan Shao Liang Collection

LB.2

Persimmon-shaped water pot

China, 18th or 19th century

Gourd, boxwood, metal

2013-00568

LB.3

Brushes

China, 19th century

Animal hair, wood, bamboo

Brushes with soft tips, typically made of goat hair, were more suitable for writing characters with thicker lines or applying coloured washes to landscape paintings.

The bigger brush, called doubi 斗笔, was used for writing extra-large characters. The short, thick handle allowed it to be gripped and wielded easily.

LB.4

Ink rest with coiled dragons

China, 18th century

Ivory

1997-02603

LB.5

Inkstick with dragon design

Mark of Xin Yi Zhai

LB.6

Inkstick with ding design

Mark of Xin Yi Zhai

LB.7

Inkstick inscribed with "bai dhou tu" characters

Mark of Hu Kaiwen

LB.8

Round ink cake with dragon

Mark of Cheng Junfang

LB.9

Ink cake (round w characters)

LB.10

Three inksticks: handscroll, inkstone, gilded

China, 18th century

Soot, animal glue, gold and blue pigments

LB.11

Inkstick in the form of a ruler

Mark of Hu Kaiwen

LB.12

Paperweight shaped as a lion

China, 1550–1644

Brass

2000-05642

LB.13

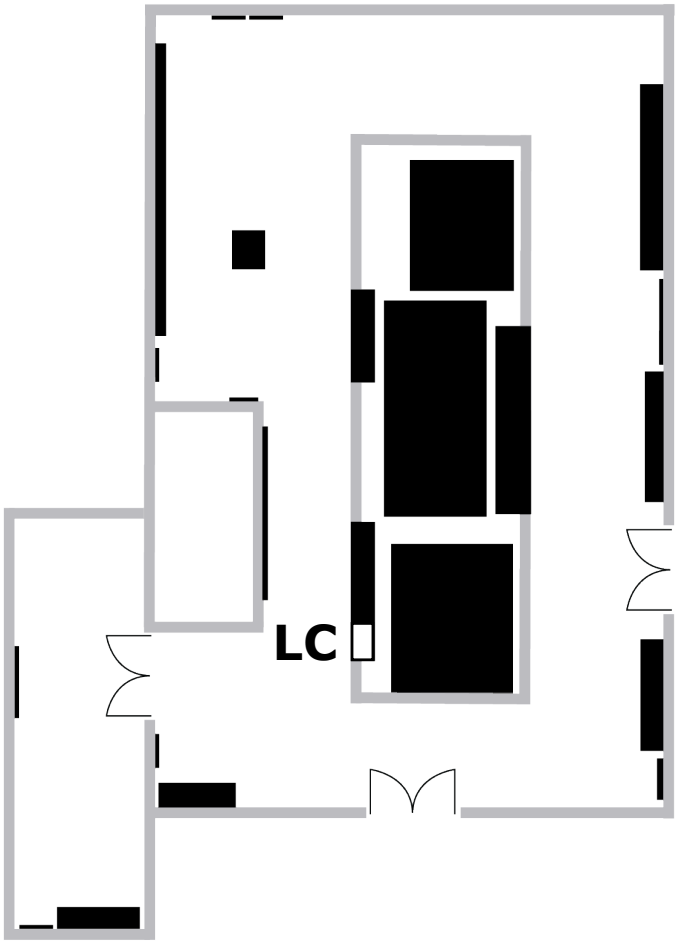
Wrist rest

China, 18th century

Bamboo

On loan from the Yuan Shao Liang Collection

Wrist rests are designed to support the forearm and elbow of a writer to allow free movement of the wrist. They also prevent the wrist or the forearm from smudging ink already on the paper.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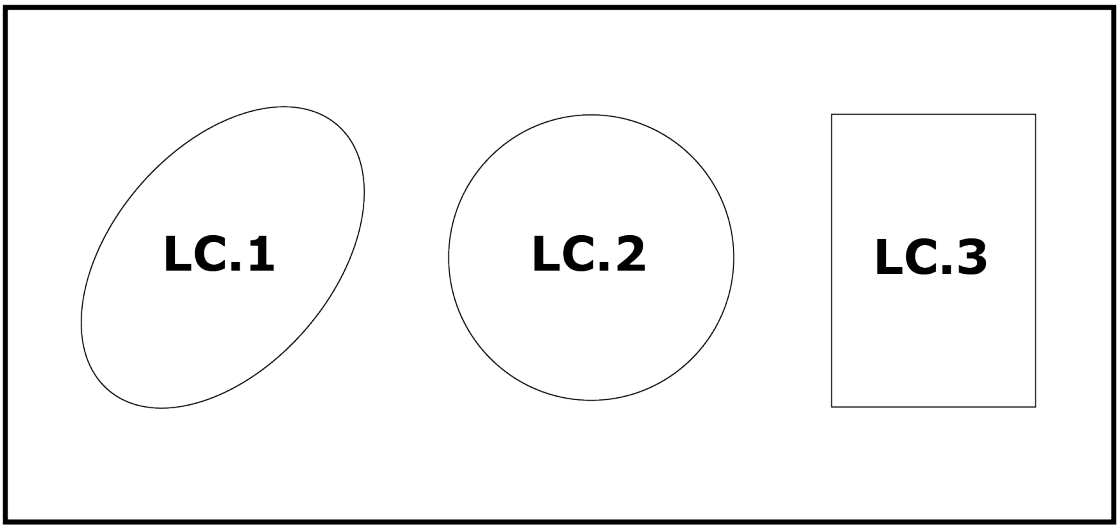
LC.1
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LC.3

LC.1

Inkstone

China, Guangdong, 19th century

Duan stone

1996-01768

Mined since the Tang dynasty (618–907), Duan stone comes from Duanzhou 端州 (present-day Zhaoqing city, Guangdong). Duan inkstones have been deemed one of the Four Famous Inkstones of China. The dense, smooth texture of duan 端 stone allowed ink to be ground evenly. It was also known for its dark purplish-brown hue and yellowish or greenish inclusions called "eyes". The eyes on this inkstone have been cleverly incorporated into the overall design to depict the shells of the tortoises.

LC.2

Inkstone with swimming creatures

China, Song dynasty (960–1279)

Stone

2011-01515

The idea of dragons encircling and protecting an orb or jewel may have had Buddhist associations in the Song period.

LC.3

Inkstone with fitted box

China, Kangxi period (1662–1722)

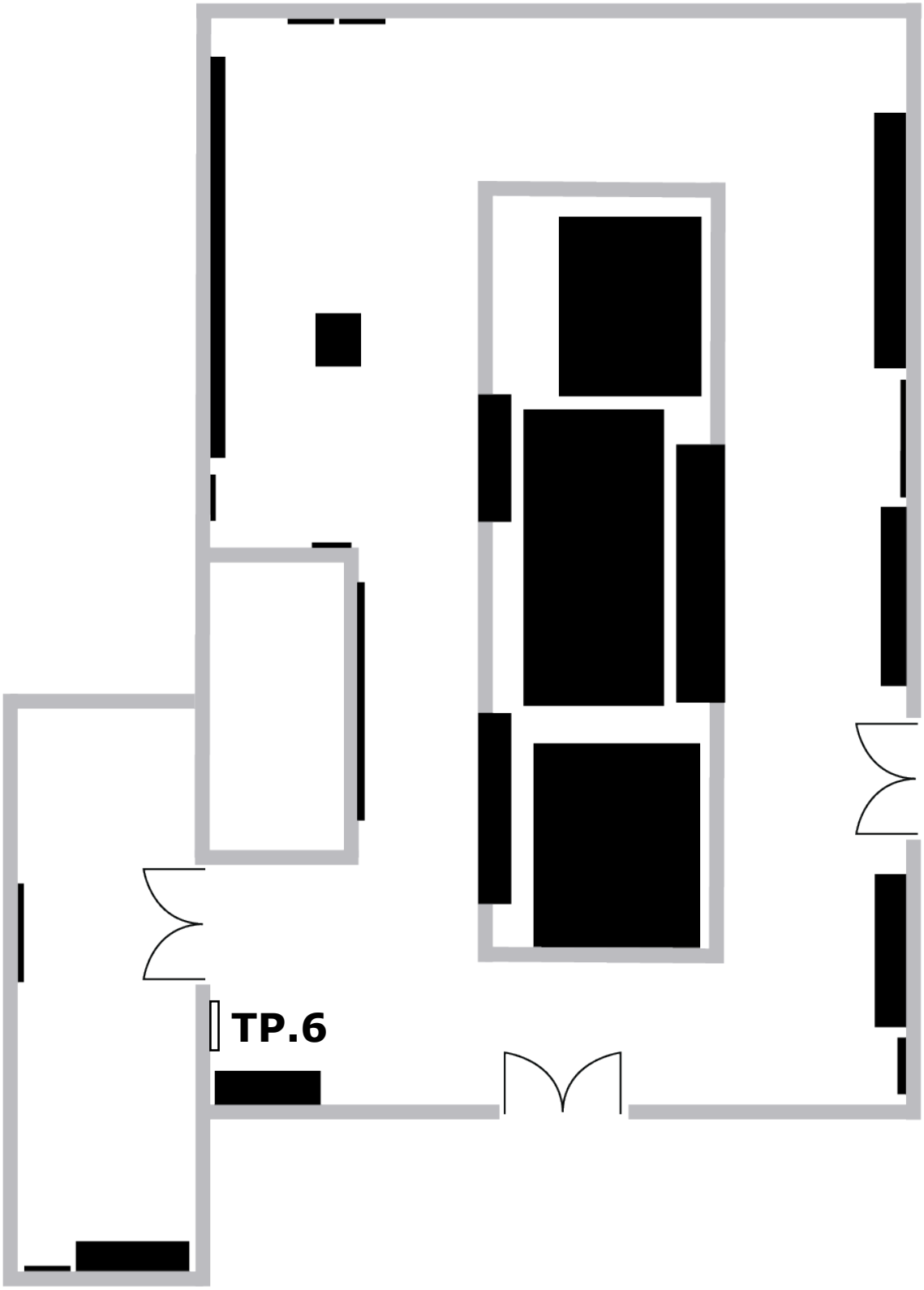
Songhua stone, zitan wood

1999-01395

Songhua 松花 inkstones became an imperial stationery item after the Kangxi emperor had the material fashioned into inkstones in the late 17th century. In addition to its fine texture and beautiful green hue, the Qing emperors favoured

this stone for its associations with their Manchu homeland.

The sloping ink reservoir features a carp and qing 磬 (an ancient Chinese percussion instrument), a motif which alludes to the phrase “jiqing youyu” 吉庆有余, signifying an abundance of good fortune. The reverse of the inkstone is carved with a proverb rendered in the emperor’s calligraphic script – “以静为用，是以永年” (quiet is the quality leading to strength and eternity).

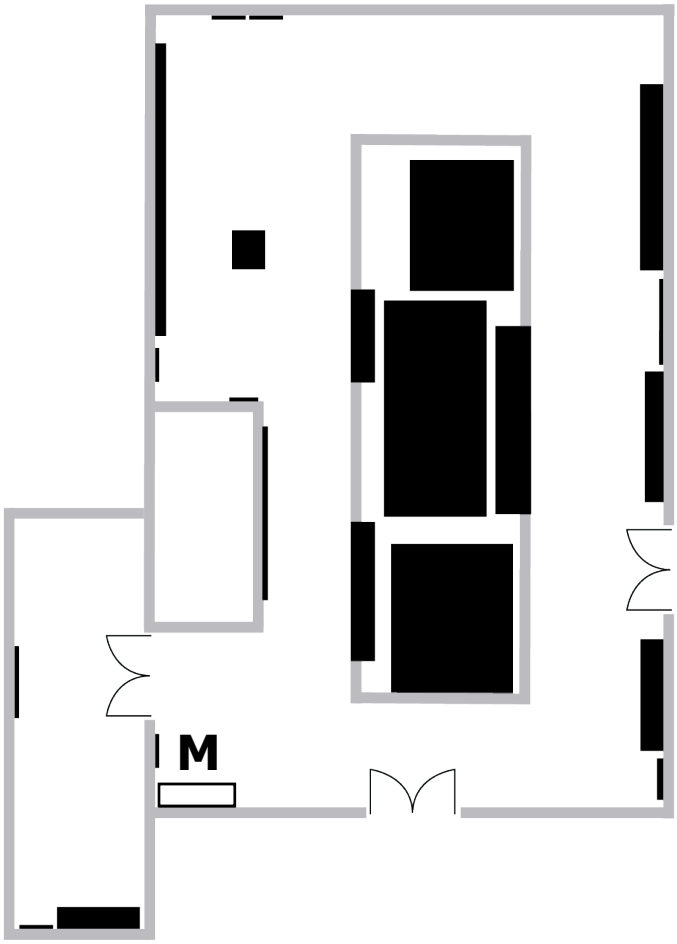

TP.6

TP.6

The Rediscovery of China’s Ancient Past

Revivals of the ancient past have long been an artistic tradition in China. The study of archaic objects, especially the inscriptions on bronzes and steles, was an important scholarly activity in the late Ming and Qing periods. Ritual bronzes from the Shang and Zhou dynasties were occasionally unearthed. The inscriptions on these bronzes were carefully interpreted by scholars as new sources for Chinese history.

The shapes and designs of ancient vessels were imitated in later periods, especially in the Song, Ming, and Qing dynasties. Archaic bronzes were often reinvented in different materials, such as porcelain and jade. The inscriptions were captured through rubbings and imitated in calligraphy. This demonstrates respect for Chinese history and the celebration of ancient ideals.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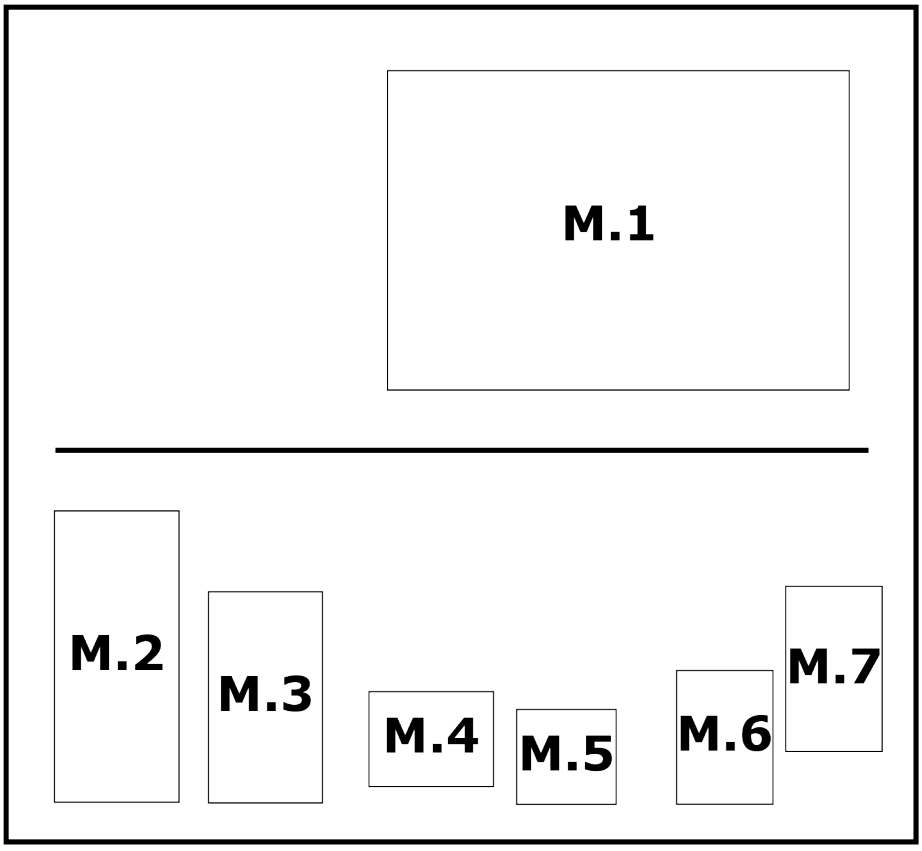
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M.7

M.1

Paintings from the album Illustrations of Bells and Dings 钟鼎图

Huang Shiling 黄士陵 (1849–1908)

China, 19th century

Chinese ink and colour on paper

1996-01712, 1996-01715

M.2

Vase with birds and flowers

China, 17th century

Porcelain

2002-00084

M.3

Wine drinking vessel

China, Henan province, 12th or 11th century BC (late Shang dynasty)

Bronze

2000-08201

M.4

Incense burner with stand

China, 1628

Bronze

Inscribed: 天啟八年漳府甘泉厝松竹坊大道公廟正殿供養 (8th year of Tianqi, enshrined in the main hall of Dadaogong Temple, Songzhu lane, Ganquan village, Zhang prefecture)

1997-02598

This small incense burner was probably used on a scholar's table. The design is based on the bronze vessels of the Zhou dynasty (around 1046–256 BC). Rituals of this period were idealized by Confucianists.

M.5

Censer

China, 17th century

Porcelain

1995-02051

M.6

Wine drinking vessel (jia 斝)

China, Henan province, around 1600–1400 BC

(early Shang dynasty)

Bronze

1996-00471

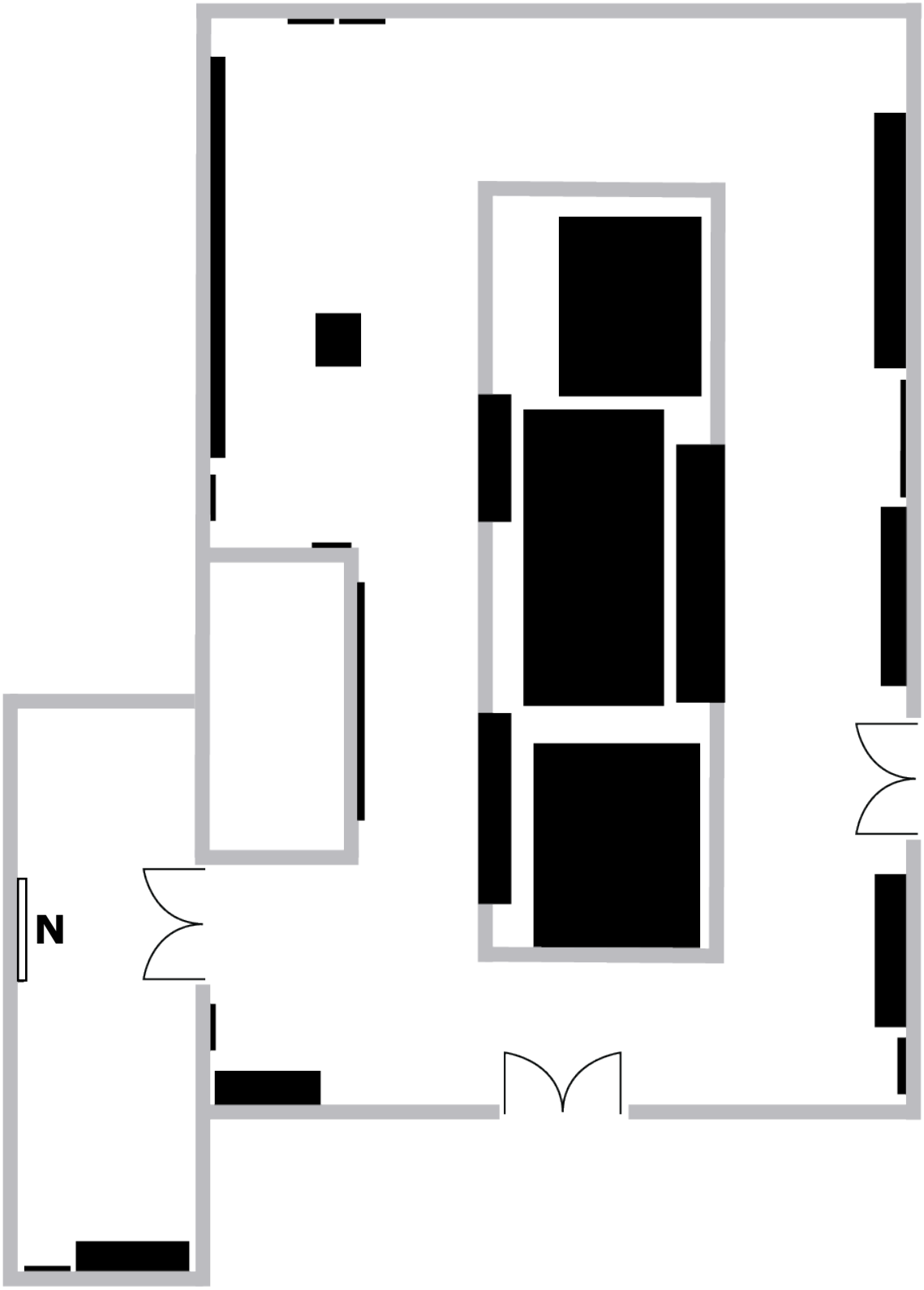
M.7

Wine vessel

China, 18th century

Bronze

1995-02364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Sarcophagus panel: Stories of filial piety

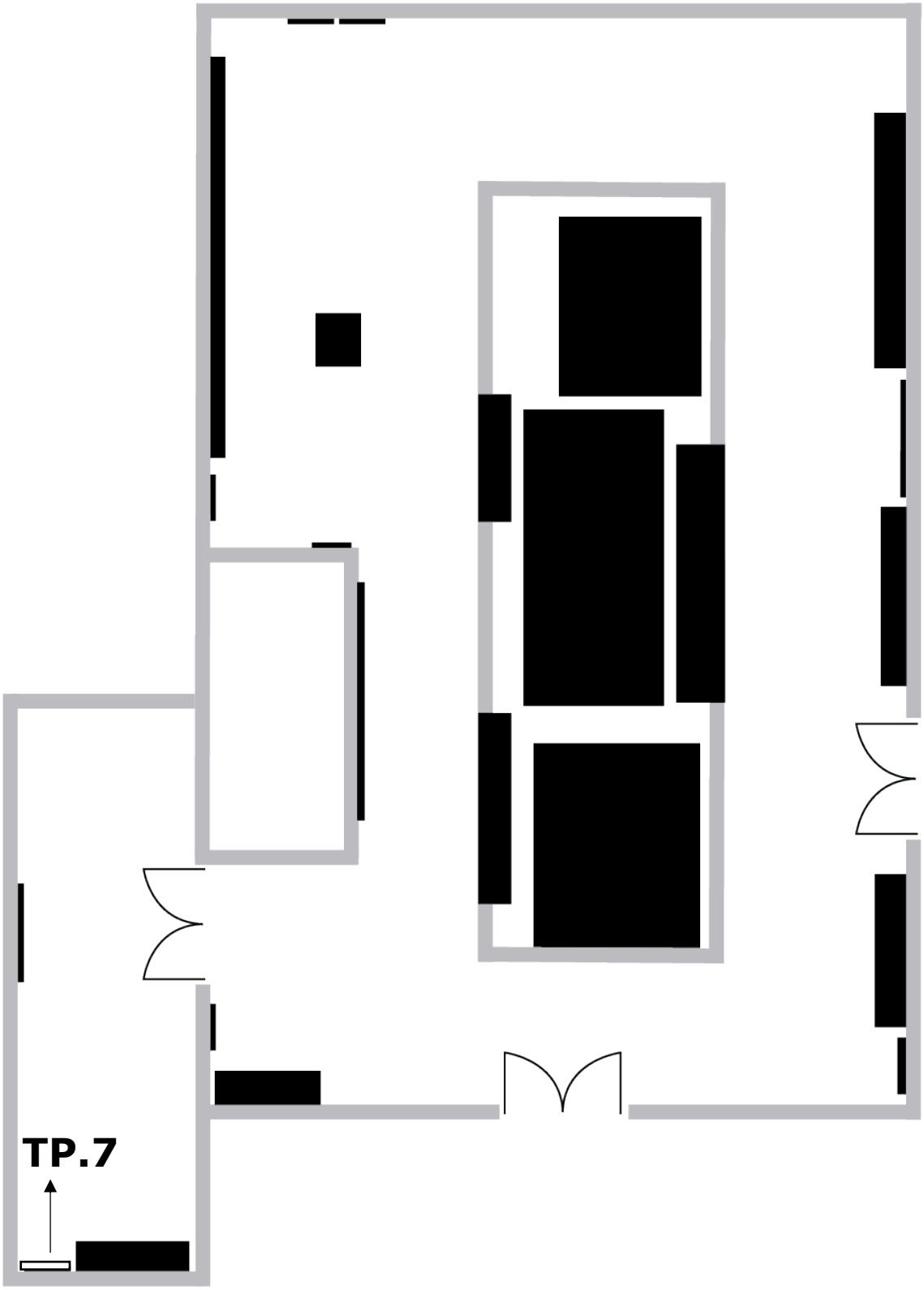
China, 386–533 (Northern Wei dynasty)

Stone

1995-02507

This stele is carved in low relief with four scenes of filial piety. On the right is the story of Guo Ju 郭巨 who tried to save his mother from starvation by burying his only son, an act moved the heavens. This story, and other examples of filial piety were later collected in the 24 Paragons of Filial Piety 二十四孝.

Between the Han and Tang dynasties (2nd–6th century), narratives of human relations were further developed. Hierarchy seen in these decorations reveals social customs and the Confucian beliefs such as filial piety.


TP.7

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Rituals in Ancient China

Jade and bronze objects were used in early ritual practices in China. Their ritual characteristics contributed to the formation of the ideas of Confucius in the 5th century BC.

Jade

Because of its beauty and hardness, jade has been a highly prized material in China from as early as 5000 BC. Jade objects of great sophistication have been discovered in ancient aristocratic graves. Some forms are based on tools and weapons, although the jade versions were too fragile to serve any practical purpose. These jade objects probably played a symbolic role in ceremonies. Even in later periods, the translucence of jade was associated with the ideals of benevolence and virtue.

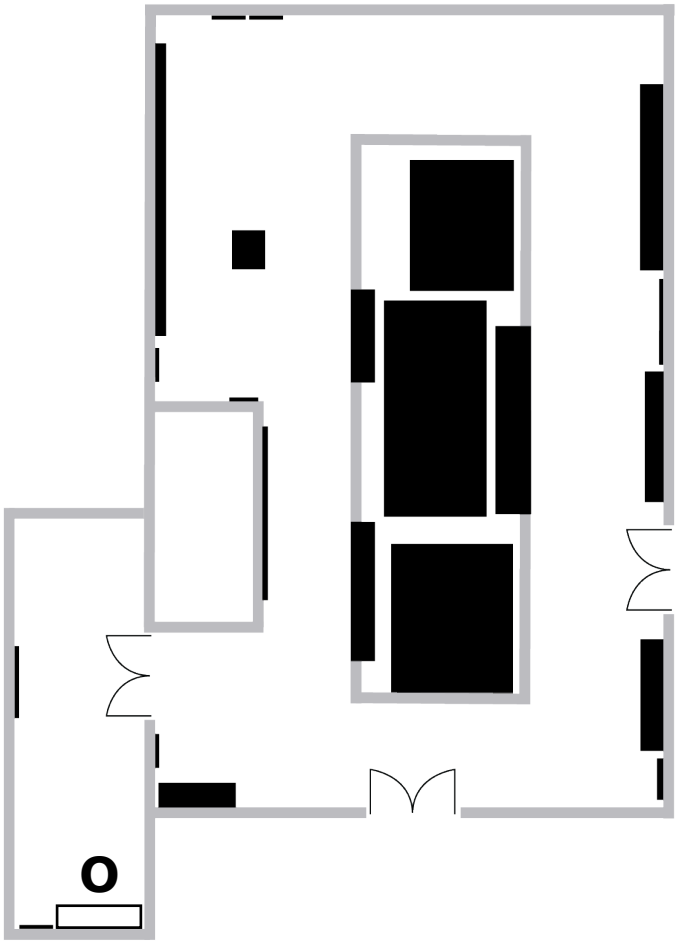
Bronze

In the Shang dynasty (around 1600–1046 BC)

and Zhou dynasty (around 1046–256 BC), elaborate vessels cast in bronze were used for ceremonies honouring ancestors and marking important annual events. Vessels of different designs were used for food, grain, or wine. The significance of these rituals, including the type of animals to be sacrificed and which foods were served, is described in later texts. Confucius praised these ceremonies as reinforcing social harmony.

Spirit animals and figures

In the Han dynasty (206 BC–AD 220), special powers were ascribed to certain animals and figures, including mythical hybrid beasts. Animals connected the real world to the spirit world in quests for immortality and longevity.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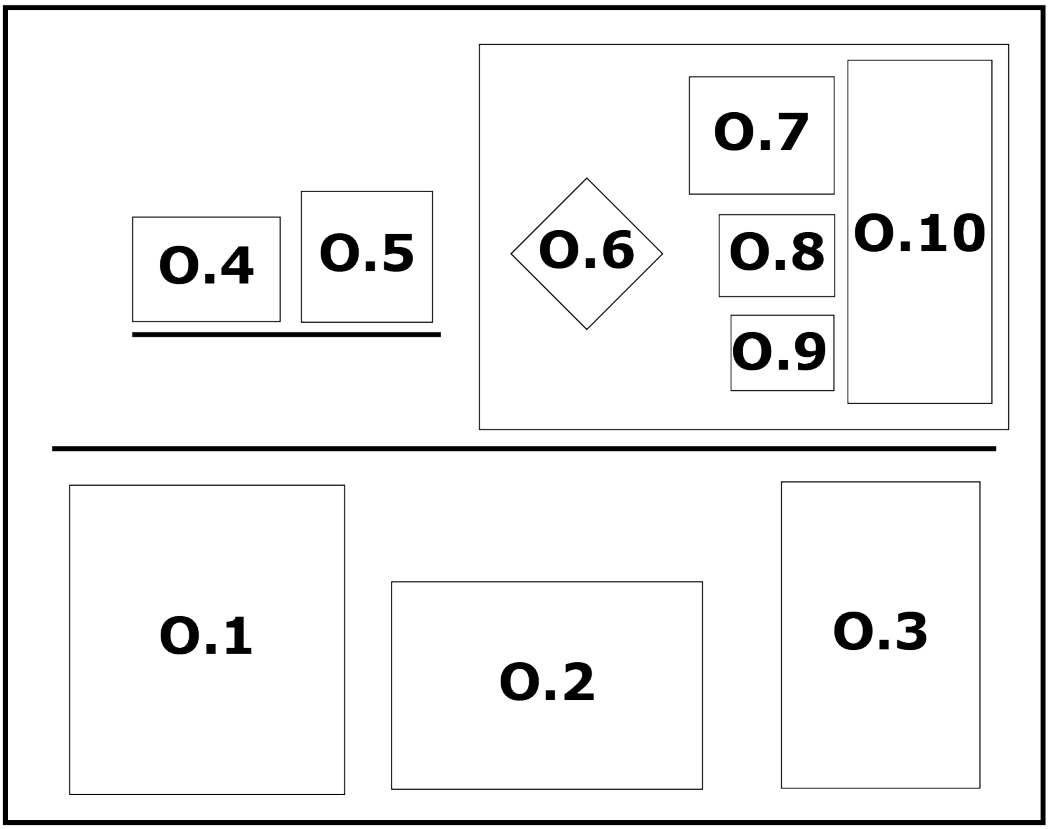
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Ritual wine container

China, 475–221 BC (Warring States Period)

Bronze

1996-00470

O.2

Ritual water basin

China, 770–476 BC (Spring and Autumn Period)

Bronze

1996-00469

O.3

Vase decorated with animals

China, 206 BC–AD 9 (Western Han dynasty)

Bronze

2011-01614

Animals and mythical beasts can be seen frolicking in the mountains. Such creatures were perceived as omens of good luck and fortune in the Han dynasty. The fine inscribed decoration

indicates that this vessel was a burial object for an aristocrat.

O.4

Water dropper

China, 3rd century

Bronze

2015-00497

This bronze is cast in the shape of a mythical animal called a bixie 辟邪, which has features of lions and eagles. These imaginary animals probably originated in the art of Central Asia. This object was used in calligraphy. The larger cylinder probably held water, while the other was used to shape a brush.

O.5

Kneeling figure

China, 206 BC–AD 220 (Han dynasty)

Bronze

2011-00614

The exaggerated facial features of this figure suggest that it was made in southwestern China. It probably once supported a lamp.

O.6

Ceremonial tube (cong 琮)

Northwestern China, around 3000 to 2000 BC

Jade

2015-00391

Ancient jade cylinders, congs 琮, were probably used for rituals dedicated to heaven. The combination of the circular hole within a square signifies the heaven and the earth, which echoes the form of the Western Zhou gui vessel shown in the main part of the gallery.

O.7

Ceremonial axe

Northwestern China, around 2000 BC

Jade

2015-00392

O.8

Ceremonial axe

Southeastern China, Liangzhu culture, 3000 to 2000 BC

Stone

2015-00390

O.9

Ceremonial axe

Southeastern China, Liangzhu culture, 3000 to 2000 BC

Jade

A-2105

O.10

Slender ceremonial axe recycled from a Neolithic blade

Northwestern China, around 6500 to 1700 BC

Jade

2015-00389