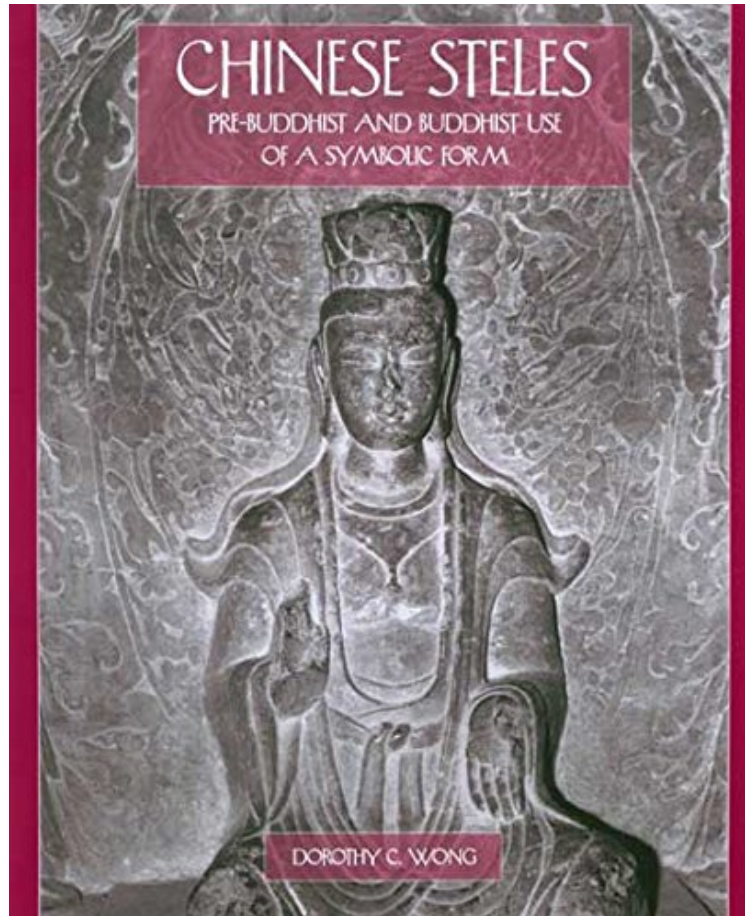


## Chinese Steles: Pre-Buddhist and Buddhist Use of a Symbolic Form

*Dorothy C. Wong*

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#816616 in Books 2004-09-30 2004-09-30 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.60 x .74 x 8.30l, 1.90 #File Name: 082482783X248 pages | File size: 67.Mb

**Dorothy C. Wong : Chinese Steles: Pre-Buddhist and Buddhist Use of a Symbolic Form** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Chinese Steles: Pre-Buddhist and Buddhist Use of a Symbolic Form:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Classic text on Chinese Steles By PBJWA stunning text that introduces the role Chinese and Buddhist steles have played in the history of religion in China. Exceedingly well-written and easy-to-understand with beautifully illustrated examples that are not only relevant but enable readers to explore for themselves the details and motifs of Chinese steles. Professor Wong first introduces Chinese steles, describing their roots in marking spaces, as well as the various shapes and purposes steles served. Although a Chinese art form since the 1C CE, they then proved to be a valuable vehicle in the 5-6C for early Buddhist societies (yiyi) seeking a platform to express their devotion. Examples from Dunhuang, Maijishan, Luoyang, Datong, and other Buddhist centres illustrate the regional variations and emergence of Mahayana Buddhist motifs. This is not a text for the lay reader but a very valuable reference work for any student interested in Chinese and/or Buddhist art. Wong has studied hundreds of steles and shares her findings generously throughout, giving us dates for the popularity of the

"10,000 Buddha motif" (late 5C, early 6C), when the familiar Buddhist triads depicted began to enlarge to 5, 7, and 9 figures (mid-6C on), when the 'dual Buddhas' (Sakyamuni and Prabhutaratna) begin to appear together as described in the 11th chapter of the Lotus Sutra (470s), etc. There are hundreds of volumes on Chinese paintings, sculpture, jade, gardens, furniture, but few that cover as thoroughly yet simply, professionally and eloquently their subject matter, as this excellent volume.

Buddhist steles represent an important subset of early Chinese Buddhist art that flourished during the Northern and Southern Dynasties period (386-581). More than two hundred Chinese Buddhist steles are known to have survived. Their brilliant imagery has long captivated scholars, yet until now the Buddhist stele as a unique art form has received little scholarly attention. Dorothy Wong rectifies that insufficiency by providing in this well-illustrated volume the first comprehensive investigation of this group of Buddhist monuments. She traces the ancient roots of the Chinese stele tradition and investigates the process by which Chinese steles were adapted for Buddhist use. She arranges the known corpus of Buddhist steles into broad chronological and regional groupings and analyzes not only their form and content but also the nexus of complex issues surrounding this art form from cultural symbolism to the interrelations between religious doctrine and artistic expression, economic production, patronage, and the synthesis of native and foreign art styles. In her analysis of Buddhism's dialogue with native traditions, Wong demonstrates how the Chinese artistic idiom planted the seeds for major achievements in figural and landscape arts in the ensuing Sui and Tang periods.

An exceptional work, useful for those unfamiliar with the genre of steles yet thorough enough to satisfy a scholarly need for depth ... Extremely thorough in its analysis and clear in its approach-- "CAA.reviews" An elegant volume, amply illustrated, and the photographs are on the whole very clear, carefully placed in the text, and well elucidated-- "H-Buddhism" An exceptional work, useful for those unfamiliar with the genre of steles yet thorough enough to satisfy a scholarly need for depth ... Extremely thorough in its analysis and clear in its approach (CAA.reviews) An elegant volume, amply illustrated, and the photographs are on the whole very clear, carefully placed in the text, and well elucidated (H-Buddhism) About the Author Dorothy C. Wong is associate professor of East Asian art at the University of Virginia.