Likeness of No One: (Re)presenting the First Emperor's Army

Ladislav Kesner

The subterranean army of several thousand life-size terra-cotta soldiers, horses, and war chariots, under excavation since 1974 from the site near the supposed burial chamber of the first Chinese emperor, Qin Shi Huangdi (r. 246–210 B.C.), in Lintong, Shaanxi province, has become famous far beyond the field of Chinese archaeology and early history as one of the grandest archaeological discoveries of this century.[1] Close to the tumulus which, according to historical accounts, should contain the tomb of the First Emperor itself, the terra-cotta army, situated in three subterranean pits, is the most conspicuous part of the entire burial compound, which also includes remains of a funerary precinct with auxiliary burials, sacrificial pits, and many other structures. According to the commonly accepted explanation, the underground army was created as a *replica* of the Qin army ("First Emperor's bodyguard sculpted in clay"): clay soldiers and horses *represent* Qin Shi Huang's army and stand *in place* of the real soldiers who could not have been actually buried.[2] There has not been much doubt about the army's function either: it was buried to the east of the tumulus to guard the tomb and to protect the emperor's eternal sleep.

The striking realism (a characteristics that will require our subsequent attention) of the army has lead some archaeologists involved in the project and some authors to suggest that the figures were modeled after living soldiers, that they were actual portraits of individual warriors. The majority of scholars, however, pointing out that the clay warriors' faces conform to a certain number of stereotypes, is unwilling to regard them as representations of individuals or to consider the Qin terra-cotta figures as portraiture.[3]

Yet if the figures are not portraits (and it certainly cannot be a priori assumed that they are), what then are they? If not portraits, are they generic types? What exactly were they supposed to represent? And what is the function of their likenesses?

Clearly, the common (and often only implicitly assumed)

understanding of these figures, which considers them substitutes for genuine models while not accepting them as representations of individual persons standing as such models, is inherently contradictory and raises more questions than it purports to answer. The main reason seems to lie in the fact that current opinions on the subject are based on largely unexamined assumptions and uses of such concepts as "portraiture," "substitution," "replica," and "realism"—in short, on some taken-for-granted conceptions of representation. Moreover, it seems that too much effort has been spent on trying to explain the "meaning" of the army through reference to contemporaneous religious practice, often enlisting spurious evidence of texts, while too little attention has been given to the forms themselves as the very medium in which the work of art signifies.

My aim in this paper is to provide a more adequate account of what the Qin terra-cotta figures represent, and to determine more precisely the ontological and semiological status of the figures and, by implication, of the whole subterranean legion.[4] To a large extent this will amount to reckoning with the complexities of a conceptual and interpretive framework, penetrating through the accumulated layers of predetermined conceptions regarding the meaning of tomb substitutes and seeing beyond the recurrent patterns of assessing the style of the Qin figures as well as inferring their status from such an interpretation of style. On the other hand, it is hoped that the current elusive and unsettled issues of portraiture, resemblance, construal of identity, and other related problems of theoretical interest can be enriched somewhat by attending to the ever more complex artistic tradition, which has been literally surfacing from Chinese soil in recent decades.

The Meaning of *Mingqi* and the Style of Qin Figures
Much as the sculptures of the Qin terra-cotta legion can be perceived as unique in terms of their dimensions or style, they are just one, albeit one of the earliest, instance of tomb

1. The best English-language scholarly introduction is probably still to be found in Hearn. Of the many catalogues accompanying exhibitions of the Qin figures in Europe, North America, and Japan, the most recent (Ledderose and Schlombs) contains several essays on various aspects of the terra-cotta army and a comprehensive bibliography through 1989. The official report on pit no. 1 (*Report*) and Yuan both contain a comprehensive corpus of data on the find. These can be complemented by *Legion*, with a popular text and many good-quality color reproductions. A selection of articles published in *Wenbo* during the last decade is reprinted in Yuan Zhongyi et al., eds., *Qin Shi Huang bing ma yong bowuguan lunwen xuan* (An anthology of papers by the Museum of the Figures of soldiers and horses of the First Emperor of Qin), Xian, 1989.

2. According to the most often accepted view, pit no. 1 contains the Right Army of the Imperial Guard in the capital Xianyang, pit no. 2 the Left Army of the Guard, pit no. 3 the army headquarters and pit no. 4 (unfinished) should have represented the Central Army. See, e.g., Wang Renbo, "General Comments on Chinese Funerary Sculpture," in *Quest*, 41–42; and Yuan, 36. For another opinion, see Wang Xueli, "Yifu Qindai de chenbing tu: Yilun

Qin yong kengde xingzhi qi biancheng" (A diagram of Qin troops: On the character and deployment of Qin figure pits), *Wenbo*, no. 5, 1990, 169–85 (pit no. 1 represents the deployment of the Qin army formation, pit no. 2 a military camp, pit no. 3 headquarters, pit no. 4 a battle array). See also Zhang Zhongli, "Qing yong sanhao keng xingzhi chulun" (My humble opinion on the nature of pit no. 3 of Qin figures), *Wenbo*, no. 5, 1990, 107–11.

3. See n. 30.

4. See Freedberg, 77: "Much of the difficulty in speaking about the ontological status of images in our culture and, even more, in those of the past or in other places arises from a failure to assess the semiotics of the phenomena we have been considering."

figures widely used in a mortuary context in early China. In addressing the issue of the status and significance of the Qin emperor's clay warriors, one is constrained by the existence of the established, commonly held conceptions of what tomb figures were meant to be and to do.

As in many other ancient cultures, furnishing graves with an elaborate array of sacrificial goods was an essential component of early Chinese mortuary practice. The late Zhou ritual texts *Li Ji* and *Zhouli* name a specific category of objects destined to accompany the dead into the nether-world, called *mingqi* (spirit vessels). The concept of *mingqi*, both in classical Chinese texts and in contemporary scholarly parlance, is rather elastic: it has been used to designate artifacts serving as substitutes or surrogates for some "real" object that is a living, functional, bigger, or more precious entity. The concept thus covers a variety of objects, including the imitations of utensils in cheap materials, but in the ancient texts and since it has been used above all to refer to the plastic images of humans and animals which began to appear in the late Zhou tombs.[5]

Those sections of the Zhou ritual texts are mostly concerned with the ethical dimension of the use of funerary images. In one passage, however, Confucius himself is quoted as objecting to the use of certain types of anthropomorphic figures in funerals, fearing that they may prompt the use of real human victims. Thus, in the sage's own words, the efficacity of verisimilitude is underscored.[6] On the basis largely of a few passages scattered in early texts, Chinese and Western scholars have explained the origins of *mingqi* by the need to replace real human and animal sacrifices interred at burials of nobility: hence they are commonly understood as effigies or replicas.[7]

What status does such a concept imply for the *mingqi* object? The figures were commissioned and created as surrogate beings, substitutes in the sense of *compensating for the absence* of real people, who, for various moral as well as economic reasons, could not have been actually buried with their master.[8] This view is further augmented by the assumption that these substitutes would act in the hereafter precisely as their models did in this world and render the occupant of the tomb the same service.[9]

A recently proposed opinion offers an alternative conception of the status and meaning of the clay army. Questioning the traditional "substitution account," it claims that the figures should not be seen simply as substitutes for human

sacrificial victims, or, in other words, as mere "equivalents" of human beings put into the tomb only because for various reasons it was impossible to bury living people themselves. Accordingly, "the figures are substitutes for real soldiers as little as Cézanne's still life is a substitute for a plate of fruit."[10]

We can refrain for the moment from an obvious and (for further discussion quite a pertinent) objection, namely, that from the point of view of representation's required effects and functions, Cézanne's still life could indeed be viewed as a substitute for a plate of fruit. What this opinion implies is that much as Cézanne was probably not mainly interested in painting a still life that would pass for a real plate of fruit, the production of the terra-cotta army was not motivated by the wish to create an illusion of the presence of real people, but by the desire to acknowledge its status deliberately as an artificial construct, to proclaim that it was of a different order from real soldiers.

Such a view is based on the interpretation of certain passages in late Zhou texts and some recent archaeological finds, such as the tomb of Zeng Hou Yi, dated to 433 B.C. These are taken as evidence for a major transition in the late Zhou religious outlook and a new tendency in funerary rituals, whereby the guiding idea became the separation of the spheres of the dead and the living. At this time, the goal of tomb builders was to represent all aspects of this world in the netherworld, to produce within a tomb a comprehensive replica of the human world. Therefore, the artificial substitutes were regarded as even more appropriate, more fitting for this task than the interment of real people, as they would be able to depict all the required activities—embodied in specific postures and gestures—far better than sacrificial victims could.[11] Thus, even though originally tomb figures may have come into existence as surrogate people, by the time of the construction of the First Emperor's tomb, they were deemed artificial objects, intentionally commissioned and made to proclaim their distinction from the living models.

On a closer view, one can discern a pattern of circular inference operating behind both these accounts of the significance of *mingqi*: the assumption about the meaning of the tomb figures supports a certain reading of their formal properties, while a description of the sculptural style itself is generated from an a priori notion of status and meaning.

The traditional "substitution-for-absence" account of the Qin army—and tomb figures generally—is tied to identifying the style as "realistic." As the figures, according to this

5. For a general overview of history of *mingqi*, see, e.g., Cai Yonghua, "Suizang mingqi guankui" (Observation on funerary *mingqi*), *Kaogu yu Wenwu*, no. 2, 1986, 74–78.

6. "Confucius said of those who produced straw souls [figurines] that they were human, but of those who used wooden automata that they were inhuman, because was there not a danger of the latter leading to the use of human sacrifice?" *Li Ji*, chap. Tangongxia, repr. in *Li Ji Zhengyi*, Shanghai, 1990, 1, 171b.

7. Zheng Dekun and Shen Weizhun, *Zhongguo mingqi* (Chinese spirit objects), Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph, no. 1, Beijing 1931. See also introductory essays in *Quest*.

8. A typical recent statement can be found in Wang Renbo (as in n. 2), 39–41: "The burial of these

figures to replace human sacrifices was an important sign of social transformation that affected funerary rites. . . . The complete substitution of funerary figures for human and animal sacrifices was an innovative measure that liberated the productive capacity of the society and raised the level of the culture." *Report*, i, 162, puts forward essentially the same explanation for the Qin emperor's terra-cotta army. Lu Zhirong, "Qin Shi Huang ling bing ma yong peizangzhi zhi yuanyuan tansuo" (The origins of burial pits of soldier and horse figures at the tomb of the First emperor of Qin), *Wenbo*, no. 2, 1992, 50–54, links the Qin emperor's legion to the armed sacrifical victims found in the Shang royal tombs.

9. More specific explanations supplement this account. Thus, it has been suggested that the Qin terra-cotta soldiers reflected magical Daoist beliefs

that realistic, lifelike images could evoke real people (H. Brinker and R. Goepper, *Kunstschätze aus China: Neuere Archäologische Funde aus dem Volksrepublik China*, Cologne/Hildesheim, 1980, 107).

10. L. von Falkenhausen, "Ahnenkult und Grabkult im Staat Qin: Der religiöse Hintergrund der Terra-kotta-Armee," in Ledderose and Schlombs, 46–47.

11. Ibid., 47. This view had been anticipated even earlier; see D. Croissant, "Funktion und Wanddekor der Opferschrein von Wu Liang Tz'u," *Monumenta Serica*, xxiii, 1964, 109–10, n. 68.

12. Yuan Zhongyi, *Qin Shi Huang ling bing mayong* (Terra-cotta warriors and horses at the tomb of the First Emperor), 3rd ed., Beijing, 1986, 17; *Report*, i, 158–59 and Yuan, 305.

13. See Hearn, 368; and Brinker and Goepper (as in n. 9), 107.

view, were intended to replace real people or animals, their creation was guided by the purposeful striving for a visual verisimilitude as complete as possible. In the replicating task, only the maximum visual accuracy, as literal a notation as possible, would do. Such a thesis is presented in a most straightforward fashion in Chinese scholarship, where the "realistic style" of Qin warriors is interpreted as simply determined by the images' purported status and identity as funerary substitutes for real models.[12] But similarly, if less assertively, molded views can be found in Western treatments, too.[13]

David Freedberg has recently provided sophisticated support for such an idea with his apt reminder of how magical efficacity depends on resemblance, on the degree of visual accuracy in the lifelike image.[14] However, Freedberg is explicitly referring to votive limbs and wax figures—that is, images whose status as objects with magical properties is securely determined. And that is certainly not our case. But first of all, it is necessary to ask whether realism is indeed the most salient and defining stylistic quality of Qin figures, as is almost invariably suggested. More precisely, we have to ask whether a purposeful striving for visual accuracy can be detected as the most prominent stylistic feature of these sculptures.

It should first be noted that the omnipresent predicates of "realism" or visual "correctness" in the writings of Chinese authors seem above all to bespeak their practice of using such terms as value-laden concepts, whereby in the rigidly Marxist realm of Chinese academic practice, "realism" per se stands for a sign of artistic quality and evolutionary progress.[15] However, even for Western authors—who might be expected to be devoid of such biases—the notion of realism seems to be central to their perception of Qin figures, to the extent that the style of the sculptures is most often simply labeled as "realistic."[16] On the other hand, it also has been pointed out that these clay warriors are better viewed as examples of conceptual art and, even in some recent Chinese scholarship, their style is characterized as incorporating both the "general" and "particular" aspects of the form.[17]

The label of realism may be useful and legitimate for an overall description of the Qin emperor's army within the evolutionary sequence of early Chinese art.[18] However, as a normative description it is both insufficient and misleading (as would be the opposite predicate "conceptual").[19]

The Qin warriors clearly exhibit a certain affinity with what

1 Armored Infantryman, detail (from *Legion*, fig. 77)

is conventionally, if not always correctly, termed conceptual, or archaic, sculpture. The bodies are conceived largely in linear and columnar planes, most of them being axially fixed (Fig. 1). But even the figures of infantrymen, with their static postures and frozen movements, do not display the degree of rigidity and symmetricality characteristic of classical examples of archaic Greek sculpture. The postures of certain warriors have a fair degree of organic interplay of planes, and escape the strict frontality and the awkwardness associated with most of the standing figures.

14. See Freedberg, 157: "Their [magical images] operational effectiveness is perceived as deriving from the closest possible form of realism available to maker and consumer"; see also ibid., 203, 245.

15. See, e.g. Fu Tianchou, *The Underground Terracotta Army of Emperor Qin Shi Huang*, Beijing, 1985, 11; Yuan, 366; and Wang Xueli, "Xionghunde qipo xieshide yishu" (Vigorous spiritedness; realistic art), in *Zhongguo kaoguxue yanjiu lunji: Jinian Xia Nai xiansheng kaogu wushi zhounian* (Collected essays in the study of Chinese archaeology: Commemorating the 50th anniversary of archaeological work of Mr. Xia Nai), Xian, 1987, 372–90, esp. 375–77.

16. For a representative statement of Western scholarship, see, e.g., H. Brinker, "Chinso-Zen Portrait Painting in China and Japan," in *International Symposium on the Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Property: Interregional Influences in East*

Asian Art History, Tokyo, 1982, 177: "The *staggering realism* of the life-size terracotta soldiers . . . marks a hitherto unknown level of achievement in *naturalistic depiction*" (my emphasis). Another typical example of such a perception can be found in Ledderose and Schlombs, where the stylistic features of figures of warriors are discussed in a section titled "Der Realismus der terrakotta Figuren" (277–78).

17. G. Kuwayama, "The Sculptural Development of Ceramic Funerary Figures in China," in *Quest*, 67; *Report*, I, 142; and Yuan, 314.

18. On a similarly problematic use of the concept of realism in the context of Roman sculptural portraiture, see S. Nodelman, "How to Read a Roman Portrait," *Art in America*, Jan.–Feb. 1975, 27–28. John Baines notes that although the realism cannot be rigorously or neatly defined, "it does not mean that it is any less real or important as a phenom-

enon. In part it may be a self-sustaining elaboration on the forms inherited from earlier generations" (J. Baines, "Theories and Universals of Representation: Heinrich Schäfer and Egyptian Art," *Art History*, VIII, no. 1, 1985, 16.)

19. Anthony Cutler has recently underscored the role of the previous body of writing relating to image in question ("Stalking the Beast: Art History as Asymptotic Exercise," *Word and Image*, VII, no. 3, 1991, 224). Qin figures are a marked case in point. Ubiquitous interpretations of Qin terra-cottas as "realistic" and "naturalistic" art seem to have been generated more from the work of earlier commentators—faced with the need to come to terms and conceptualize the unprecedented appearance of the figures and thus creating a self-perpetuating tradition of description—than from critical assessment and observation of their forms.
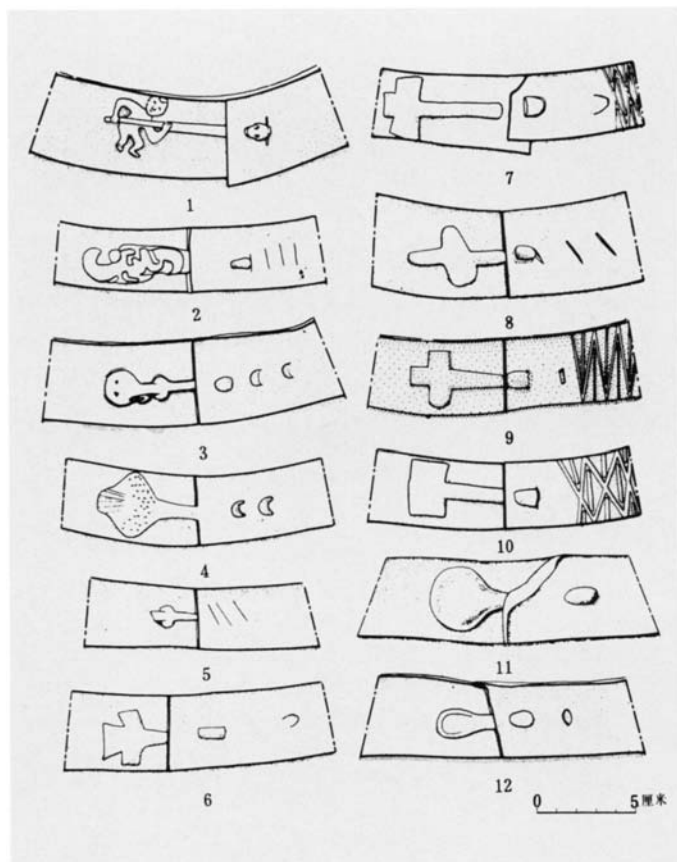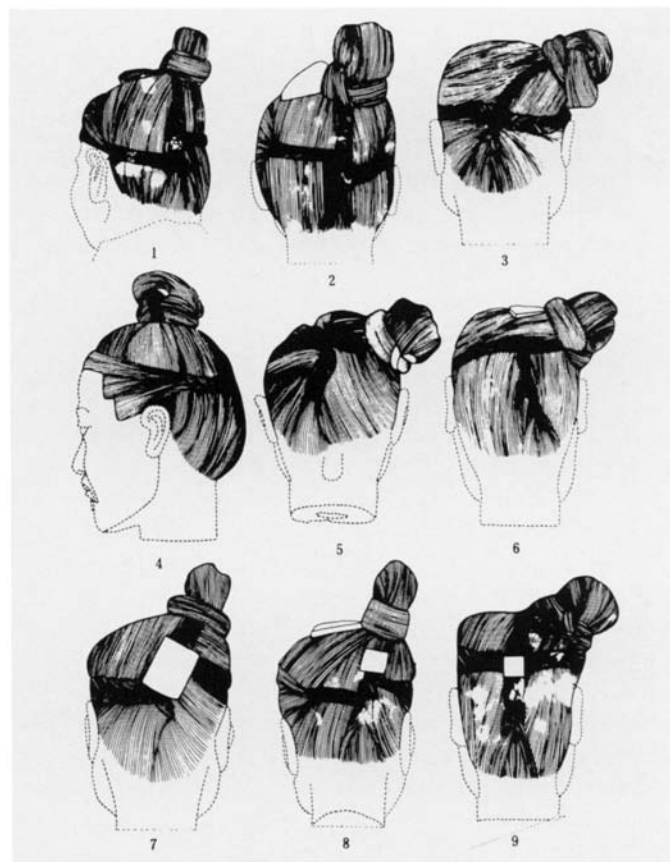
2 Belt Hooks on figures from pit no. 1 (from *Report,* I, fig. 51)

3 Buns and Plaits on figures from pit no. 1 (from *Report,* I, fig. 66)

The most striking and significant stylistic feature of the Qin figures, however, lies in the way these conceptually conceived forms are organically infused with details of the utmost visual accuracy. There is a prominent interplay (neither fully harmonious, nor entirely baffling and disturbing) of stylized components of bodies with instances of a literal notation of headgear, hairdos, costumes, armor, and footwear. There are examples of striking visual realism in Chinese art prior to the Qin terra-cotta army; but there is no precedent for this massive deployment of verisimilitude, evident especially in the rendering of garments and parts of the armor and accoutrements. Belts and belt hooks, boots and shoes, collar closures, buns and plaits are all uncompromisingly transcribed into plastic form (Figs. 2, 3).[20] As a close look at the figure of the kneeling archer from pit no. 2 reveals, this perceptual realism includes such details as the bending of the right foot on which the weight of the body rests, as well as the texture of the sole, and the folds on the inner side of the left sleeve (Figs. 4, 5).

Such consistent striving for visual verisimilitude does not merely characterize one aspect of the sculptural style of these soldiers. It can likewise be observed in figures of horses and models of carriages found in nearby pits. It is further enhanced by the presence of genuine bronze (and a few iron) weapons held by the warriors, instead of painted or sculpted substitutes. Again, the figures were originally elaborately painted and although the polychromy in most cases has now flaked off, enough remains to suggest that it was applied to imitate the colors of the actual armor and garments worn by

different ranks of soldiers.[21] As the inclusion of real weapons testifies, this iconic impulse extends to the point at which the sign is effectively fused with the signified. This feature, as we shall see, can be further observed in some other aspects of the whole necropolis.

The effect of literally transcribed elements, however, is balanced by stiffness, occasional distortion of proportions, and in some cases by awkward exaggerations of body parts. For all their realistic impact, most of the figures convey to the contemporary viewer a sense of marionettelike artificiality, rather than that of immanent, empirical reality, as mediated, for example, by some fine examples of Greek sculpture. Such characteristics and impact of style essentially inhere in the subject matter itself—in the constraints of depicting fully armed warriors, standing in military formation in certain appropriate positions. Firstly, with the exception of heads and hands, the bodies are entirely clad in tunics or armor, their contours defined by garments. No underlying anatomical structures, such as joints, and no muscular tensions are visible whose depiction would imbue gestures and postures with a more convincing approximation of reality. In short, there is no sense of actual physis, no immediacy that can be better expressed by the naked body. Secondly, as the figure of a kneeling archer (Fig. 4) clearly demonstrates, the figures could not have been depicted in just any random postures, expressive of transient states of mind and thus of more convincing individuality, but had to be represented with specific gestures predicated by their function within the entire formation.

4 Kneeling Archer from pit no. 2 (from *Legion*, fig. 109)
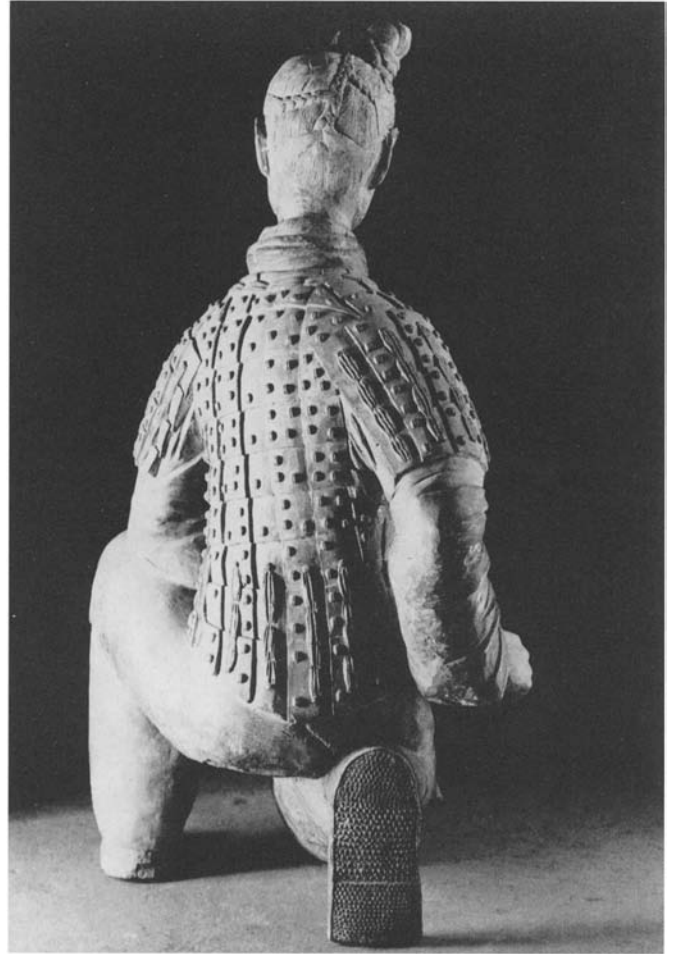
5 Kneeling Archer from pit no. 2, back view (from Ledderose and Schlombs, fig. 229)

The preceding analysis exposes the pitfalls of simply summarizing the impact of the style of the Qin's emperor army. The majority of scholars perceive these forms as "realistic," assuming that they strive to be *like* real people, horses, and chariots. Others choose to see the style as mediating a sense of artificiality, referring to the sculptures as self-labeled representations and proclaiming that they are *unlike* real people and objects. Neither alternative seems wholly satisfactory. There is no means of determining how the style was perceived by the audience for which it was destined—namely, the soul of the dead emperor.[22] The few passages in late Zhou and early Han texts that scholars have traditionally squeezed dry in order to determine what kind of reality funerary images represent are an unreliable guide.[23] Not only are they notoriously ambiguous and open to varying interpretation; their use to interpret funerary art is also based on the uncritical assumption that they are prescriptive, expressing normative ideas and attitudes, which repre-

20. For illustrations, see *Report*, II, figs. 92, 93, and *Legion*, figs. 100–102 (boots); *Report*, II, figs. 94–97 (belt hooks); *Report*, I, 98, fig. 46 (collars); *Report*, II, figs. 98–99, and *Legion*, figs. 104–6 (headgear); *Report*, II, figs. 100–104, and *Legion*, figs. 196–214 (hairdos, buns, and plaits); *Report*, II, figs. 143, 144, and *Legion*, figs. 93–98 (hands).

21. See *Report*, I, 193–94.

22. By contrast, the living audience is crucial in the study of some other early dynastic funerary monuments and representations; e.g., the imagery of Han funerary shrines was intended as much for the live viewers as for the deceased himself. As some recent studies have persuasively demonstrated, the styles of these monuments and images are tied to the concerns, aspirations, and ideologies of the living audience (see Wu Hung, *The Wu Liang Shrine: The Ideology of Early Chinese Pictorial Art*, Stanford, 1989, and M. Powers, *Art and Political Expression in Early China*, New Haven/London, 1991.)

According to some passages in another ritual text, *Yi Li*, the articles for the dead were also displayed prior to entombment: "*Mingqi* are displayed to the west of carriages . . . upon arriving at the funeral grounds, they are arranged to the east of the road, while the main ones are arrayed on the northwestern side." In later times, especially during the Tang dynasty, tomb figures and other goods were probably destined as much for the eyes of participants in elaborate public funeral processions and rites as for the dead themselves. But there is no evidence that the underground world of the Lishan necropolis was intended for anyone other than the First Emperor.

23. These are, in particular, passages from *Li Ji* (compiled in the 2nd century B.C. from earlier materials) on the use of funerary vessels and consciousness of the dead. The key passage reads: "Confucius said, 'In dealing with the dead, if we treat them as if they were entirely dead, that would show a want of affection and should not be done; or, if we treat them as if they were entirely alive, that would show a want of intelligence and should not be done. On this account the vessels of bamboo [used in burials of the dead] are not fit for actual use; those of ceramic cannot be used to wash in; those of wood are incapable of being carved; the lutes are strung, but not in tune; the bells and musical stones are there but they have no stands. They are called 'spirit [funerary] vessels,' that is,[the dead] are thus treated as if they were spiritual intelligences," *Li Ji*, chap. "Tangongshang," in *Li Ji Zhengyi* (as in n. 6), I, 143a; J. Legge, trans., *The Chinese Classics*, 3rd ed., 5 vols., Hong Kong, 1960, I, 148. For a discussion of the issue of the consciousness of the dead from the philosophical perspective, see A. Graham, *Disputers of the Tao: Philosophical Argument in Ancient China*, La Salle, Ill., 1989, 15–18, 258–60.

6 A Formation of Infantrymen in pit no. 1 (from *Legion*, fig. 56)

sentational practice simply followed. But there is little justification for this approach in general and even less in the case of the Qin emperor and his mausoleum.[24]

The Features
The stunning degree to which the features of the figures are elaborated and the differences perceived—resulting in the initial observation that "no two faces are alike" (Fig. 6)—

have lead some to believe that the figures are portraits, modeled after real people.[25] But close scrutiny reveals that physiognomic details and facial expressions are to a large extent stereotyped. While certain figures exhibit a remarkable degree of individuation, most faces can be best described as aggregates of prefabricated expressive and representational units (Figs. 7, 8).[26]

Sculptors worked with a certain repertoire of standardized components, obtained through the use of a limited number of molds. The individual appearances were assembled through combination of these basic components, followed by the hand finishing of details.[27] This "editing" of faces was naturally firmly intertwined with sculptural procedures, but need not be looked at merely as a consequence of the technical constraints of serial production.[28] The most authoritative Chinese treatments distinguish eight basic facial types, according to the general contours of faces, each of which can be realized in many different expressions. The heads are thus said to embody both generality and individuality.[29] Typically, most scholars now claim that despite all the specific traits and seemingly endless diversity in the rendering of faces, the figures are better viewed not as individualized portraits of particular subjects, but as "types": "The goal was to produce the appearance of individuality, without its substance, realism without portraiture."[30] Such a conclusion seems to be supported by our viewing experience: for all their differences, in most cases the figures do not create the sense of specific beings. However, is such a conclusion any better grounded than its opposite, the notion that the warrior figures are portraits? In both cases, the determination of the status of the image is derived merely from a purely subjective assessment of visual properties. Yet is there any less convincingly articulated visual appearance in the figure of the Qin general (Fig. 9) than, for example, in the portrait bust of Queen Nefertiti (Fig. 10) or in the Heian-period sculpture of the high priest Roben (Fig. 11)? Do the Nefertiti and Roben portraits mediate any more objective a transcrip-

24. Martin Powers in his study of Han funerary shrines has recently argued that passages from *Li Ji* and other texts suggest a conventional and self-consciously representational funerary art (Powers [as in n. 22], esp. 58–61). However, this account seems to underestimate beliefs in the reality of the afterworld and the potentials of visual realism within the macrocosmos of the tomb (see also Jonathan Hay's review of Powers, *Art Bulletin*, LXXV, no. 1, 1993, esp. 173–74). There is little reason to suppose that the commission of the First Emperor's burial compound was predicated on ritual prescription and Confucian ethical views, which may be relevant for understanding the funerary art of the Eastern Han literati. Such texts were in any case not fully formulated at the time of the First Emperor's death.

25. Nie Xinmin, "Yetan Qin bingmayong de zhuti" (Discussion of a subject of Qin figures of soldiers and horses), *Wenbo*, no. 5, 1986, 57; Li Dingxuan, "Qin bingmayong de xieshi zhuyi yishu fengge" (Realism of artistic style of Qin figures of soldiers and horses), *Wenbo*, no. 1, 1985, 36; Wang Yuqing, "Qin yong mianxing he biaoqing" (Facial features and expressions of Qin figures), *Wenbo*, no. 1, 1984, 70–73; and Arthur Cotterell, *The First Emperor's Warriors*. London, 1981, 28–29.

26. For clear details of faces and facial expressions, see *Legion*, figs. 143–95.

27. For a fuller account of production methods, see *Report*, I, esp. 163–92. E. von Erdberg, "Die Soldaten Shih Huang Ti's—Porträats?" in D. Seckel et al., eds., *Das Bildnis in der Kunst des Orients*, Stuttgart, 1990, 225–29, summarizes the procedures involved in creating the heads of the figures.

28. I am struck by the persistence of this artistic procedure in a Chinese context. The late imperial manuals for artisan makers of ancestral portraits contain a stock of standard formulas for various types of noses, mouths, and eyes which could be combined according to the specific conditions of the patron's wishes to construct the likeness of a person. See J. Bredon, *Peking*, Shanghai, 1931, 130. See also L. Kesner, "Memory, Likeness, and Identity in Chinese Ancestor Portraits," *Bulletin of the National Gallery*, III, 1993–94, in press. Lothar Ledderosse ("Module and Mass Production," in *Proceedings of International Colloquium on Chinese Art History*, 1991: *Painting and Calligraphy, Part 2*, Taipei, 1992, 826–28) mentions the procedures for creating Qin figures and especially their features as one example of module system, whereby the image is constructed by manipulating a stock of building blocks.

29. See *Report*, I, 142–50, figs. 74–76, and Yuan, 315–19. The English summary in *Report* says (498) that "of the 1,087 clay figures unearthed, no two faces are alike. Each face is a personal portrait"; the term "portrait" is not used in the Chinese original of this passage (142–43), which merely states that each facial shape and expression is different. Most recent Chinese sources show a certain inconsistency in the matter; e.g., in Yuan, 317–18, it is said that among thousands of figures "all of them have different individuality . . . it is difficult to find two faces which would be identical," while earlier (316) the claim is made that of some 700 figures so far restored, there are approximately 100 kinds of different facial types and about 300 different expressions.

30. D. Keightley, "The Quest for Eternity in Ancient China: The Dead, Their Gifts, Their Names," in G. Kuwayama, ed., *Ancient Mortuary Traditions of China: Papers on Chinese Ceramic Funerary Sculptures*, Los Angeles, 1991, 23 n. 3. See also Hearn, 361. For a strong assertion that Qin figures cannot be considered as portraits, see A. Schlombs, "Die Herstellung der Terrakotta Armee," in Ledderosse and Schlombs, 97.

7, 8 Heads of Officers; Charioteers and Armored Infantrymen (from *Legion*, figs. 154–66)

9 Head of a Cavalry General (from *Legion*, fig. 151)
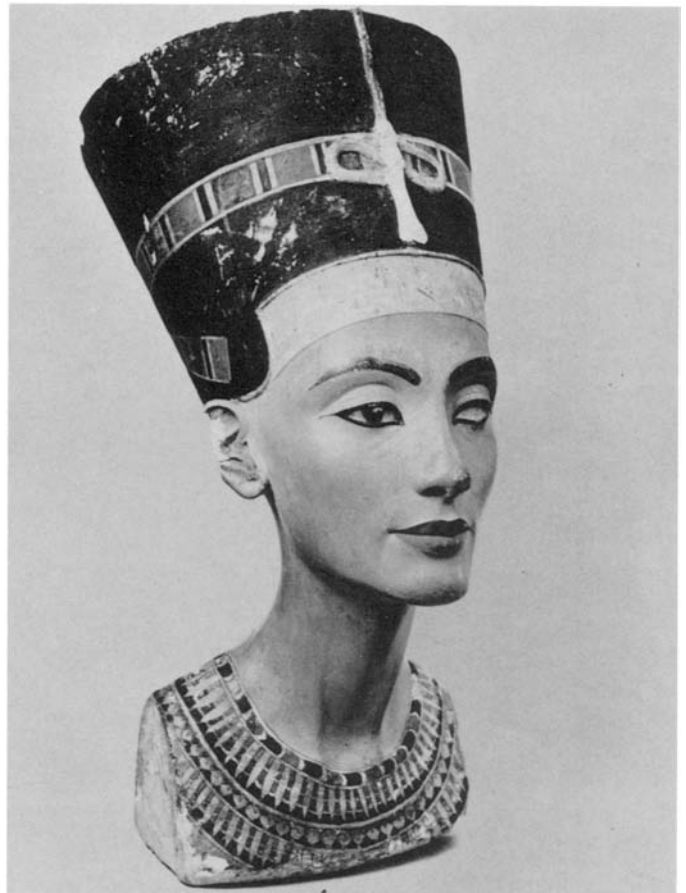
10 Portrait Bust of Queen Nefertiti (from *The Egyptian Museum in Berlin*, Berlin, 1990, 97)

tion of empirical reality, any more convincing a sense of an individual than does the figure of the Qin general? Obviously, all three images contain not a few conventionalized features, dictated by the specific circumstances of their commission and purported use, as well as aesthetic and ideologic constraints.[31]

Limits and inadequacies inherent in the traditional Western concept of portraiture, dominated by an emphasis upon likeness and the reproduction of an individual's unique physiognomy, have recently received much attention. As Richard Brilliant has observed:

the quality and perspicacity of [the portraits'] reference rather than the accuracy of depiction establishes the normative standard of their being. Then, the degree of likeness, comprehended historically as some requisite quotient of resemblance, may vary almost without limit, effected more by changing views about personal identity and the function of artistic representation than by the

peculiar physiognomy or appearance of the Subject. . . . likeness is never more than a represented approximation that operates conceptually to fix transiency in an elusive image.[32]

Such a perspective is particularly apt in the context of Chinese figural representation.[33] In tomb sculpture especially, there are many instances of figures that have a much greater degree of visual specificity than many images recognized as "portraits." Yet unlike such paintings, where the identity of the models can be inferred from the context, tomb figures do not allow for any identification of the person depicted.[34]

A realistic image, of course, often a priori implies the existence of an actual being as a model. As interpreter, one may be fully aware in theory that the degree to which the image is elaborated is not indicative of its status, that "the question of reference, in fact, is totally independent of the degree of differentiation."[35] Yet one's interpretative efforts

31. See Nodelman (as in n. 18), passim, and Davis, 41–46, on an interchange between conventional factors and individual features in constructing "likeness" in late Roman and Egyptian portraiture respectively.

32. R. Brilliant, "Editor's Statement: Portraits: The Limitations of Likeness," *Art Journal*, XLVI, no. 3, 1987, 171–72. See also Brilliant, chap. 1, esp. 25–26. The classic formulation of the problem can

be found in E. H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion*, Princeton, N.J., 1961, 90.

33. See, e.g., Audrey Spiro's study of 4th- and 5th-century portrait tomb reliefs, *Contemplating the Ancients: Aesthetic and Social Issues in Early Chinese Portraiture*, Berkeley, 1990.

34. A typical example of a "contextual portrait" is a representation of a woman on a central section of the painted banner from the tomb of Lady Dai (ca.

168 B.C.) at Mawangdui, which is identified as a depiction of the tomb master and thus can be regarded as the first portrait of a specific historically known personality in Chinese art. See L. Kesner, "Portrait Aspects and Social Functions of Chinese Ceramic Tomb Sculpture," *Orientations*, XXII, no. 8, 1991, 33–42, for a comparison of this painting with contemporary tomb figures.

35. E. H. Gombrich, "Meditations on a Hobby
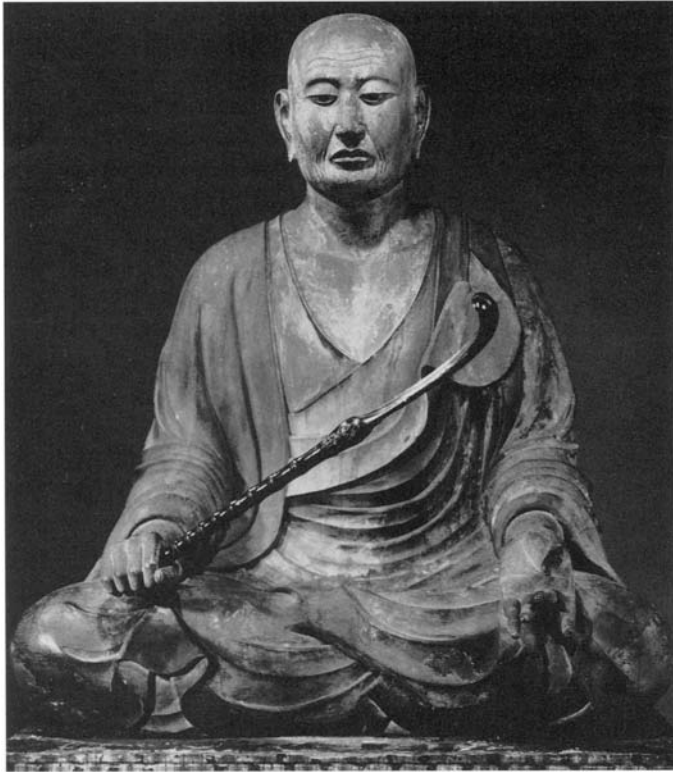
11 *High Priest Rōben* (from *The Great Eastern Temple: Treasures of Japanese Buddhist Art from Tōdai-Ji*, Chicago, 1986, 107)

are not exempt from the psychological constraints of the viewing experience. Thus, the small, crude effigy with an undifferentiated face, a figure from an Eastern Zhou tomb, which directly precedes the Qin emperor's terra-cotta figures in a similar funerary context could equally have been intended to represent some particular person (Fig. 12).[36] It, however, does not particularly prompt questions about the identity of its model, the figural aspect taking precedence over the portrait, the general over the unique. But in the presence of an image with prominently articulated features, which declares itself authoritatively, it is difficult to escape the notion that it must have been created to imitate a definite human model. The Qin soldiers declare themselves as representing some specific preexisting prototype in a way that a less articulated image does not.[37] But the central question remains: who (or what) exactly are the figures of the underground legion substitutes for? The issue, in other words, is to establish the nature of the reference, to discover whether there were real individuals as models for the clay warriors. Furthermore, if we are to decide whether these can qualify as portraits or not, the task is to determine what established the individual's ontological status in the specific historical context of the production of the Lishan necropolis.

Likeness and Identity

If, as we have seen, no particular degree of resemblance is required for the visual construction of the subject's identity, any figure of the terra-cotta army could be considered an individual portrait. In fact, some pieces with distinctly pronounced features would seem to lend themselves to such an interpretation. It is only when we shift our focus from the individual figures to the underground army as a whole, and when the methods and procedures of its production are taken into account, that we are led to the conclusion that the army could not have been conceived and created as an aggregate of individual soldiers' likenesses.

It is true that not much is known of the circumstances of the making of the terra-cotta army. Yet one important inference, with a direct bearing on the issue of the status and identity of figures, can be made. According to a passage in Sima Qian's *Shi Ji* (Records of the historian), compiled around 100 B.C., construction of the necropolis started with the First Emperor's accession to the throne.[38] Calculations based on an assessment of the production methods and technique suggest that the creation of the army must have proceeded over a period of several years (ten years would be a minimal estimate), and even at the time of the First Emperor's death it probably had not been completed.[39] Whatever the precise time span of the creation of the army, and even if some of the figures were informed by the likeness of an actual person, it would not have been possible to transcribe the particular appearance of more than seven thousand men, one after another, into plastic form. Indi-
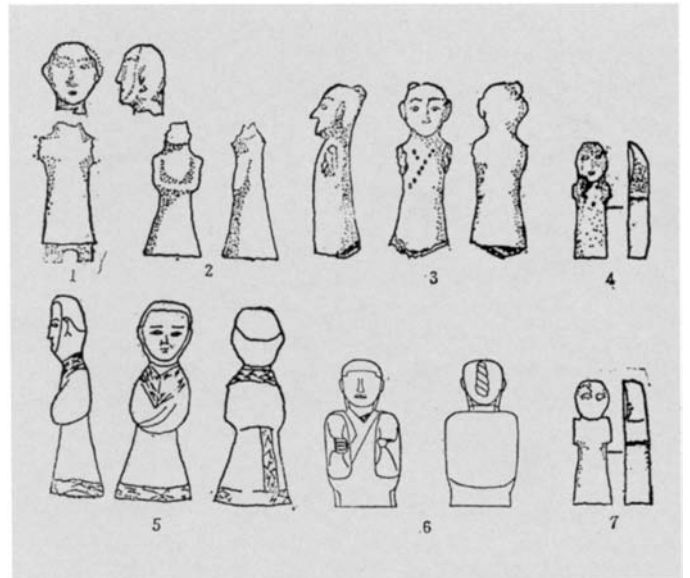
12 Pottery Figurines, 5th–4th century B.C. (from Yuan, fig. 173)

Horse or the Roots of Artistic Form," in *Meditations on a Hobby Horse and Other Essays on the Theory of Art*, London, 1963, 3.

36. Anthropomorphic figurines were unearthed from at least six tombs of Qin state, predating Qin Shi Huangdi's mausoleum. See Hu Lingui, "Zaoqi Qinyong jianshu" (A brief review of the early phase of Qin figures), *Wenbo*, no. 1, 1987, 23–25.

37. The psychological justifications for this are excellently treated by Freedberg; see esp. chap. 9, 201.

38. The passage is quoted below, at n. 53.

39. The fourth, much shallower pit found in the immediate vicinity of three pits is generally interpreted as the unfinished site for the fourth part of the underground army, thereby implying that the

whole project had not been completed at the time of Qin Shi Huang's death. For an alternative opinion, which views pit no. 4 as a source of soil used for the construction of the army, see Dang Shixue, "Si hao keng shi weijian chengzhi yong keng shuo zhiyi" (Calling into the question the theory that pit no. 4 is an unfinished pit of figures), *Wenbo*, no. 5, 1989, 65–71.

13 Incised and Stamped Characters found on figures from pit no. 1 (from *Report*, I, fig. 115)

vidual likenesses of all those who composed the army at a given moment prior to starting of the project could not, therefore, have been intended. Thus, the main reference of each figure is not to a unique individual, as revealed in the contingencies of his physiognomy.[40]

Identity, to be sure, can be conveyed by means other than through the depiction of distinct physiognomic traits.[41] One common means by which an image can be established as the representation of a specific individual is through the identifying inscription.[42] Such a practice was widely utilized in early Chinese portraiture, where persons were often differentiated not by a conveyance of their respective likenesses but by an inscription that named them.[43] Of more than one thousand fully restored Qin figures, more than five hundred indeed

bear incised or stamped characters (Fig. 13). These inscriptions, however, have plausibly been read as "signatures" of master potters, or, in some cases, as numerical symbols serving to assign figures into certain groups, probably in the process of their assembling.[44] Not even in the figures of high-ranking officers or generals do inscribed characters point to individual identities. This absence of any demonstrable attempt to identify a particular person within the entire army is striking and suggestive. Accepting that the army represents aspects of reality relevant to the beholder for whom it was destined, one can conclude that in these terra-cotta figures, the depiction of persons in the sense of actual human beings was not intended. To the emperor, for whom the clay army was created, the vital component of his generals' (let alone his soldiers') capacity was obviously not their individual personalities.

Some authors, who have previously argued against the notion of the Qin terra-cottas as portraits, maintain that in fact it was precisely the sculptors' goal to evoke and express the ideal of a uniformed, disciplined army of the Qin state, where any presentation of individuality would contradict and undermine such a purpose.[45] It remains to be fully examined how the tenets of the Legalist doctrine on which the Qin state was organized, and which suppressed individualism in favor of strict social regimentation, standardization, and subordination to prescribed patterns of behavior, might affect the construction of the underground army. On the other hand, in any army the fulfillment of the soldier's role significantly deemphasizes the qualities and characteristics of its individual members. This fact alone, therefore, would hardly suffice to explain the specific features of the Qin emperor's army.

The conclusion that these figures do not portray unique individuals does not automatically imply a negative answer as to whether they are portraits. In itself it does not answer the question of what they were meant to represent, or what was their semiological status. And other questions remain to be addressed. Why, for example, did the creators of the army strive for such a variety in the rendering of features if the establishment of personal identity through individual physiognomies had not been intended? To address these issues, we have to shift the focus of attention to a fact briefly mentioned earlier—that in the Lishan necropolis we are dealing with several, ontologically separate objects. So far, we have been mostly concerned with the figures of soldiers as

40. On the link between visual appearance and personal identity, see, e.g., S. Shoemaker and R. Swinburne, *Personal Identity*, London, 1989, esp. 49–51.

41. Classical evidence has been provided by Leo Frobenius, when he published his famous double portrait of Maori chief Tupa Kupa, one by a Western painter, the other by the chief himself. In the first image, a portrait was produced according to the conventions of Western academic portrait painting, showing the man's face and shoulders, thus attempting to fix Tupa Kupa's likeness. In Tupa Kupa's self-portrait, however, the design of tattooed skin only is presented, the sign of a man's identity, his "likeness" in the Maori context. See L. Frobenius, *The Childhood of Man*, Philadelphia/London, 1909, 35. Several recent studies have focused on the various means through which visual

identity in a portrait can be established, complementing or entirely substituting for the recording of distinct physiognomic traits. See, e.g., T. Breen, "The Meaning of "Likeness": American Portrait Painting in an Eighteenth-Century Consumer Society," *Word and Image*, VI, no. 4, 1990, 325–50.

42. The locus classicus for the individuation of image by naming, in a context not entirely dissimilar with that of early China, is to be found in Egyptian art. See, e.g., Andrey O. Bolshakov, "The Ideology of the Old Kingdom Portrait," *Götinger Miszellanea*, nos. 117–118, 1990, esp. 102ff.

43. The early development of portrait painting in China is to a large extent a case of conceptual, stock images being transformed into representations of definite persons by inscription. The most notable early examples may be the famous figures on a lacquer basket from Lolang, dated to the 1st–2nd

century A.D., or the portrait of one Puqianjiu and his wife on the wall painting from their tomb ("Luoyang Xi Han Bu Qianjiu mu bihuamu fachu jianbao" [A brief report on the excavation of the Western Han tomb with painted murals of Bu Qianjiu in Luoyang], *Wenwu*, no. 6, 1977, figs. 33–34). Spiro ([as in n. 33], esp. 21–36, 103) discusses some further examples, especially an important group of 3rd-century tomb reliefs depicting the so-called Seven Worthies of the Bamboo Grove. Among tomb figures, inscribed examples are rare. When they occur, however (e.g., a group of figures from a Sui-Tang dynasty tomb at Zhengzhou, each bearing a one- or two-character inscription on the back), this most probably denotes the individuality of the person depicted (see *Kaogu tongxin*, no. 7, 1958, 56).

44. *Report*, I, 194–207, figs. 112–19.

individual works of art, or as self-sustaining entities. Each of them, however, is only one constitutive part of the whole three-pit underground army, which, in turn, forms just one component of the entire burial complex. Thus, much as the significance of a larger unit is determined by its various components, it is only through consideration of the entire micrococm of the Lishan necropolis that the significance of its constitutive parts can be grasped.

The Fictional World of the First Emperor's Necropolis

It has been shown above that each sculpture of the Qin army can be regarded as an aggregate of stylistic and expressive components with varying degrees of differentiation.[46] While the bodily aspect of the sculptures retains a considerable degree of figural distance—something that could be conventionally labeled as stylization—such elements as headgear, garments, armor, and other attributes attain a close iconic resemblance to their models. And some elements, as we have seen—such as real weapons carried by the soldiers—display no figurative distance at all; instead of being represented, they are, properly speaking, presented.

The analogous situation can be discerned in the entire burial compound. Whether or not one accepts the common interpretation that the necropolis is to be understood as a replica of the First Emperor's palace and a symbolic diagram of the cosmos,[47] it undoubtedly was designed as and purported to be a complex whole, made up of many components.

Let us briefly and selectively consider some of its major constitutive parts:[48]

(1) In the underground pit to the west of the tumulus, inside the inner precinct, two bronze carriages have been discovered, each pulled by a team of four horses, complete with the bronze figure of a driver. The chariots are rendered with minute attention to the structural and painted details, as are the teams of horses. They are, however, not real carriages, but replicas half the size of actual ones. In the same pits as the chariots, large quantities of organic remains of hay have been found, suggesting that these underground structures represent depots.[49]

(2) To the east of the outer wall of the compound, some one hundred pits were unearthed, containing horse skeletons and kneeling terra-cotta figures of grooms. The inscriptions on the accompanying ceramic vessels identify these structures as palace stables.[50] Another large group of horse

skeletons was buried on the western side of the tumulus between the inner and outer walls.

(3) In the same area, to the west of the tumulus, another cluster of some thirty small pits contains clay models of deer, birds, and other animals and/or a kneeling figure. They are usually interpreted as symbolizing the emperor's parks and forests.[51]

(4) On the eastern side of the necropolis, nineteen tombs were found, containing human remains, which in all probability were those of high officials and royal retainers destined to follow the First Emperor in death and executed at his funeral.[52]

Finally, there is the underground tomb itself, which, according to a famous and much-quoted passage from the Han-dynasty historian Sima Qian's *Shi ji*, represents the entire world:

> As soon as the First Emperor ascended the throne, the work [on his mausoleum] at Mount Li began. . . . The artisans dug through three subterranean streams, which they sealed off with bronze in order to make the burial chamber. Inside they carried [models of?] palaces, pavilions, and the hundred officials, as well as precious utensils and valuable rarities. . . . With mercury myriad waterways of the empire, the Yangzi and Yellow Rivers, and the great ocean itself were created and made to flow and circulate mechanically. The heavenly constellations were depicted above, while the geography of the earth was laid out below.[53]

The presence of high doses of mercury in the nearby soil, verified through recent scientific examination, lends some credibility to this historical narrative, suggesting that the entire microcosm was indeed created underground.[54] According to the same source, the First Emperor's concubines and the workers involved in the construction of the Lishan necropolis were likewise buried inside the tumulus.

There is much to be gathered from considering these features and the description of the mausoleum. Obviously, for whoever designed the entire burial compound it made sense to use different representational idioms, to employ elements with varying degrees of figuration. The components taken from real life, such as human and animal sacrifices, actual weapons, or hay—that is, those aspects employing no figural distance from their referents (fusing

45. See, e.g., von Erdberg (as in n. 27), 228.

46. For a very useful concept of figural difference, see R. Shiff, "Phototropism (Figuring the Proper)," in *Retaining the Original: Multiple Originals, Copies, and Reproductions*, Studies in the History of Art XX, Washington, D.C., 1989, 162: "no description or picture can copy its model, its original, without differing from that original; and the difference or distancing is created as if through the deployment of a mode of figuration."

47. Hearn, 169–71.

48. For a reconstruction of the Lishan site based on the situation in the early 1980s, see R. Thorp, "An Archaeological Reconstruction of the Lishan Necropolis," in G. Kuwayama, ed., *The Great Bronze Age of China: A Symposium*, Los Angeles, 1983, 72–83. See also *Report*, I, 1–63; Li Dingxuan, "Qin Shihuang ling kaogu tanpin" (Discussion on the

archaeology of the tomb of the First Emperor of Qin), *Wenbo*, no. 5, 1990, 261–65.

49. These chariots were interpreted as auxiliary vehicles for the ghost of the emperor to be used on his inspection tours. See Yuan, 28–29; and "Qin Shi Huang ling yihao tongchema qingli jianbao" (A brief report on the clearing of No. 1 bronze chariot with horses at the tomb of the First Emperor of Qin), *Wenwu*, no. 1, 1991, 1–13.

50. "Qin Shihuang ling dongce majiukeng zuantan qingli jianbao" (Brief report on probing and clearing horse pits on the eastern side of the tomb of the First Emperor of Qin), *Kaogu yu Wenwu*, no. 4, 1980, 31–41; Zhao Kangmin, "Qin Shihuangling dongce faxian wu zuo majiukeng" (Five horse pits found on the eastern side of the tomb of the First Emperor of Qin), *Kaogu yu Wenwu*, no. 5, 1983, 23–26; and Yuan, 29–34.

51. "Qin Shihuangling yuan peizang zuantan qingli jianbao" (Brief report on probing and clearing burial pits within the funerary park of the tomb of the First Emperor of Qin), *Kaogu yu Wenwu*, no. 1, 1982, 25–29; and Yuan, 34–36.

52. "Lintong Shangjiaocun Qimu qingli jianbao" (Brief report on clearing Qin tombs at Shangjiao village, Lintong), *Kaogu yu Wenwu*, no. 2, 1980, 42–50.

53. Sima Qian, *Shi ji* (Records of the historian [ca. 100 B.C.]), Beijing, 1959, VI, 265.

54. See Chang Yong and Li Tong, "Qin Shihuang ling zhong maizang gongde chubu yanjiu" (Preliminary research on the mercury buried in the tumulus of the First Emperor of Qin), *Kaogu*, no. 7, 1983, 659–63, 671.

sign with signified)—were *presented,* while other elements were *represented* in varying degrees of specificity. This appropriation of the whole range of representational modes is marked by a strong propensity for iconic resemblance. It should be noted, at least briefly, that such a feature is by no means exclusive to the Lishan necropolis. Precedents can be found at some Eastern Zhou tombs, for instance, where the bodies of human sacrificial victims were used alongside figural images.[55] Only in the burial of the First Emperor, however, has this approach been fully developed, resulting in an all-encompassing strategy that deployed varying modes of representation to stage a reality appropriate for the emperor's eternal sleep. Such constituting of the fictive reality through various figurative modes, not mere "realism," seems to be the key formal feature for grasping the significance of the Lishan necropolis.[56]

Discerning this feature and its significance should allow us to overcome the confines of the previous accounts of the meaning of the Qin terra-cotta army. Underlying these accounts was basically the assumption that representation must perforce be preceded by a coherent and consistent set of beliefs and attitudes, that it is possible to be sure what kind of reality the figures do represent. Thus, in what has been dubbed here as a substitution-for-absence account, the goal of the army's sculptors was to re-create reality by replicating its aspects with as much verisimilitude as possible, given the limits of medium, technique, and representational capabilities. The experience of the authentic world, which a tomb master could "believe in," can only be sustained if style is sufficiently transparent. The alternate view, posing figures not as substitute people but as self-labeling artificial creations, has the goal of creating a reality of a different order, a self-conscious representation. The style then becomes a purposefully selected code, a mode of representation appropriate only for depicting the otherworldly reality.

It surely need not be supposed that beliefs and religious sentiments played no significant role in the creation of this artificial eternal world. However, need we assume that the determination of the status of the representation precedes its coming into existence, rather than being enacted through the process of depiction? Beliefs and motives, at any rate, are always compromised by the actual conditions and circumstances of image making.

What has been preserved of the First Emperor's necropolis enables us to discern the artistic and ideological goal of its creators: to produce a self-sustaining version of the world, plausible enough to support the notion of authenticity. The practical circumstances and constraints of the construction of such a world must have decisively determined its format and style. Thus, if it was possible some two centuries earlier for a
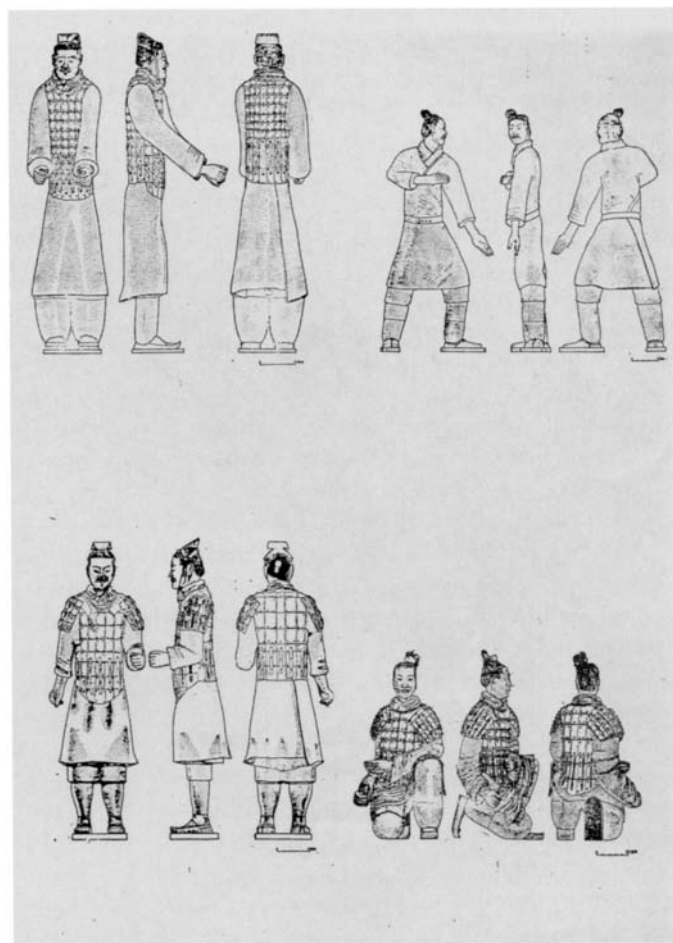
14 Charioteer, Standing and Kneeling Archers, and Infantryman, seen from the front, side, and back (from Yuan, figs. 49, 58, 79, 82)

ruler of the local state, Marquis Yi of Zeng, to have twenty-one young women (presumably his concubines and musicians) follow him in death,[57] if it was perhaps possible for the First Emperor himself to have his concubines and artisans (or even court retainers) buried with him, the same would not have been possible in respect of an army of some seven thousand fully armed men, along with horses, unless, that is, they were replicated as clay models. Obviously, it was quite possible (and desirable) to represent some horses through the burial of actual animals, as it was preferable to present real weapons and real hay, instead of their surrogates. But ocean, rivers, and skies, as well as the army itself, had to be depicted to become part of this realm. For such a fictional world to be successfully and plausibly deployed, it had to consist of all the elements deemed appropriate and neces-

55. E.g., Eastern Zhou tomb no. 7 at Changzi, Shanxi province, which contained skeletons of at least three sacrificial victims who accompanied the master of the tomb in death, as well as four wooden figurines. See "Shanxi Changzi xian Dong Zhou mu" (Eastern Zhou tombs at Changzi county, Shanxi province) *Kaogu Xuebao,* no. 4, 1984, 503–30, esp. figs. 2, 10.

56. In a somewhat different context and sense,

David Keightley has identified what he describes as "a totalistic desire" that seeks "to appropriate all available forms of expression, to speak with a full range of dialects and accents" as a significant trait of Neolithic and Bronze Age Chinese art (Keightley, 1990a, esp. 19–23, 39.)

57. Hubei Provincial Museum, *Zeng Hou Yi mu* (The tombs of Marquis Yi of Zeng), 2 vols., Beijing, 1989.

58. See Freedberg's notion of "constitutive verisimilitude" (i.e., a resemblance that reproduces) striving toward reproduction of total reality, which he contrasts with accuracy as a reflective category (i.e., the accuracy that mirrors); Freedberg, 206.

59. Some authors associate the figures with specific Qin military ranks, as their nomenclature was recorded in extant texts (see, e.g., Chen Mengdong

sary to (and presumably by) the emperor, for whom this staged reality was created. But much as iconic resemblance was desired and pursued, the efficacy of this fictional reality was not predicated on the exact visual accuracy of its constitutive parts, which in any case could not have been achieved.[58]

Reference in the Clay Warriors

One aspect of ultimate importance in the real world was the emperor's army, and for the surrogate army to become a meaningful part of the fictional world it had to replicate the roles and efficacity of its model. Our earlier finding that the terra-cotta figures do not represent actual soldiers points to an essential characteristic of the real army, and thus by extension of its surrogate: in the emperor's eyes, his soldiers were not important for *who* they were, but for what they *could do* or what they could be *used for*. Their individual personalities were fully encased in their roles. What mattered within the confines of the underground realm were those aspects that made each soldier a constitutive component of the whole—his function, as it was embodied in position, gesture, and the requisite attributes. And this is exactly what is depicted in each figure.

The conceptual component of style, which imbues the terra-cotta soldiers with a rigid, almost marionettelike appearance, freezing them in certain (sometimes exaggerated) postures and gestures, dominates their physical aspect. It captures those movements and stances that spatially embody and define—and thus differentiate—the most typical, meaningful configuration in which the specific function of a given individual within the whole unit was enacted (Figs. 2, 5, 14). Any more convincing or psychologically more persuasive kind of realistic depiction would be out of place here, precisely as the aim was not to depict any random, subjective posture or transient state of mind, but a relatively stable, distinctive situation. In contrast, the descriptive, iconic component of style literally transcribes the appearance of each soldier's attributes—his headgear, outfit, boots, armor, weapons. Equally it serves to differentiate his specific function within the larger body of men. The figure of a kneeling archer or a charioteer perhaps best illustrates how both components of style, organically intertwined, refer to twin aspects of the figure's model, through which its status was established as an operating, functional component of the army: the requisite posture and gesture, and the iconicity of the attributes (Figs. 5, 15). This reference constitutes the identity of each clay soldier: the specific rank and role/function is the "who" represented—precisely the signified we have been striving to disclose.[59]

It has already been mentioned that the essentially imper-

15 Charioteer from pit no. 2, detail (from *Legion*, fig. 88)

sonal, functional character of the clay army has a certain correspondence with the Legalist tenets of the Qin state, which stressed standardization, efficacity of the individual, and subordination to prescribed social roles.[60] However, to understand how the formats and styles of the First Emperor's eternal world developed, it is also necessary to look beyond the specific social situation and institutions of the Qin state and ideology to persistent, much older patterns of thought and ritual action, which conspired in the creation of the army. The use of tomb figures evolved within the context of ancestor worship, within the broad framework of burial practices and concern with the afterlife. Scholars studying late Neolithic and Bronze Age mortuary customs have pointed to depersonalization as a significant feature in early Chinese religion and metaphysics. David Keightley, in particular, concentrating on the detailed study of Shang oracle bone inscriptions, has persuasively traced the loss of individual personality involved in becoming an ancestor. In Keightley's words: "Although [these] dead have power, they have no personality."[61] Further implications of such a feature have not been lost either: this bureaucratization and ritualization of ancestor worship have been proposed as one

and Lu Guilan, "Qin ling bingyong jueji kao" (Investigation of the ranks of soldier figures of Qin [Shihuangdi's] tomb), *Wenbo*, no. 1, 1985, 14–20. Further research will have to establish whether the sculptures can indeed be so classified.

60. Maxwell Hearn has noted that the "profusely detailed appearance of the terracotta army reveals the same ardor for minutiae that pervades Qin's precisely defined legal statutes" (Hearn, 368). There is certainly a need for further attempts to deter-

mine how the contemporary intellectual and cognitive endeavors—such as standardization in writing, measures, and weights—carried out during Qin Shi Huang's rule might have influenced the sculptors of the terra-cotta army.

61. Keightley, 1990b, esp. 41–46, 68–70. On the basis of arguments assembled in several of his publications, Keightley supports his view of the bureaucratization and depersonalization of the dead

and death, especially in the practices of conferring temple names (described as typological and jural) on dead kings, of assigning functions to the dead, and of using the dead body of the king itself to legitimize the living king's political power and decisions. See, too, D. N. Keightley, "The Religious Commitment: Shang Theology and the Genesis of Chinese Political Culture," *History of Religions*, XVII, no. 1, 1978, esp. 218–20.

16 Formation of Infantrymen in pit no. 1, detail (from *Legion*, fig. 133)

basis for the generalizing nature of early Chinese art and aesthetics.[62]

The depersonalization and bureaucratization associated with death and the dead obviously characterized not only the object of worship itself—the dead ancestors—but also the sacrificial victims destined to accompany the dead. Their primary function was both to continue rendering appropriate service to their master and to express, perpetuate, and validate his/her ritual and social status. The evidence from archaeological remains suggests that in this function the sacrificial victims' own roles and status must have taken precedence over their aspects as individual human beings. To cite again one instance of negative, albeit significant evidence: among a number of sacrificial victims unearthed

from Neolithic and Bronze Age tombs—sometimes with well-preserved coffins and burial accoutrements—not once was there any indication of the personal identity of the victim being recorded.[63] Tomb figures, which assumed the place of actual sacrificial victims (substituting in a broader sense of the term), were thus required to perpetuate the same task, to represent a social/ritual identity, rather than a metaphysical, personal one. The outward signs of function that integrated an individual as a signifying, relevant part of the tomb master's social (and hence ritual) realm had to be depicted. Qin terra-cottas are one of the first and arguably the most comprehensive embodiment of this logic.

We have established what the figures were meant to represent; that is, what the main reference in each figure is. And this finally positions us to address the question of what this implies for the status of the figures. In other words, it leads back to our initial question: can these soldiers be regarded as "portraits"? The logical solution for those authors who opposed the notion of Qin terra-cotta soldiers as portraits was to assign them the status of types: "they seem to be on the whole *idealized types* rather than *realistic portraits*" (emphasis added).[64] Despite the recent awareness of the blurred and fluid boundaries between the representation of individual and type, this polarity still informs most discussions of portraiture and has been crucial in discussions of early Chinese figural art.[65] Most early Chinese portraits are characterized as typological in the sense that a type is used for the depiction of a certain individual. The dichotomy of individual versus type has recently been emphasized in an attempt to contrast patterns of representation and thought in early China and early Greece.[66]

What has been concluded here about the nature of style and reference in the Qin figures would seemingly require us to accept that they indeed represent types. First, it has been ascertained that they are not representations of actual men. Furthermore, in his posture, gestures, and attributes, each figure embodies the most stable and intrinsic—hence typical—parameters of a particular rank or specialization within the army, be it general, officer, archer, carriage driver, bowman, foot soldier, and so on. Each figure can also belong to one of several facial types. Finally, some have also tried to read physiognomic features as signifying the different regional origins of those who constituted the Qin army.[67] In light of these findings it is possible to conclude that the figures embody what might be considered typical qualities. Yet I believe that they still do not qualify as representations of generalized types and that it would be incorrect to assign them this label. I would like to explore the possibility that sculptures of the Qin emperor's army in fact challenge and

62. Keightley, 1990b, 68–70.

63. Also pertinent to our argument here is the fact that in the royal Shang dynasty burials, various classes of sacrificial human victims—corresponding to their differing social ranks and functions under the king when he was alive—were present. See also Lu (as in n. 8).

64. Brinker (as in n. 16), 178. See also n. 30.

65. Baines (as in n. 18), 14: "Portraiture is a case of how axial fixity might change into freedom through

detailed concentration on individuals rather than types." On the interchange between portraits and conventional figures, individuals, and types, see also E. H. Gombrich, "Grotesque Heads," in *The Heritage of Apelles: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance*, Ithaca, N.Y., 1976, esp. 69–70; and J. Cahill, *The Compelling Image: Nature and Style in Seventeenth-Century Chinese Painting*, Cambridge, Mass., 1982, esp. 108, 114, 130, 141.

66. "Early Chinese artists valued repetition of patterns and they valued the type over the individual"

(Keightley, 1990a, 49). This theme is pursued by Keightley, 1990b.

67. E.g., *Legion*, 163; and Wang (as in n. 25), 73.

68. The terra-cotta soldiers of the First Emperor can thus be considered an extreme case of a more general situation, characteristic of group portraiture as practiced in both Western and Chinese art. See Brilliant, 95ff: "It is the participation in the group and the devices used by the artist to visualize that participation that have such a high degree of significance in establishing any member's identity."

perhaps elude the conceptual dichotomy of individual versus type so crucial to Western thinking on figural art.

Much as in the real world, the personal identities of individual soldiers were of no consequence to the army's operation; each figure in the terra-cotta army acquires its status and significance only within the framework of the whole and insofar as it contributes to the function of that whole.[68] On the other hand, the larger context, that is, the army, is sustained only through the participation of a definite number of entities, each embodying its own specific role.

A look into the reconstructed formation of pit no. 1 helps to elucidate this point. Postures, gestures, and basic attributes (such as the type of armor, garment, or weapon), which refer to the specific function of its model, establish each figure as a member of a generic type (armored infantryman, archer, etc.). However, within the formation of figures belonging to the same type and thus conforming to one basic stance and type of garment, no two sculptures are completely identical; each member of the group is particularized in some way. The identity of each figure is thus predicated on its being differentiated, established as a specific segment of reality within the entire body of the army. The status is sustained through the effect of difference (Figs. 8, 16).

This also suggests an explanation of the variety of facial expressions of the clay soldiers. Why, after all, were all the faces not rendered in a stereotypical, undifferentiated (or at least less particularized manner), if it is the other figural aspects that carry the reference? The features, as we have seen, do not convey distinct, individual physiognomies. These faces are not (to use Richard Brilliant's apt phrase) "repositories of primary signals of identity."[69] Indeed, they are not "likenesses" at all, and it is precisely because the features do not carry a burden of reference to actual people that they could be relentlessly manipulated and assembled from a stock of prefabricated expressive units. And yet the role of faciality in the Qin warriors is paramount. Facial diversity was essential for creating (or at least enhancing) the effect of difference. Within the spatial contiguity of figures of one type, the face, differentiated from surrounding faces, installs the plausibility and authenticity of each figure as a distinct entity.

The First Emperor's terra-cotta soldiers may not be accepted as portraits in the strict sense of the word. Like Fragonard's *portraits de fantaisie* or some astonishingly specific images from Egyptian tombs, they lack any reference to individuals.[70] Unlike those representations, however, for reasons just outlined, the Qin warriors are not just typological representations. Through their interaction in one spatial continuum, several thousands of these images constitute the composite portrait of an army. In this capacity, each figure thus refers to a specific, irreducible element of reality. According to Brilliant, "Fundamental to portraiture in the vast repertoire of artistic representation is the necessity of expressing the intended relationship between the portrait image and the *human original*" (emphasis added).[71] What had to be revealed and reconstituted of the human originals of whom the emperor's army was composed specifically does not include any element of individuality; the personal identity revealed in the image is nonexistent or, rather, is completely consistent with the social/ritual identity.[72] Yet, if we can accept that the charge of portraiture lies primarily in the notation of the specific segment of reality to which the figural image refers, in sustaining distinctness of entity within a given context, without necessarily having to contain any qualities of individual personality, we should be prepared to consider the Qin warriors as one instance at the outer limits of the vast genre we call portraiture.[73]

The Subject of the Emperor and His Necropolis

Qin Shi Huangdi's burial compound was created during a period of very significant development in the history of Chinese art. Commencing some three centuries earlier and culminating during the Han dynasty, around the first century A.D., this development brought about the gradual evolution of representational concerns, of psychological realism. It is usually, albeit somewhat simplistically, described as an evolution from decoration to representation.[74]

The terra-cotta army, as indeed the conception of the whole necropolis, seemingly embodies a major innovation, an achievement radically different from Bronze Age art. Referring to Sima Qian's description of the subterranean world of the emperor's tomb quoted above, Wu Hung has recently characterized this change:

It reveals an artistic goal that would have been entirely alien to the Three Dynasties [i.e., the Bronze Age]. Shang-Zhou ritual art did not portray any worldly phenomena but aimed to visualize an intermediate stage between the human world and the world beyond it, thus linking these two separate realms. In the Lishan tomb, however, art imitated actual things: there was an artificial ocean and flowing rivers, and all images were arranged to create an artificial microcosm of the universe.[75]

Another aspect of the Qin emperor's burial compound can be pointed out as sharply contrasting with the art of the preceding epochs: the very existence of monumental figural

69. Brilliant, 43.

70. For the status of the *portraits de fantaisie*, see M. D. Sheriff, "Invention, Resemblance, and Fragonard's *Portraits de Fantaisie*," *Art Bulletin*, LXIX, no. 1, 1987, 77–87. For Egyptian sculptures which may qualify as portraits, see Donald Spanel, *Through Ancient Eyes: Egyptian Portraiture*, Birmingham, Ala., 1988.

71. Brilliant, 7.

72. See Wendy Steiner's suggestion ("The Semiotics of a Genre: Portraiture in Literature and Paint-

ing," *Semiotica*, XXI, 1977, 111–19) that the uniqueness of portraits among artworks comes from their specific reference to an existing element of reality, that is, a real person.

73. While supporting Brilliant's insistence on referentiality as a necessary condition of portraiture, the Qin soldiers seem to counter his claim that identity constituted merely as a social artifact would be incomprehensible to an artist and impossible to represent (Brilliant, 12–13).

74. See, e.g., M. Loehr, "Some Fundamental Issues in the History of Chinese painting," *Journal of Asian*

Studies, XXIII, no. 2, 1964, 186. William Watson positioned the break with the tradition of formalizing, nonrealistic art in the middle of the 1st century B.C., but this whole process can be traced over many centuries. See W. Watson, *The Genius of China*, exh. cat., Royal Academy, London, 1973, 117; and idem, *Style in the Arts of China*, London, 1974, 52.

75. Wu Hung, "From Temple to Tomb: Ancient Chinese Art and Religion in Transition," *Early China*, XIII, 1988, 94.

work on such a scale, human figures having always occupied a subordinate place in earlier periods. Most notably then, it is the presence of a feature that has been referred to here as the "iconic impulse"—a totally unprecedented systematic attention to accuracy and verisimilitude in rendering reality. Thus, to another writer, "the vividly lifelike soldiers constitute such a radical departure from anything previously known from China. . . . something startlingly new and indicative for the future."[76]

However, is this notion of radical innovation, of a fundamental break with a previous stage as simple and straightforward as the above passages would seem to suggest? When we consider those features that specifically define the Qin emperor's necropolis and the terra-cotta army, the mental and technological processes involved in their creation, a somewhat different picture is obtained. To enumerate only the most important points, which have already been discussed: firstly, the pervasive sense of depersonalization, brought about by the presence of several thousand figural images, none of which, however, denotes any personal identity, as well as by the total absence of any image of the emperor himself; secondly, the emphasis on orderly arrangement and placement; thirdly, the "totalistic" appropriation of disparate figurative modes and idioms involved in the creation of the underground world. Above all else, one can discern the operation of "editorial compulsion" to manipulate a preexisting stock of expressive units, most clearly present in the rendering of faces. Significantly, all these elements define early Bronze Age (and to some extent the preceding Neolithic) artistic production, most notably the art of bronze ritual vessels in its early stage, during the Shang dynasty.[77] It is only logical to find these analogies extending to the realm of technology, since both the casting of bronze vessels and the making of terra-cotta figures involve serial, prescriptive processes.[78] Definite analogies can also be projected for the status of the artisan-craftsman in both cases, though the lack of space does not permit us a closer view.

The above-quoted observation on the distinction between Qin and Bronze Age artistic practice is correct in its own terms but it remains misleadingly incomplete: the goal of the clay army's creators—to depict vast segments of reality—was indeed different from that of Bronze Age artisans and their patrons. Yet the Lishan necropolis and the clay army retained some defining, strategic characteristics of earlier art.

Although this is not the place for a full discussion of the analogies and comparisons between the Qin and Shang states, it can nevertheless be argued that there is a certain correspondence between the unified, centralized state of Qin and the theocratic state of the late Shang period. A brief comparison of the representational practice of the early Bronze Age in relation to the ideological concerns of the elite will therefore provide the opportunity for yet another approach to grasping the significance of the artificial microcosm at Lishan and the role of the Qin emperor himself in its establishment.

For present purposes at least, early Bronze Age Chinese art can be divided into two broad groups. First, a distinct set of elaborate and codified symbolic forms, especially bronze and jade artifacts, central to the ritual activities of the elite, functioned as a physical means of access to the supernatural realm. In this capacity, together with other types of artifacts, they also symbolized the religious and political authority of their owners. Second, it was surface decoration that enhanced and strengthened the ritual efficacy of the object on which it appeared. The repeated use ("use" implicitly subsumes display) of ritual objects and images sanctified and legitimized the political authority of the elite, thus validating the existing social hierarchy and maintaining the sociopolitical order.[79]

In this art, reference to the observable phenomena of the natural world was relatively scarce and in any case played a subordinate role. More important, the primary goal of representational activity was not to depict the object of worship—ancestors and spirits—nor indeed the king. In striking contrast to the art of other ancient societies, there is in early Chinese art a near-total absence of images of both supernatural and this-world authorities, and of their activities. In early China, the status of ruler and elite—and thus the stability of sociopolitical order—was to a large extent established and maintained through their ability to appropriate, control, and deploy various means of representation. Perpetuation of those activities that secured the elite's position within the stable, immutable, and manageable world order was tantamount to claiming and asserting control over forms and modes of visual mediation; yet it did not include the elite (or the object of their religious worship) as the subject of the depictive activities.[80]

The gradual reification of visual practice toward depiction of real-life phenomena that took place in the later Bronze Age gained momentum with the reestablishment of the centralized, unified political power of the Qin state. Among all the aspects of the world that became legitimate subjects of representation, however, the ruler himself and his accomplishments were not included. The situation followed the pattern of the early Bronze Age in that the status of the

76. Joseph Alsop, The Rare Art Traditions: The History of Art Collecting and Its Linked Phenomena Wherever These Have Appeared, London, 1982, 218–20. Alsop writes that the terra-cotta army of the First Emperor provides a departure point for the new development of Chinese art, and describes "the reign of Qin Shihuangdi as the moment when the second era of art obscurely, rather strangely, yet demonstrably originated" (ibid., 217).

77. See Keightley, 1990a; and 1990b, esp. 52ff.

78. For a formulation of prescriptive technological processes, as compared to holistic types of artistic production, see Ursula M. Franklin, "The Beginnings of Metallurgy in China: A Comparative Approach," in Kuwayama, ed. (as in n. 48), 96–97.

79. L. Kesner, "Taotie Reconsidered: Meanings and Functions of Shang Theriomorphic Imagery," Artibus Asiae, LXI, nos. 1–2, 1991, 29–53.

80. A comparison with ancient Egypt is particularly instructive. The substantive body of Egyptian representation was inextricably intertwined with the ideological legitimization of rule as in China; it depended, however, to a large extent on the dissemination of an image of the king. See Davis, passim, and esp. 203–24, for the ideological dimension of canonical imagery. For the ideological function of state-sanctioned royal likenesses in ancient Egypt, see A. P. Kozloff and B. M. Bryan with L. M. Berman, Egypt's Dazzling Sun: Amenhotep III and His World, exh. cat., Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, 1992, 125–92.

81. Qin Shi Huang's dread of death is mentioned in Shi Ji. According to the same source, the emperor employed a number of alchemists/exorcists (xian) to obtain an elixir of immortality. See Ying-Shih Yu, "Life and Immortality in Han China," Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, XXV, 1964–65, 92–96.

supreme political and religious authority was enacted and maintained through the emperor's comprehensive control of various orders of representation, without in any way depending on the dissemination of his own image. The Shang elite's privileged access to image making as a coded language, as a specialized form of knowledge, was replaced at this time by an even more concentrated control of and access to means (cognitive, personal, technological) of depicting empirical reality. The status of the First Emperor was commensurate with his ability to deploy various modes of representation through which the real world could be perpetuated in the afterlife—in other words, with his ability to deploy artifice. Thus, in burials of the Shang dynasty people followed the dead king into the netherworld to render him appropriate service and to symbolize his status. This custom was perpetuated, albeit on a far less significant scale, by Eastern Zhou nobility, and, as we have observed above, it was probably partly used by the Qin emperor at Lishan. In fact, one specific reference in the terra-cotta army must have been to this practice, which at that time would have been still at least dimly remembered. But where the Shang kings were able to take life as a means of expressing and construing their status, the First Emperor was capable of having humans and things depicted as an alternative mode of presentation to achieve the same end.

It has been repeatedly and variously stated that the underground army embodies the ideology of the Qin state and its Legalist doctrines and expresses the Qin emperor's religious and supernatural beliefs. One objective in this paper has been to point to some of the pitfalls inherent in such accounts of the terra-cotta army, which essentially position art as a vehicle for some predetermined belief or philosophical concept. This is not to deny the role of religious beliefs in the construction of the Lishan necropolis and its inhabitants. What historians have claimed about the Qin emperor's superstititous nature, his dread of death, and his prolonged quest for physical immortality suggests that there certainly might have been elements of belief in the magic efficacy of the clay warriors involved in the commission and construction of the army and the whole artificial microcosm.[81] The First Emperor's psychic dispositions, anxieties, and ego are as much—and perhaps more—relevant to the army's origins as contemporaneous religious doctrines. This, however, still does not help much to explain this remarkable project. Were, after all, the clay soldiers any more real, efficacious entities to the emperor than paper replicas of electric rice pots, refrigerators, and servants are real and functioning objects to the contemporary Taiwanese villagers

who are interred with them?[82] How do we go about establishing what those who commission such funerary goods believe in? Continuity in these two instances of furnishing the dead with representations of the significant aspects of their human existence can be partly justified at least by reference to religious beliefs and recurrent psychological dispositions. These are insufficient, however, to account for the difference between the clay soldiers of the First Emperor and the paper servants of Taiwanese villagers today.

One substantial implication of regarding representation as merely the expression of some belief or idea, rather than as complete on its own terms, is to keep the gulf between representation and reality wide open. However (and here my argument assumes the form of a proposition), the significance of the Lishan necropolis can only be grasped by adopting the perspective recently embraced by Freedberg toward the end of his book *The Power of Images*: to reconsider the radical disjunction between the reality of an art object and reality itself.[83] The concern with locating some belief as the underlying rationale for the terra-cotta army, then, must be supplemented with a proper focus on the force of imagination: not belief but make-believe played a crucial role.[84]

The whole microcosm of the Lishan necropolis did not, therefore, primarily reflect or express Legalist or Daoist doctrines, the Qin state ideology, or the emperor's beliefs. The Lishan mausoleum simply in itself constitutes the most complete, self-sustained form of an idea.[85] It occurs at a critical juncture in the history of Chinese art, at the moment when the coercive power of the ruler was matched with his ability to command vast economic resources and, above all, to exert exclusive authority over forms of visual mediation. Because of such an unparalleled capability to orchestrate representational modes, combining presentation with the deployment of various figurative modes of representation, a microcosm could have been created that sustained claims to authenticity. The real world extended into the artificial one to create a single continuous presence. In this continuum, because of specific historical circumstances, the beliefs and personal anxieties of one man were completely tantamount to the ideological concerns of the state. The Lishan project was naturally aimed at the future, designed to represent and perpetuate a certain order of the world, to project it into eternity for the needs of the emperor after his death. However, it was during and through the long process of the project's coming into existence that the very order it strove to represent was being established and embodied in the first place. The Lishan necropolis is a metaphor for the person of

82. See Emily Ahern, *The Cult of the Dead in a Chinese Village*, Stanford, Calif., 1973, 226: "The most elaborate array of paper objects I saw was for a woman in the Li lineage. . . . Inside the front gate, in the open courtyard, were replicas of an electric fan, two television sets, an electric rice pot, a washing machine, a car with large tail fins, a radio, lawn furniture, and a refrigerator, along with several servants wielding mops and brooms. . . . Relatives sometimes carry on long discussions while gazing at the paper house, enumerating all the comforts provided for the dead. Those close to the deceased are clearly anxious about the precise

conditions of the ancestor's existence in the underworld." See also A. Cormack, *Chinese Births, Weddings and Deaths*, Peking [Beijing], 1923, 29–30.

83. Freedberg, chap. 15, esp. 436–41.

84. Kendall Walton has recently provided a thoughtful account of representation, whose theoretical thrust is most pertinent to our theme. It emphasizes the role of the imagination (as contrasted to belief) in the creation of fictional worlds; see K. Walton, *Mimesis as Make-Believe: On the Foundations of Representational Arts*, Cambridge, Mass. 1990, esp. 39–42, 273: "We do not just observe fictional worlds from without. We live in them."

85. The case of the First Emperor's mausoleum (but more generally, of the whole of early Chinese art) provides support for Whitney Davis's strong critique of idealist, reductive notions of representation: "rather than asking what ideas are expressed in a canonical image, we should ask how ideas are expressed in an image—which is another way of asking simply what kind of ideas the images are and not what kinds of ideas magico-religious or other doctrines might be. . . . Representation is no more and no less than a specific doctrine or belief *in itself*" (Davis, 202–3).

the First Emperor himself. His very subjectivity—though nowhere figuratively depicted—was being enacted here in its twin aspect of an individual with personal beliefs and anxieties and the omnipotent First Emperor. Only thus established, could he finally enter the hereafter.

Frequently Cited Sources

Brilliant, R., *Portraiture*, London, 1991.

Davis, W., *The Canonical Tradition in Ancient Egyptian Art*, Cambridge, 1989.

Freedberg, D., *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response*, Chicago, 1989.

Hearn, M. K., "The Terracotta Army of the First Emperor of Qin," in Wen Fong, ed., *The Great Bronze Age of China: An Exhibition from the People's Republic of China*, exh. cat., Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1980, 353–78.

Keightley, D., 1990a, "In Clear and in Code: Pre-Classical Roots of the Great Tradition in China," paper delivered at the session "The Formation of Great Traditions," Annual Meeting of the College Art Association, New York.

————, 1990b, Where Have All the Heroes Gone?: Reflections on Protagonists, Art, and Culture in Early China and Early Greece, unpublished manuscript, Berkeley.

Ledderose, L., and A. Schlombs, eds., *Jenseits der grossen Mauer: Der Erste Kaiser von China und seine Terrakotta-Armee*, exh. cat., Museum am Ostwall, Dortmund, Gütersloh, 1990.

Legion   The First Emperor's Terracotta Legion, compiled by the Archaeological Team of Qin Shi Huang Mausoleum, Beijing, 1988.

Quest   The Quest for Eternity: Chinese Ceramic Sculptures from the People's Republic of China, exh. cat., Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, 1987.

Report   Qin Shi Huang ling bing ma yong keng yihao keng fajue baogao 1974–1984 (Report on the excavation of No. 1 pit of figures of soldiers and horses at the First Emperor's mausoleum in 1974–1984), compiled by Archaeological Institute of Shaanxi Province and Archaeological Team of Qin Pits of Pottery Figures, 2 vols., Beijing, 1988.

Yuan Zhongyi, ed., *Qin Shi Huang ling bing ma yong yanjiu* (The research on pottery figures of soldiers and horses at the First Emperor's mausoleum), Beijing, 1990.

Ladislav Kesner, who received a Ph.D. from Charles University, Prague, is a curator of Chinese art in the National Gallery, Prague. He has written catalogues and articles on Chinese art; the latter have appeared in Artibus Asiae, Oriental Art, Orientations, *and elsewhere [Department of Asian Arts, National Gallery, zamek Zbraslav, 15600 Praha 5, Czech Republic].*