

## Yin-ting 銀釘 und yin-ting 銀錠

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Among the unpublished papers left by Paul Pelliot that are now being posthumously printed under the auspices of the "Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres", the essay *Les débuts de l'imprimerie en Chine* (Oeuvres Posthumes de Paul Pelliot, IV, Paris 1953) is of special importance because of the wide range of problems treated.

Prof. Pelliot completed this article in 1928; doubtless he would have amplified the text and added corrections if he had lived to make it ready for the press. P. Demiéville wrote a valuable Appendix, containing additional notes on the printed editions of the Buddhist Canon. Here I may present a few remarks on Pelliot's discussion of the famous collection of rubbings, the *Ch'un-hua-ko-ta-t'ieh*<sup>[1]</sup>.

On pp. 112—114 appears an extensive footnote where Pelliot discusses the Chinese terms used for indicating the clamps used for repairing the blocks from which the rubbings of the *Ch'un-hua-ko* collection were taken. Pelliot goes into great detail in order to show that these clamps were referred to by some Chinese writers as *yin-ting*<sup>[2]</sup> "silver nails", and by others as *yin-ting*<sup>[3]</sup> "silver ingots"; he poses the question why these different terms were used, adding that he suspects that they refer to two different features.

However, when Pelliot wrote his article he evidently had no copy of the *Ch'un-hua-ko-ta-t'ieh* at his disposal, for an examination of the current sets of these rubbings supplies the answer to the question. As shown on the accompanying photograph, the outlines of the clamps as they appear on the rubbings form a pair of swallow-tails connected at the narrow end. This is indeed the usual shape of the clamps used to this day in China and Japan for mending bursts in antique objects of wood, bamboo, lacquer etc. The material of the clamps is usually hardwood, but for more valuable objects silver and mother of pearl are also used. Their shape reminds us of that of, for instance, an hour-glass; but the Chinese were struck by their resemblance to the conventional representation in pictorial art of the silver ingot, often occurring in ornamental designs of an auspicious character.

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[1] 淳化閣法帖

[2] 銀釘

[3] | 錠



These clamps can therefore be referred to either as "nails" or as "ingots". The writers who employed the former term thought primarily of the *function* of the clamps, those using the latter thought in the first place of their *shape*. Thus both terms are right and both refer to the same clamps, hence both appear in older and later Chinese writings dealing with this famous set of rubbings.

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