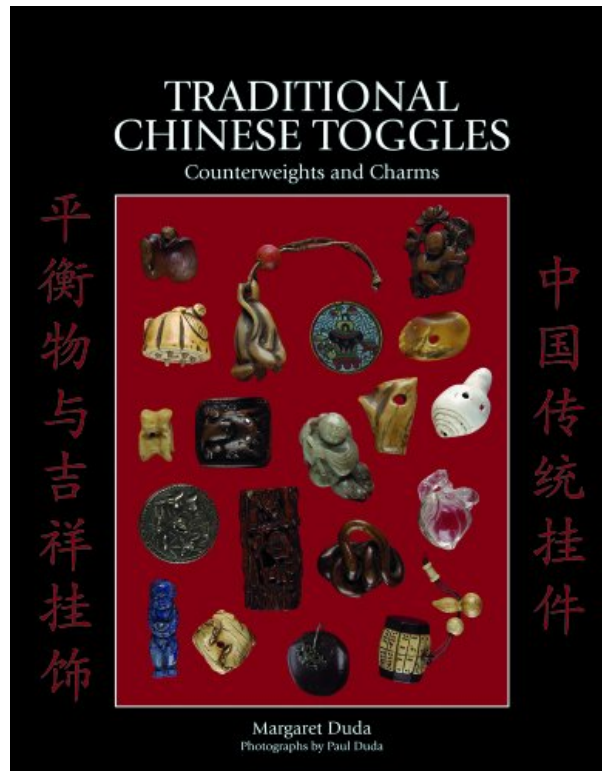


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About the Author

Margaret Duda is an American writer, photographer and jewellery designer who has authored a number of books, short stories and articles, including *Four Centuries of Silver: Personal Adornment in the Qing Dynasty and After* and "Grooming Kits and Fragrance Carriers in Qing China", published in the acclaimed arts and antiques magazine, *Arts of Asia*. She is one of the leading authorities in the field of Chinese toggles, having spent many years studying and researching the topic. This book combines her interest in writing, photography and personal adornment.

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This volume is an excellent reference guide to the historical and cultural significance of Chinese toggles or zhuizi ? carved pieces of jade, ivory, bone, wood, shell and semi-precious stones used by the Chinese in ancient times as counterweights to secure personal effects like tobacco pipes and money pouches to their belts. Over time, toggles became treasured objects of identity and expression, believed to bring the bearer good luck, happiness, fertility, longevity and health. Accompanied by stunning photography and detailed descriptions, *Traditional Chinese Toggles: Counterweights and Charms* will be the definitive illustrative guide to this little-known Chinese art form.

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Meticulous research and preparation; a wonderful book in every way

By PBjW

Almost everyone is familiar with Japanese toggles (known to the world as netsuke), but until this volume, few will have even been aware of the existence of Chinese toggles. Except for the author, of course, who has been collecting and photographing, researching, cataloging and writing about them to share with the world.

Toggles are absolutely fascinating in their own right as they come in all sizes and shapes, created from stone, ivory, wood, metal, crystal, bone, seeds, etc., but the insights they give into the everyday world of the symbols, myths, legends, and concerns of China is breathtaking. The toggles themselves are miniature carvings of mushrooms, figurines, musical instruments, birds, gods, animals...and their diverse subject matter is meticulously used by author as an entree to introducing the iconographic palette of traditional (and in many cases, modern) China.

Reading this book is like sitting side-by-side with the author as she shares her collection with you--explaining the substance and meaning of each toggle while enriching your knowledge of China piece by piece. There are hundreds of fascinating stories and explanations as well as much good and practical advice ranging from how to distinguish genuine elephant tusks from mammoth tusks, to explaining the properties of the materials each carver chose to work in.

Special praise must also be given the photographer Paul Duda for the beautiful, perfect four-color photographs that are found on every page. It is no mean feat to photograph such miniature items, yet each is photographed crisply and perfectly and from the best perspective to show off the carver's material, skill and the subject matter chosen.

Anyone interested in Chinese motifs and symbols, superstitions and charms, folk art and crafts, or looking for an insight into the folk life of China, will appreciate this book. I am confident that this beautiful volume will endure the test of time and remain for many years to come, the definitive resource on this fascinating topic.

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