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Sommario/riassunto	This is the biography of a set of rare Buddhist statues from China. Their extraordinary adventures take them from the Buddhist temples of fifteenth-century Putuo - China's most important pilgrimage island - to their seizure by a British soldier in the First Opium War in the early 1840s, and on to a starring role in the Great Exhibition of 1851. In the 1850s, they moved in and out of dealers' and antiquarian collections,

arriving in 1867 at Liverpool Museum. Here they were re-
conceptualized as specimens of the 'Mongolian race' and, later, as
examples of Oriental art. The statues escaped the bom
