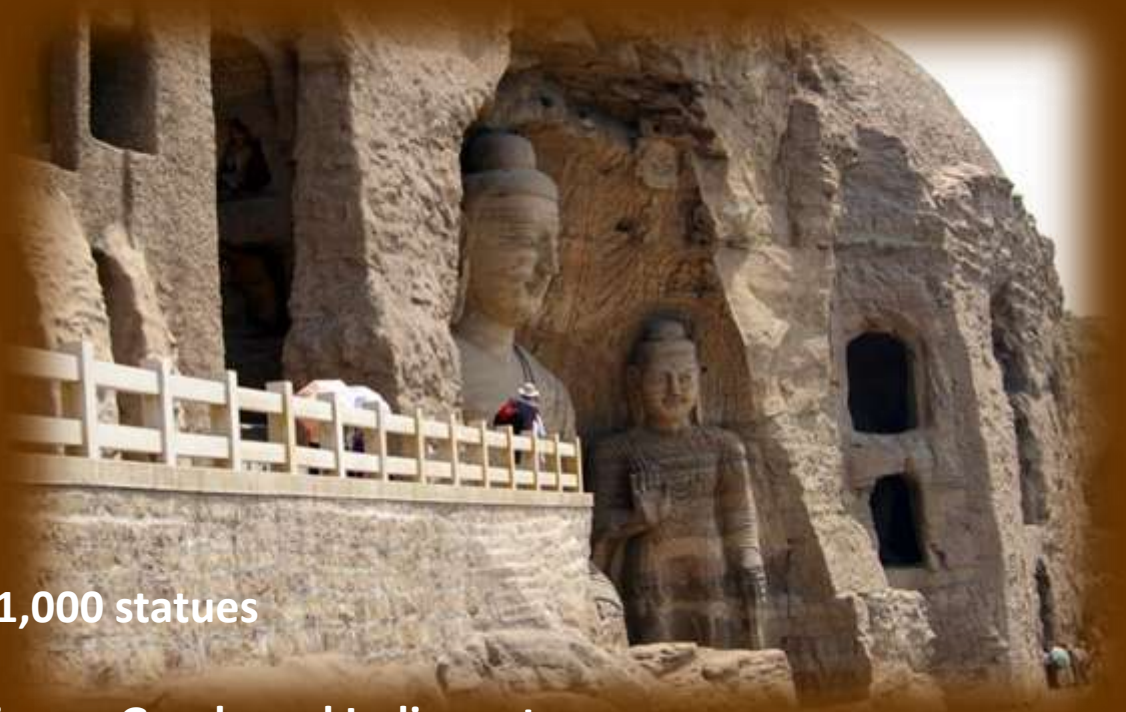


The YunGang Grottoes 山西、大同、雲岡石窟

Datong, Shanxi, China June 06, 2010

## The YunGang Grottoes

- one of the three famous grottoes in China
- on the northern side of the Wuzhou Mountain 武周山
- 16 KM west of Datong City in Shanxi Province
- about 1 KM from east to west
- 45 (or 53?) grottoes      some 51,000 statues
- some caves had a combo of Chinese, Greek and Indian art
- statues range from 2 cm to 17 meters tall
- construction started in AD 453 (or 460?), in the North Wei Dynasty 北魏 ; completed in 50 years
- listed as World Cultural Heritage Site by UNESCO in December 2001





The grottoes with Chinese, Greek and Indian influence

The first grottoes.

Characteristics: with the look of an emperor (in the Wei Dynasty) and the body of a Buddha

Grotto 20 – The icon statue in the open

The different types of grottoes

The many small grottoes on the west

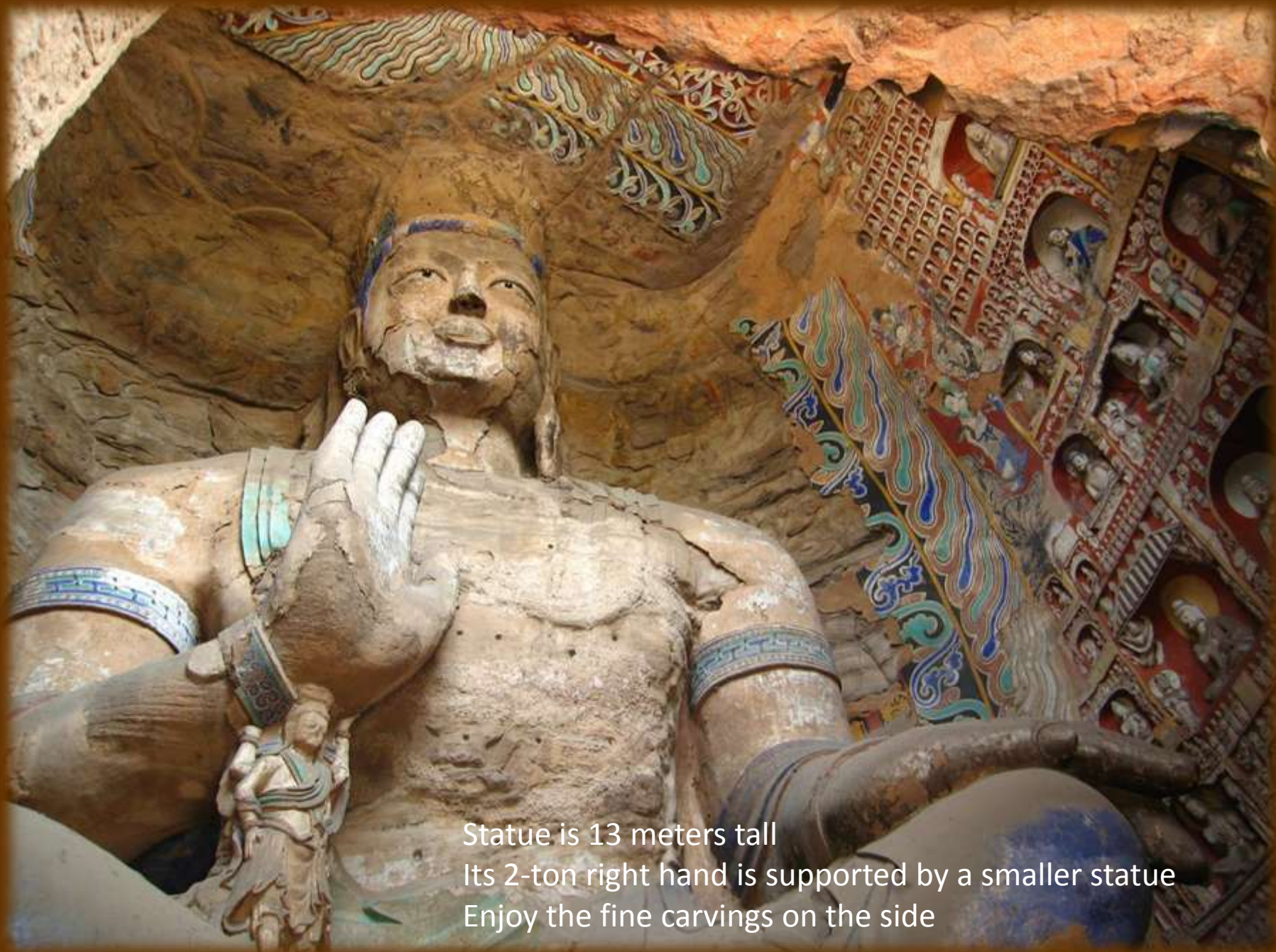
The Buddha Grottoes. Some enclosed and no photos allowed

Small eroded grottoes to the east



# The grottoes of Buddhism





Statue is 13 meters tall  
Its 2-ton right hand is supported by a smaller statue  
Enjoy the fine carvings on the side





The horizontal view

Look different, ay?



The carving of the statue began from the head

....thru that hole (top window) made through the rocks

Isn't the scheme amazing?



The Grotto of Buddha



# Grotto of A Thousand Buddha

千佛洞

三劫、三世、千佛



Some statues have decayed



# Grotto of A Thousand Buddha



Look at  
the thin  
wall  
between  
grottoes



Look at the many fine small  
statues that are lining the wall



Many remained intact





Another grotto with  
fine carvings



## The first grottoes

“The Five Grottoes of Monk Tanyao” 曇曜五窟

- named after Monk Tanyao 曇曜 who orchestrated them in AD453 (or 460?)
- a.k.a. the Regal Grottoes at one time since the face of each statue was modelled after an emperor of the Wei Dynasty 帝佛合一



The 1st one  
景穆帝



The 1st one  
景穆帝







The 2nd one  
道武帝





The 3rd one  
明成帝






The 3rd one  
明成帝



CAVE 17 (No. 4651)  
A CROSS-ARCHED CAVE, 10.5 METRES  
HIGH, OPENED IN THE WEST WALL. A SEATED  
BUDDHA ON THE EAST WALL AND A STANDING  
BUDDHA ON THE WEST WALL. THE CAVE WAS  
NAMED THE 'TAMING CAVE' BY THE CHINESE  
CELESTIAL ON THE MOUNTAIN. THE  
WEST WALL IS NINETEEN METRES  
GRACEFULLY SHAPED, WITH A SEATED  
HEAD, A WIDE HIBBON AROUND HIS KNUCKLES,  
SHORT AROUND HIS LOWER BODY AND A LOTUS  
PAD IN HIS HANDS. A NICHE ON THE EAST REVERE  
OF THE WINDOW WAS CARVED IN THE 18TH  
YEAR OF TAIHE'S REIGN (486 A.D.).





The 4th one  
太武帝





The 4th one  
太武帝

The 4th one  
太武帝







The 5th one 文成帝 is a statue in the open-air



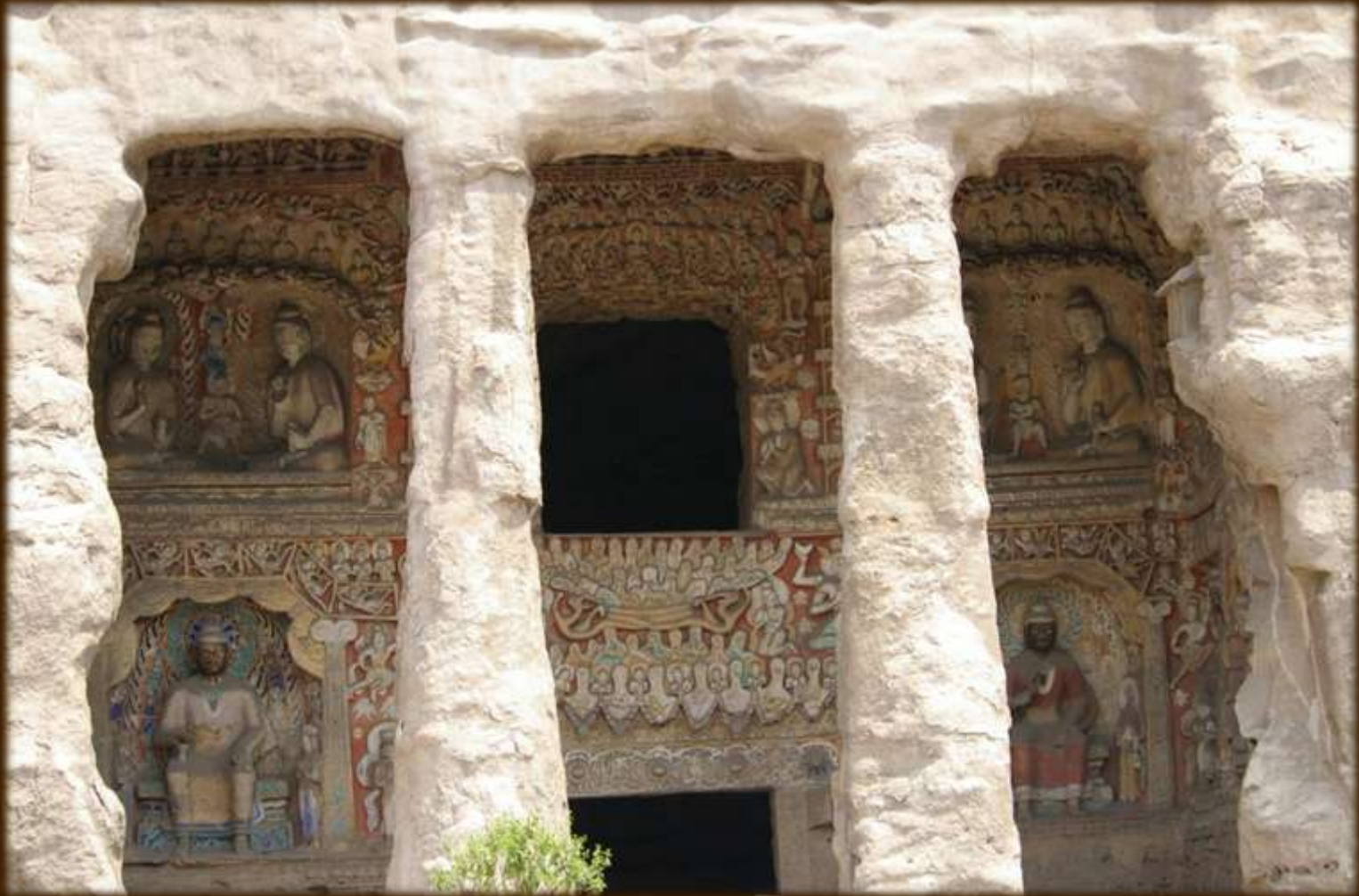
These are the grottoes  
on the east – not  
popular to tourists





Grottoes that had a Chinese, Greek  
and Indian influence

五華洞



Chinese and Indian statues and colours.....Greek columns





The grotto with a more Chinese flavour

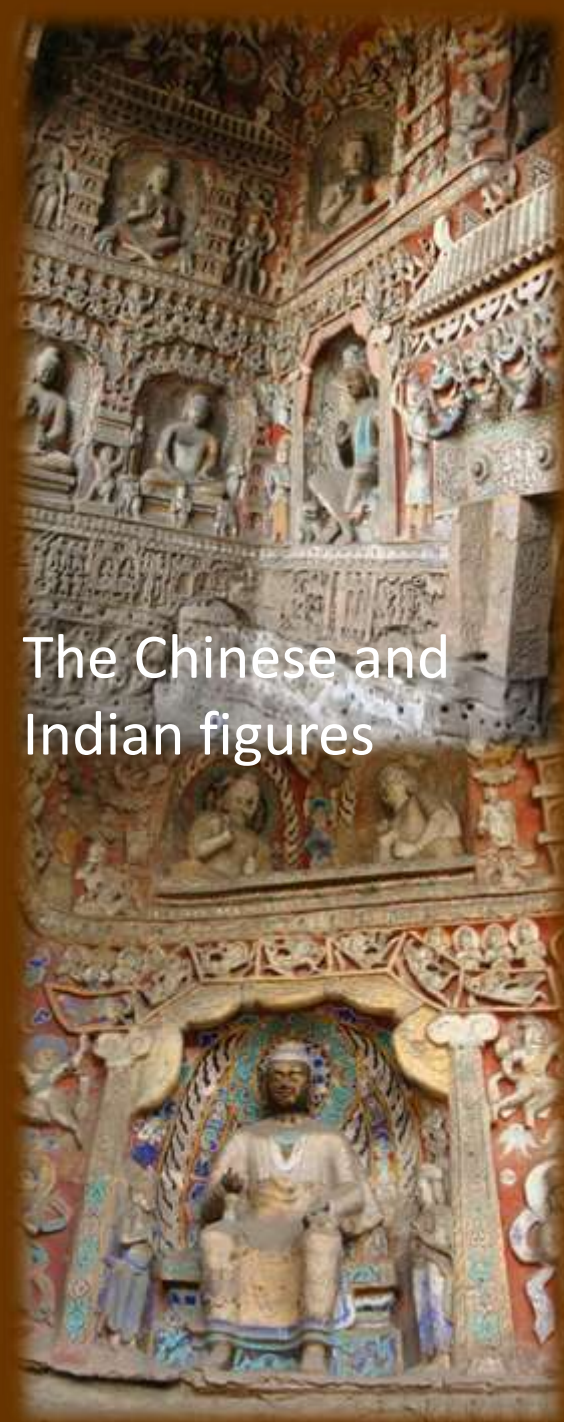




Enjoy the ceiling  
and the wall  
carvings







The Chinese and  
Indian figures





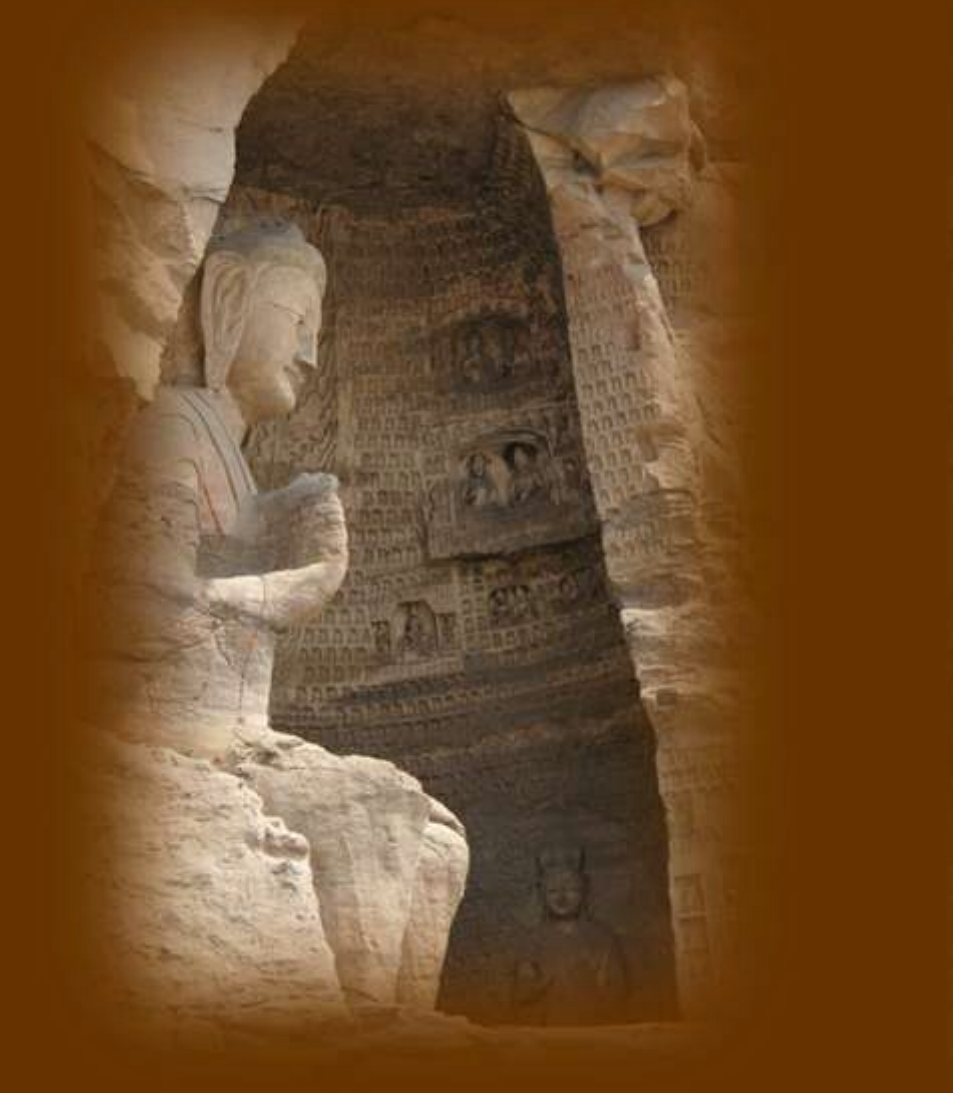
The elaborate statues and carvings are inside the Chinese structures....however, no photos are allowed inside





The icon of the YunGang Grotto

and those standing beside it







...blessing the  
visitors below

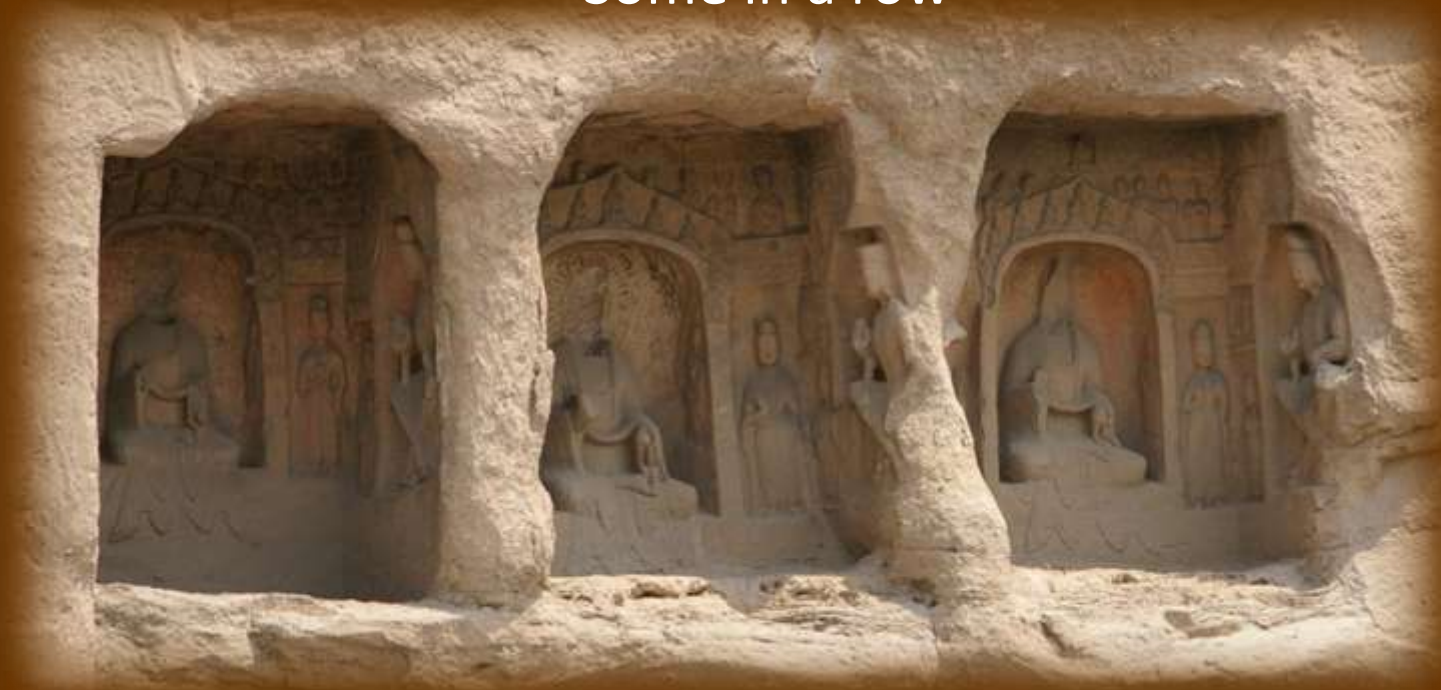


There are more carvings  
on the exterior wall





Some in a row



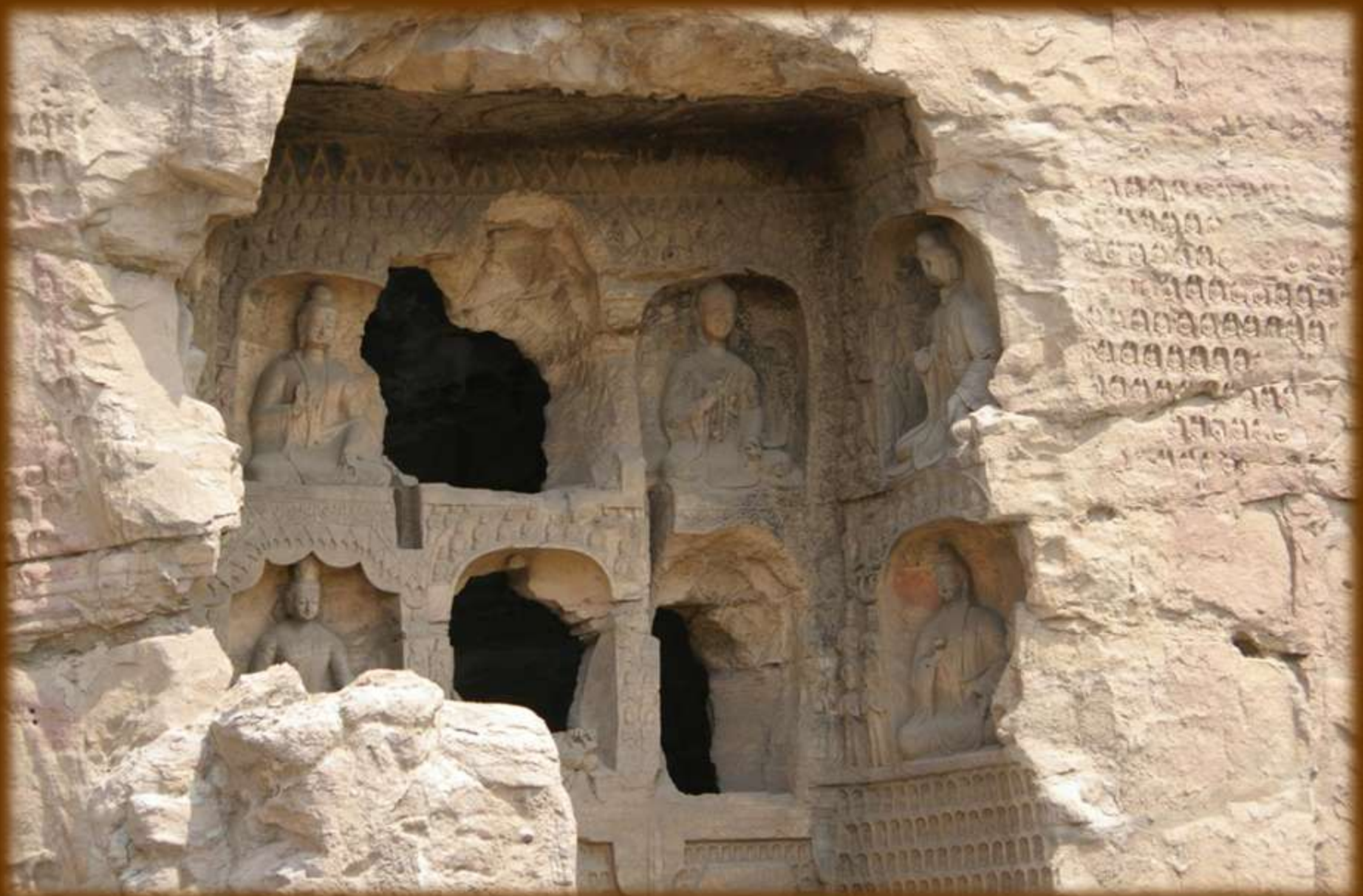


Some larger, some smaller



Some have decayed; some not





Some gone; some remained





Some are minuscule





Some happy and cute





Despite wear, some kept  
their form and shapes



When  
visiting,  
do not  
miss these  
exterior  
carvings







They trigger one's  
imagination



I enjoyed  
the YunGang Grottoes

Did you?