Hua T'o Encyclopedia Article

Hua T'o

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Chinese surgeon who is traditionally credited with the invention of anesthetic drugs, antiseptic ointments, medicinal baths, hydrotherapy, medical gymnastics, abdominal surgery, and other remarkable operations. Hua T'o was also allegedly a master of acupuncture and a brilliant diagnostician. Hua T'o burned his manuscripts while imprisoned by Emperor Ts'oa Ts'ao, and all of his surgical discoveries, except for his technique for castration, were forgotten after his death. He left no students or successors to carry on his art; it is possible that he existed only as a figure of legend.