

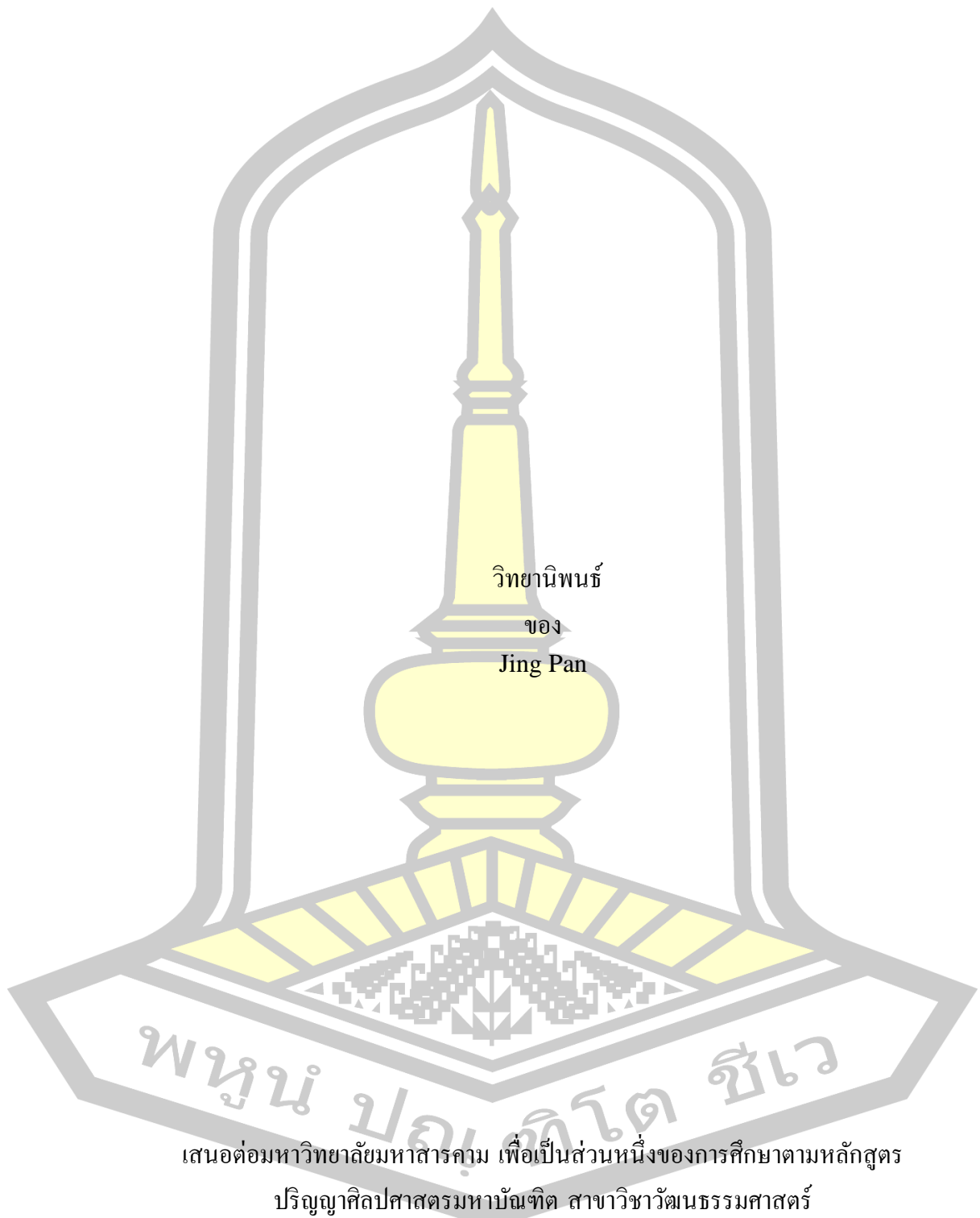
Ancient coins in Luoyang City : Roles in Economy Society and Culture

Jing Pan

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for
degree of Master of Arts in Cultural Science
March 2024

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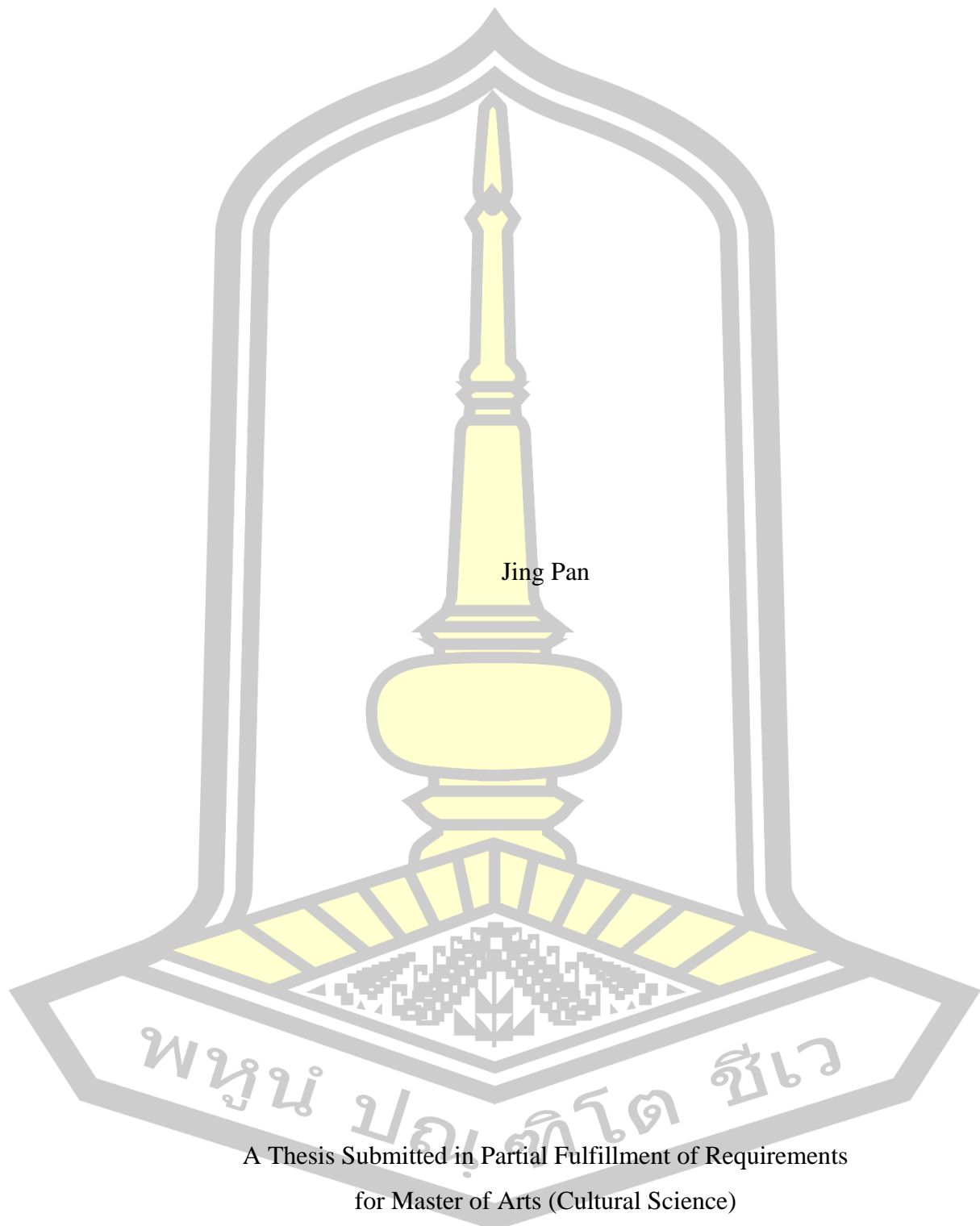
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March 2024

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The examining committee has unanimously approved this Thesis, submitted by Ms. Jing Pan , as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts Cultural Science at Mahasarakham University

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TITLE	Ancient coins in Luoyang City : Roles in Economy Society and Culture		
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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the history of ancient coins in Luoyang, especially its unique position and importance in ancient Chinese civilization. In Luoyang, as an ancient capital with a long history, its currency evolution has not only witnessed the social, economic and cultural changes of the city itself in different historical stages, but also is the epitome of the course of ancient Chinese civilization. Therefore, this study aims to comprehensively and systematically outline the historical context of Luoyang ancient coins, especially the changes from the Xia and Shang dynasties to the late Qing Dynasty. First of all, the paper deeply discusses the shape and type changes of ancient coins in different historical periods and the social, economic and cultural motivation behind them. This process not only backdates the development course of Luoyang currency, but also tries to interpret the function and significance of currency in various times. In addition, through the comprehensive evaluation of the existing ancient coin research in Luoyang, the current main research results and trends are summarized, and some obvious research gaps and limitations are also pointed out, hoping to provide a new thinking direction for the subsequent research. Considering the importance of the Tang Dynasty in Chinese history, this study further deepens the historical status, economic function and social and cultural influence of Luoyang currency in the Tang Dynasty. The Tang Dynasty is not only a cultural and economic peak in Chinese history, but also its monetary system and circulation mode are different from the previous and later dynasties. Therefore, the study of the currency of the Tang Dynasty will provide us with important clues about the social, economic and cultural characteristics of the Tang Dynasty. Through an in-depth analysis of the interaction between money and social culture, the research hopes to better explain the significance and influence of ancient coins in daily life, belief ceremony and artistic creation, as well as how they reflected and shaped the social and cultural environment at that time.

To achieve these research objectives, we adopted various methods, including literature review, material analysis, and interpretation of historical literature, in order to ensure the comprehensiveness and depth of the study. After in-depth research, we have obtained the following important discoveries about the history of ancient coins in Luoyang. After a comprehensive review of the historical context of Luoyang ancient coins from the Xia and Shang dynasties to the late Qing Dynasty, the study confirmed that the change of currency shape and type over time closely

interacted with the social, economic and cultural environment at that time. Especially in some critical periods, such as the Warring States, Han, Tang, Song and Ming dynasties, the change of currency is often synchronized with the political change, economic development and social transformation, reflecting the macro-historical process of Luoyang and even the whole country. Through the comprehensive evaluation of the current research status, it is found that although the study of ancient coins in Luoyang has made remarkable progress in the past few decades, there are still some gaps and limitations in the study of some historical periods, especially in the Tang Dynasty. Further exploration of this specific period revealed the unique status and function of Luoyang currency in the Tang Dynasty. They not only played a key role economically, but also had a profound influence in cultural and social life, proving the importance of Tang currency in history. Further, the research deeply explores the interaction between money and social culture and reveals a novel scene for us. The use of ancient coins in daily life, its status in the ceremony of faith, as well as its symbolic significance in artistic creation, all proved that currency is not only an exchange tool, but also a historical symbol carrying social memory and cultural value. Especially in the Tang Dynasty, the interaction between the currency and the society, culture and religion of that time formed a rich historical picture scroll, providing us with a unique perspective on the life in Luoyang in the Tang Dynasty.

This study is of certain significance to monetary historians, archaeologists and social-cultural researchers. For monetary historians, through the evolution of Luoyang ancient coins, provides a systematic and comprehensive framework, help them more accurately understand the key period of Chinese monetary history, especially in the specific study of the tang dynasty currency, for researchers in the field of related to fill the existing knowledge blank. Archaeologists can use this study to conduct more targeted excavations of the sites in the Luoyang area. As an ancient capital, Luoyang is rich in underground cultural relics resources. Through the study of ancient coins, it can provide important clues and references for archaeological excavation, and help reveal more historical information. Moreover, for the social and cultural researchers, the research provides a new perspective to explore the social and cultural changes from the perspective of economy and currency. As a reflection of social culture, the change of money is closely related to the evolution of society, politics, economy and culture, which provides a enlightening research field for researchers.

In general, this research not only provides more research data and new research perspectives for the academic circle, but also provides strong support and reference for the protection of cultural heritage, education promotion and tourism development, and has a far-reaching impact on the promotion and inheritance of Chinese culture.

Keyword : Ancient coins, Roles, Economy, Society, Culture

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Spring goes to winter, and the years flow. In a blink of an eye, I have been studying in the university for more than two years. During this period, I have received the words and deeds of many professors, the care and help of my classmates, and the influence of the school spirit. I believe that everything I have learned here will benefit me for life. The graduation thesis defense is approaching. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the school, tutors, professors and classmates, which will be a perfect end to my final campus life.

First, I want to thank Mahasala for watching the University School of Culture. More than two years made me more convinced that it was wise to choose Mahasalad to see the University Culture School. Starting from multiple perspectives, the college provides us with an environment and platform for learning and research to the greatest extent, and makes silent efforts to cultivate us into "applied research" compound talents.

Secondly, I want to thank my mentor: Prof. Satta. He is rigorous, virtuous and approachable. Not only taught me the method of research, but also in spite of my busy schedule, I read and revised my paper carefully for many times. Without his tireless guidance and correction, it was impossible to have the first draft and final draft of this paper. Through words and deeds, I deeply feel that a scholar's academic rigor, open-minded and selfless spirit in research, has a profound impact on my future development. In the process of topic selection and opening of this paper, I put forward many constructive opinions and suggestions, which opened up ideas for the improvement of the paper. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to Prof. Satta.

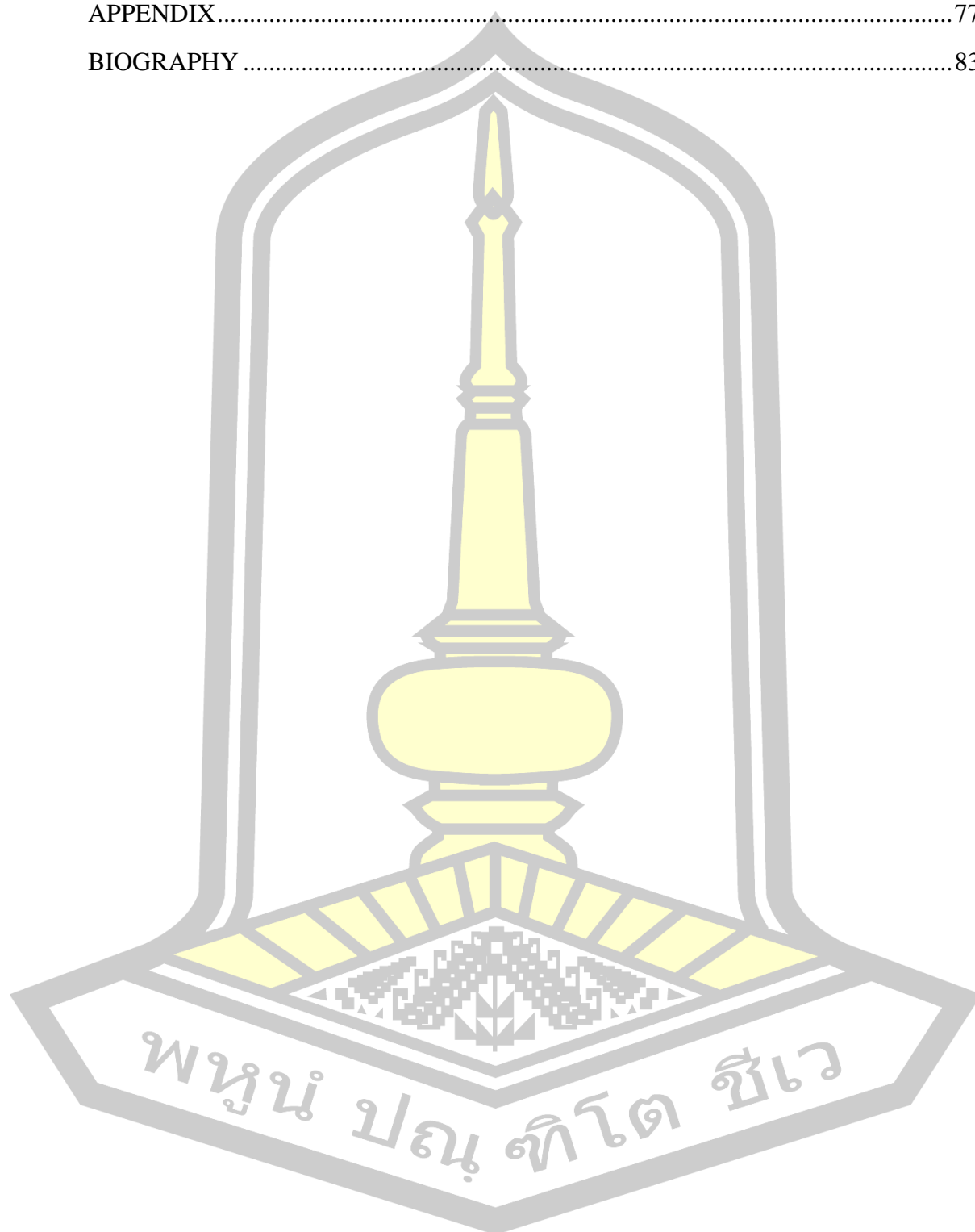
Finally, there is no limit to learning, although the university life is coming to an end, but "the road is long, I see no end, I will search up and down", I will pursue the ideal of the road, remember to respect teachers, carry forward the tireless spirit of study, constantly spur, urge myself, lifelong learning, lifelong benefit.

Jing Pan

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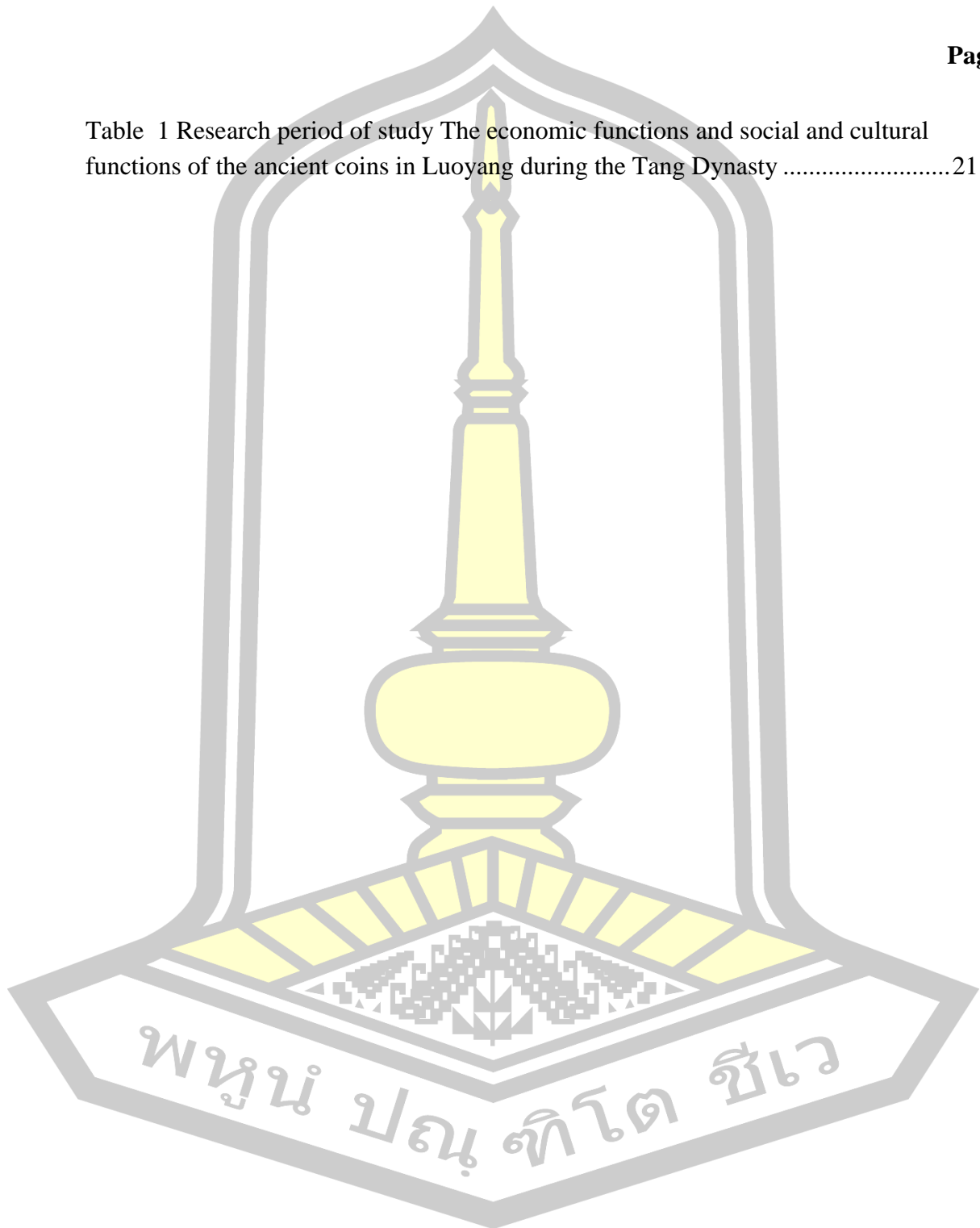
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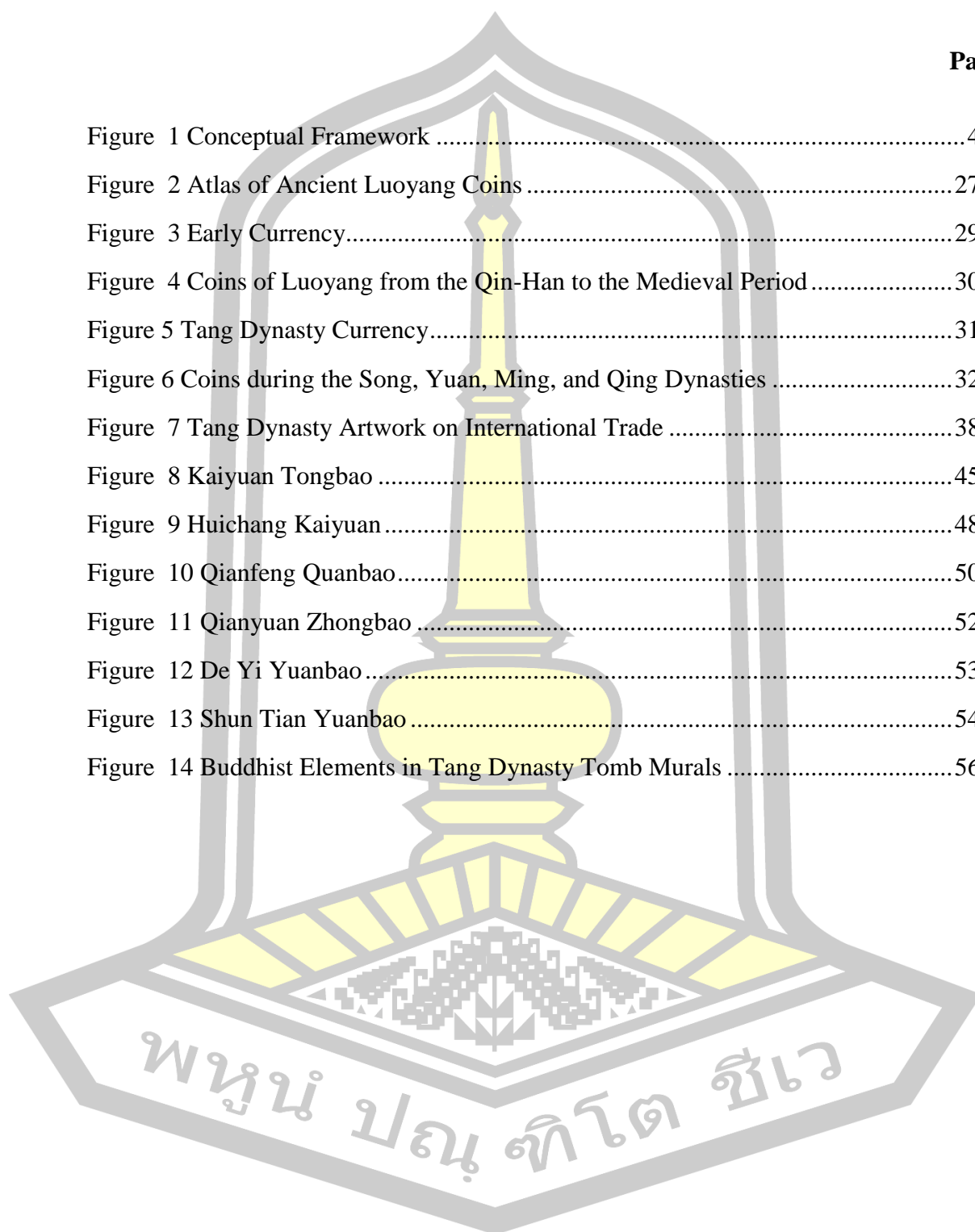
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Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 Research Background

China is one of the four ancient civilizations, with a long history and splendid culture (Yitang Identification, 2020). Among them, the ancient coin culture is a dazzling chapter in the history of Chinese culture, and also a treasure of Chinese cultural heritage. From shell coins, knife coins, to copper coins, copper yuan and silver dollars, ancient coins have accompanied the footsteps of this ancient cultural country for more than 4,000 years (Beijing Morning Post, 2017). Ancient coin is precious, not only because after the years vicissitudes of life, rare, not only because of exquisite design, casting technology, more because as a cultural carrier, it records the dynasties, each period of politics, economy, finance, business, culture, science and technology development and change (Beijing morning post, 2017) both have the effect of history, at the same time as the history of material, the study of the corresponding period of history, economic and other development play an important role. Therefore, ancient coins are a mirror of social development, is a special cultural phenomenon, and is a precious heritage of national culture.

"Coin" in ancient China is also known as "spring coin", "spring cloth", "spring goods" and so on, but also called "money" or "spring". During the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period, the metal coins in China mainly had four major systems: cloth coins, knife coins, round money and ant nose money. After qin destroyed the six states, it unified weights and measures, and implemented square holes to round money. Later, from the Qin and Han Dynasties to the Sui Dynasty, "half two money" and "five dwarf money" became the two most important currencies in the society at that time. The Tang Dynasty was popular as money and continued until the end of the Qing Dynasty for thousands of years.

There are a wide number of ancient coins in China. Based on the appearance of ancient coins, they can be classified into cloth coins, knife coins, circle money, etc.; based on the material of copper coins, treasure coins, silver coins, iron coins, etc.; based on the foundry of ancient coins, they can be classified into regular articles, counterfeit goods, foreign goods; based on the use of ancient coins; crushing money, riding money, horse money, feeding money... different standards, the classification will be different.

Although there are many and complex images of ancient coins, they cleverly and naturally integrate people's feelings and meanings into their composition, and then express people's wishes and thoughts through the unique euphemistic and implicit way of traditional Chinese culture. For example, we can clearly see through the words and patterns on the ancient coins the blessings expressed by people and the

good psychology of seeking good luck and harmony. Any excellent work of art in the world is based on the basis of the traditional cultural connotation as the soil, without the cultural connotation is not creation. And ancient coin is very typical embodies this, it is not only rooted in the Chinese traditional culture of the civilization of five thousand soil, and is a collection of one thousand ancient coin development essence, again through people art creation, production and into the artistic conception finally formed in things, created a high aesthetic value of ancient coin visual elements and rich cultural connotation.

Luoyang coins have been found in a large number in the past dynasties, a large number, rich types, strong coherence of The Times, with a wide range of representative and distinctive local characteristics, is an important content of the excellent traditional Chinese culture. Through the study of Luoyang ancient coin, can understand the coin casting technology, shape characteristics, material characteristics, pattern pattern and the content of the inscription information, can reveal the ancient Luoyang social economic, political, cultural and social characteristics, for us to understand the ancient Luoyang social economic system, political system, business background, aesthetic concept provides important clues, also help to protect and inherit cultural heritage.

But, these precious cultural heritage, with the passage of time, with different degrees of damage and damage, in the "sweep" s, they are listed as "four old", all swept to the so-called "historical garbage", a large number of ancient coins as scrap iron into the furnace, failed to get effective protection. Nowadays, ancient coins have completely withdrawn from the stage of history, and the ancient coin culture needs to be protected and inherited. Based on the above situation, in the past, if Luoyang ancient coins are not protected and inherited for a long time and gradually disappear, the rich history, cultural connotation and exquisite calligraphy and plastic arts contained in them will not be spread, so it is necessary and urgent for the protection and inheritance of Luoyang ancient coins.

Ancient coins were used as key words in the CNKI, including 1287 academic journal papers and 26 dissertations (6 doctoral papers and 20 master's theses). There are only three academic journal papers using Luoyang coins as keywords, namely, a variety of coins buried in the tomb of the Eastern Zhou Dynasty in Luoyang (Zhao Zhenhua, 1993), the Western Han Dynasty coin hoard in Luoyang (Cheng Yongjian, 2001), and the preliminary exploration of coins unearthed from the tomb of the Western Jin Dynasty in Luoyang (Zhang Hongliang, Han Zhanpo, 2010). From the retrieval data, a lot of achievements have been made in the research of ancient coins, but it is a pity that there are few studies on ancient coins in Luoyang. Through the retrieval of Confucius old books, there are three atlas dictionaries related to Luoyang coins, and there are no books on the research of Luoyang coins. From the above data analysis, it can be concluded that there are very few studies on the ancient coin refinement in Luoyang. The study of ancient coins is sorted out and discussed from

the perspective of archaeology, but there are few studies from the perspective of history and culture, and the combination of the development of Luoyang ancient coins and coin culture is a blank place, which still needs in-depth research.

1.2 Research Objectives

1.2.1 To study the historical development of ancient coins unearthed in Luoyang

1.2.2 To study the economic functions and social and cultural functions of the ancient coins in Luoyang during the Tang Dynasty

1.3 Research Questions

1.3.1 How did the shape and types of ancient coins in Luoyang change and develop in different dynasties?

1.3.2 What was the economic function of the ancient coins in Luoyang during the Tang Dynasty? What is the social and cultural function like?

1.4 Significance of the research

"Ancient coins have the characteristics of inheritance, diversity, integration and ethnic characteristics."The characters and patterns on the ancient coins all contain rich cultural connotations, reflecting the development of the social economy and historical culture of a country or the era. Therefore, the study of Luoyang ancient coins has great academic value and practical significance.

1.4.1 Significance of cultural inheritance.

The study of Luoyang ancient coins is conducive to protect and inherit cultural heritage, helping coin lovers and collectors better understand the historical role of coins and their significance of collection, and is more conducive to carrying forward the excellent traditional culture and enhancing the cultural pride of Luoyang people.

1.4.2 Promote interdisciplinary research exchanges

The research in this paper covers many disciplines, such as money, history and archaeology. Through the study of ancient coins, the exchange and cooperation of interdisciplinary research can be promoted, and the depth and breadth of the research can be improved.

1.4.3 By analyzing the historical, cultural and artistic values of ancient coins, the public can be educated about history, traditional culture and art.

1.4.4 Enhance the understanding of the ancient society. Through the study of Luoyang ancient coin, can understand the coin casting technology, shape characteristics, material characteristics, pattern pattern and inscription content information, can reveal the ancient Luoyang social economic, political, cultural and social characteristics, for us to understand the ancient Luoyang social economic system, political system, business background, aesthetic concept provides important clues.

1.5 Definition of Terms

1.5.1 The characteristics and source of ancient coins

This term refers to the form, production and raw material characteristics of the main circulating currency unearthed in Luoyang from the Xia and Shang dynasties to the late Qing Dynasty. This includes, but is not limited to, the manufacturing process of the currency, the coin house, the form of copper and silver coins, and the main raw materials used (such as copper and silver).

1.5.2 Monetary value in the economy

This term explores the specific value of ancient coins in the economy of Luoyang in the Tang Dynasty, such as its purchasing power, stability and its relationship with prices.

1.5.3 The monetary function in the economy

This part focuses on the main functions of ancient coins in the Luoyang's economy of the Tang Dynasty, such as its role in trading, investment, loans and savings.

1.5.4 Monetary status in a social culture

This term describes the important position of ancient coins in the social and cultural background of Luoyang in the Tang Dynasty, including how it embodies the social status, cultural value and aesthetic concept.

1.5.5 Monetary significance in social rituals and religion

This is about the use and symbolic significance of ancient coins in the social ceremony, religion and sacrifice of Luoyang in the Tang Dynasty, and discusses how it plays a link and ritual role in various social activities.

1.6 Conceptual Framework

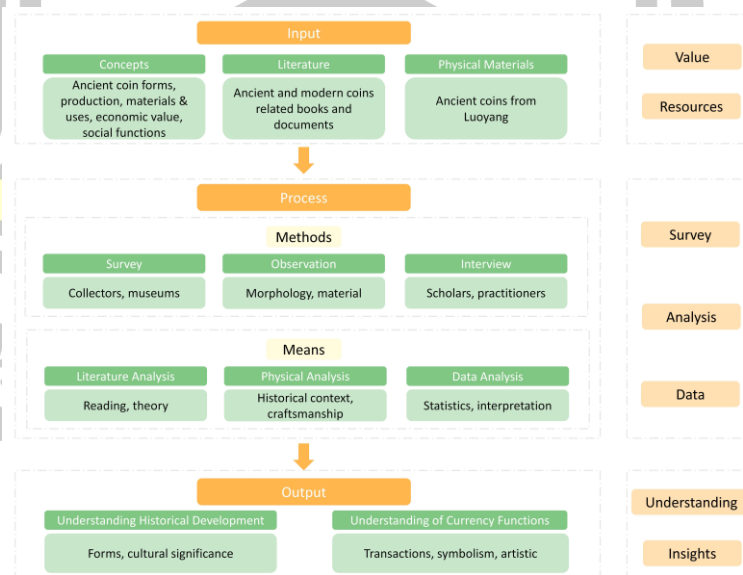


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Chapter II

Literature Reviews

In the archaeological activities everywhere, the discovery of coins reveals the context of the economy, culture and history of ancient China. Researchers in the field of coins have done a lot of research, especially for the ancient coins unearthed in Luoyang area. This chapter will provide a classified review of the literature in order to provide a solid theoretical basis for this study. The catalogue listed in this chapter is as follows:

- 2.1 Research on ancient coins
- 2.2 Research on keyword-related
 - 2.2.1 An Overview of the development of ancient coins
 - 2.2.2 Research on the shape, decoration and casting of ancient coins
- 2.3 Research on the artistic aesthetics of ancient coins
- 2.4 Laws and regulations of ancient coins
 - 2.4.1 Laws and regulations on ancient coin trading
 - 2.4.2 Laws and regulations on the rescue and protection of ancient coins
- 2.5 Research on the construction dynasty of Luoyang capital
- 2.6 Literature review of ancient coins
 - 2.6.1 Research on ancient Chinese coins
 - 2.6.2 Research on ancient coins in Luoyang
 - 2.6.3 Research on ancient coins abroad
 - 2.6.4 Study areas
 - 2.6.5 summing-up

2.1 Research on ancient coins

China has a long history of studying ancient money. In the reign of Xiao Liang in the Southern Dynasty is the earliest monograph on ancient money studies in China. In the Tang and Song dynasties, some people compiled money books, but they were all lost. In the Southern Song Dynasty, Hong Zun wrote Quan Annals. After Qianlong and Jiaqing of the Qing Dynasty, the works of ancient money studies also increased. The most important works were Ancient Quan Hui by Li Zuoxian, and Xu Quan Hui co-written by Li Zuoxian and Bao Kang. From the late 1930s to the early 1940s, the Numismatics Society and two kinds of numismatics special journals appeared in Shanghai. Ding Fubao's Dictionary of Ancient Money, published in 1936, is a masterpiece of ancient money books since the Qing Dynasty. At the same time, the Japanese scholar Ao Pyeongchang Hong compiled the book "East Asian Qian Zhi", which also collected a large number of coin rubbings in various historical periods. They are still of great significance to the development of basic coin research work.

After the founding of new China, the study of the ancient coin presents the flowers gratifying situation, Guo Ruoyu of the ancient auspicious money image appreciation, He Lin folk money pictures, Zheng Yiwei "Chinese money map" and "the Chinese money map sequel", "ancient Chinese money", Yu Jiming "Chinese money guide", Yu LiuLiang "Chinese money", Gao Wen, yuan more than high "Chinese history pressure money", zhang Ting "folk money investment and collection" and the ancient coin appreciation. The above books input a large number of rubbing pictures of ancient coins, which provides a lot of material for the art research of ancient coins. Hua Guangpu's Chinese Ancient Qian Collection (A, B, C and D) is the most systematic and comprehensive image content, which is recognized as a rare research book with reference value in the Chinese ancient coin circle. In addition, Yan Fushan's Bronze Money in the Northern Song Dynasty, White Cat's Bronze Money in the Southern Song Dynasty, and Shen Hong's Coin Collection and Investment in the Qing Dynasty respectively distinguished and identified the ancient coins of a certain dynasty.

The Great Dictionary of Chinese Coins (Compilation Committee of The Great Dictionary of Chinese Coins, Zhonghua Book Company, 2007). This book mainly includes two parts: the brief introduction of more than 800 Chinese numismatists in China from ancient times to the present and the brief description of more than 800 coin works. Among them, the introduction and discussion of numismatists and coin works are mostly written by famous writers, and the text content is concise and comprehensive, reliable and reliable. In addition, this book also has a "Chinese coin spring people writing chronology" and "dictionary and strokes index" each one, very then search.

Chinese Coin Books (edited by Si Li, Si Xiaojuan and Sun Yan, China Finance Press, 2002). The book includes nearly a thousand Chinese books on the monetary history written before 2000, and provides a brief introduction of the authors, publication age, main contents and characteristics of most of the coin works, including more than 100 coin works in the Qing Dynasty.

Jin Deping's "Reading Weng Shupe" Ancient Spring Collection and Six Dynasties "- " Ancient Spring Collection> "(" Chinese Coin 3,2004), with the content of the Six Dynasties, the part of the ancient Spring Collection in the Qing Dynasty. Zhang construction of the author of analysis <coin test> "(" literature "in 19994), according to the coin test in the sequence of the author of the information, reference ni model" ancient and modern money slightly "transcribed" coin test "notes author and their native place and life s records, and combined with the other literature related content, to infer" coin test holders of south China Lin is likely to be the author of the coin test".

In addition there are mainly pan Liangui "zhang and <money record>" ("Chinese coin" 1990,2), the high BaoZi years <ancient pavilion spring said>, <big spring catalogue> notes postscript "(" Chinese coin "2,1990) Zhang Shuxue" Wang

Xian tang and weng <ancient spring exam> spread "(" literature "in 1994,2), GuanHanheng" read Dai Xi <ancient spring from words> -collecting currency essays (9) "(" Chinese coin " 20034), etc.

The Han Tomb in Luoyang, compiled by the Institute of Archaeology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, contains 11,265 copper coins unearthed from 162 Han tombs in Shagou District of Luoyang, measuring the relatively complete ones and analyzing them, which is of great significance to the study of coins unearthed from Han tombs.

2.2 Research on keyword-related

2.2.1 An Overview of the development of ancient coins

China is the first country in the world to use coins, and it is also the first country to cast coins. First of all, ancient coins were first born in the Xia Dynasty of China. At this time, the form of coins was mainly shell coins. In the middle of the Western Zhou Dynasty, with the gradual improvement of bronze development skills, the form of coins gradually became the main body of coins. In the historical development of the Western Zhou Dynasty and the former Qin Dynasty, the types of coins were changeable and lacked unified norms. According to historical records, the King Tang of Shang began to cast "copper shellfish" in 1767 BC (many "copper shellfish" were unearthed in modern Henan and Anhui), and Europe was a thousand years later, around 700 BC, when the Greeks made the earliest coins in Europe. China's ancient coins, the variety of categories, the numerous quality, is the first in the world. Thousands of ancient coins, as historical witnesses, can reflect the wisdom of the nation, the rise and fall of politics, as well as the development of economy, culture and science and technology.

2.2.1.1 Pre-Qin currency

The pre-Qin period, the currency, the disorder is not unified. China has a long history according to expert research, as early as in the late Neolithic, tortoise shell and sea shell have obtained the qualification of physical currency. In the Shang Dynasty, the tortoise shell was regarded as the spirit thing that could connect with heaven and man, used to inquire, and gradually remove the function of money. Shell, pearl and jade became the main currencies. With the increase of productivity, the lack of physical money is the casting of copper shellfish. By the Spring and Autumn Period, gold, silver, copper and other metal currencies were widely used, such as gold love, gold cake, silver coins, and a large number of copper coins. Copper coins in the pre-Qin period can be roughly divided into the following four categories:

(1) Bu coin, shaped like a small shovel, originated from a kind of farm tool "fu" (ancient Yin and "Bu"), and was popular in Zhao, Wei and Han;

(2) Knife coin, shaped like a knife, popular in Xiyan and other places

;

(3)Round money, round round hole or square hole, popular in Qin, Wei and other places;

(4)Ant nose money, also called grimace money, is mainly popular in the state of Chu.

2.2.1.2 Emperor Qin Shihuang unified the currency system —— "half two money"

After the unified Emperor of Qin unified the monetary system and determined gold and copper as the currency materials, and used the circular ritual of Qin, namely "half two coins" as the unified currency of the whole country; pearl, jade, shellfish coins and the knife coins of various countries. All cloth coins will be closed to circulation. Because the circular square hole money can run through, easy to manufacture and carry and not easy to wear, in line with the needs of the society, so it became the main form of copper money in the later dynasties, has been passed for more than two thousand years, until the early years of the Republic of China was abolished.

The Qin Dynasty implemented a strict system of half two money and stipulated the shape of half two money、Casting technology, circulation principle, valuation units, etc.Half two money as the coin (gold for the currency), is engaged in the general market trading, tax payment and other activities directly related to people's daily economic life currency. Half two money had legal metal content, coin name and unified shape, which was an advanced metal currency form at that time. In the Qin Dynasty, the central government implemented the system of special casting for half two money, that is, half two money was cast and issued by the government, and the money was cast in Beijing, which prohibited both private casting by the people and county officials. As the first coin form in Chinese history in the whole country, half two money played the most important and core value scale and circulation means in the social commodity exchange between the Qin and early Han dynasties.

2.2.1.3 Emperor Wudi of the Han Dynasty unified the currency weight "five baht money"

In the First Emperor of Qin, he used "half two" money, as the text, namely half two (two or 24 baht, half two or 12 baht). In the early Han Dynasty, the copper coins were still named after weight and cast half two coins (known as "Han half liang" for later generations).Emperor Wudi of the Han Dynasty (118 BC), Allow the county state to cast five baht money. As a result, the size of the five baht money cast is different. In the fourth year of the Yuan Ding (113 BC), Emperor Wudi of the Han Dynasty concentrated the mint power to the central government, and passed the unified standard of five baht money through the world. All kinds of other copper coins are sold for waste. This kind of unified standard and moderate weight is the longest used currency in the history of our country. After the Han, Three Kingdoms, Two Jin, Northern and Southern Dynasties and Sui Dynasties, the dynasty

was not abolished until the fourth year of Wude (621 BC). A total of seven hundred and thirty-nine years were worked.

Han Dynasty "five baht" (coin unit) money, "Five baht" is the main pattern of the money surface. Its characteristics are mainly small seal characters: slender font, thinner than painting; round pen: sharp contrast with horizontal and vertical pens. The currency text is also read horizontally from right to left. The whole format seems plain in form, but if you look at it carefully, you will find that in the horizontal and vertical, the intersection in the middle of the word "five" is like the waving sleeves in the drama, swaying, full of dynamic.

2.2.1.4 Tang Gaozu unified the name of "Kaiyuan Tongbao"

Emperor Gaozu of the Tang Dynasty broke the rules and changed the tradition of naming weight in the Qin and Han Dynasties (called "remember heavy money", such as "half two" and "five baht"), and renamed "Kaiyuan Tongbao" in the fourth year of Wude. Qian Wen by the calligraphy of Ouyang Xun, a great calligrapher at that time, the font is strong and steep.

The weight and size of Kaiyuan Tongbao were completely cast in accordance with the standard of the "five baht" money of the Han Dynasty. One for each, ten or two. So later I called the metal currency "money". One or two-tenth is also called "money". This is the origin of our two-down tenth-scale rule today.

Because of different reading methods, "open yuan Tongbao" can be read as "open ingot". This has a great influence on the name of the coins. "Tongbao" takes righteousness circulation, "ingot" means treasure goods, as an abstract currency, pure value scale into circulation. Compared with the previous weighing currency for half two money, five baht money, etc., is a fundamental advance. From then on, the currency of the past dynasties, whether it is year or national money, is generally labeled with "Tongbao" or "ingot". Such as the year name "Xining Yuanbao", "Yongle Tongbao", the national name money "Da Song Yuanbao", "Daming Tongbao" and so on. After the Ming Dynasty, "Tongbao" was used as the text until the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China. From "Kaiyuan Tongbao" to "Republic of China Tongbao", it lasts for more than 1,300 years, so it can be seen that "Kaiyuan Tongbao" occupies an important position in the history of China's monetary development.

The "Kaiyuan Tongbao" in the Tang Dynasty contains the significance of creating a new era, Call "money number money", is not "year number money". This "Kaiyuan" has nothing to do with Tang Xuanzong's annual name "Kaiyuan". "Kaiyuan Tongbao" money passed through the whole Tang Dynasty. In the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms, Yuan Emperor Li Jing of the Southern Tang Dynasty and King Wang Zhixian of Min also had two kinds of "Kaiyuan Tongbao" respectively.

The Tang Dynasty has nearly 300 years of history, "Kaiyuan Tongbao" money is always the main circulating currency, and the role and influence

of "Qianfeng Quanbao", "Qianyuan Chongbao", "Dali ingot", "Jianzhong Tongbao" and other currencies can not be compared with it. After the Tang Dynasty, "Kaiyuan Tongbao" money still got a lot of imitation casting and use. During the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period, Fujian was located in the south. The Southern Tang Dynasty and Wu Yue. The southern Han and other separatist regimes have used Kaiyuan Tongbao money, copper, iron, lead and other materials. In the early years of the Northern Song Dynasty, the Kaiyuan Tongbao money was also imitated and used. Taiping Heavenly Kingdom and Hongmen Tiandi Association and other folk secret organizations also cast Kaiyuan Tongbao money. Hong Zun wrote in his book *Quan Zhi*: " Kaiyuan Qian was created by Emperor Gaozu of the Tang Dynasty. Later, Gaozong Qianlong, Suzong Qianyuan, and Dali, Jianzhong, Xiantong, each because of their years with famous money, but not long. But the Kaiyuan money, the tang dynasty three hundred years of smelting and casting successively, so the popularity is very much. Detailed examination of this money, Guo has the size, meat has weight, are long suitable. All eight points seal, li three products and back armour, production fine good, this life especially more. Li Xiaomei alone figure one of them, lost slightly!" " Spring annals " to give Kaiyuan Tongbao money with a very high praise, kaiyuan Tongbao's historical status and influence can be seen.

2.2.2 Research on the shape, decoration and casting of ancient coins

Qin and Han dynasties —fitting between square and circle ducts

In 221 BCE, Qin destroyed the six states and unified the state, and established the first unified multi-ethnic and centralized state in Chinese history. It abolished the old currencies of the Warring States Period and unified the whole currency in the form of the gold and half money of Qin.

Qin half two circular square holes reflect the ancient cosmology and Taoist thought of the round sky and place, This view of cosmology has been accepted by successive Kings and common people in thousands of years of Chinese culture. Since then, the coin form of the circular square hole has been continued until the end of the Chinese feudal society. Around the early western han dynasty, can casting half two money, due to the long-term war, economic recession, the weight of the coin is more and more light, until the emperor, emperor, the weight of the coin is stable, to the emperor began to issue "five baht money" become han long-term circulation of coins, China officially began by the central unified coin. At the end of the Western Han Dynasty, Wang Mang usurped the throne and carried out four reforms of the currency system. The new coins were arbitrary, varied and lack of rules and unpopular, but because of his advanced craft, beautiful design and excellent production, he became a rare treasure now. In addition, the Qin and Han Dynasties also needed more gold and silver coins. Wei, Jin and Sui dynasties all kinds of

At the end of the eastern han dynasty, The three states of Wei, Shu and Wu each implemented different monetary systems and policies. To create insufficient money to support the war, bringing difficulties to the people's lives.

China's currency, from the eastern han dynasty to the northern and southern dynasties has been very chaotic, the lack of unity and continuity of war has brought serious damage to social economy, ethnic minorities have established their own regime, is generally accepted the five baht currency, but on its system and casting a variety of local coins, all kinds of coin mixed circulation, shape, production, text, multifarious, distinctive, short time, scarce. Sui, Tang, Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms Create a era

During the Sui and Tang dynasties, the Chinese feudal society began to reach its peak, Social and political stability, and unprecedented economic prosperity, During the reign of Emperor Gaozu of the Tang Dynasty, copper coins of "Kaiyuan Tongbao" were cast, which meant a new era. Kaiyuan Tongbao eliminated the heavy traces of coins, and became a veritable count of coins, which was regarded as the standard of coins by later generations. Since then, the coin is no longer called "baht", but changed to "treasure", and has been used. Even the ancient paper money, silver collars and the mechanism coins in the late Qing Dynasty are also called "treasure".

The ornaments of ancient Chinese coins is different from foreign countries, not animals or portraits, but for words. Coin is regarded as a symbol of Chinese coin culture. From the ancient coins, the most noticeable is Qian wen, but it does not mean that there is no other figure decoration except Qian wen, take the square hole money, the money face, especially the money back, often have pictures or other patterns. People are more familiar with the so-called "Yang Guifei nail mark" on the back of Kaiyuan Tongbao money (of course, this is just a legend, and no historical basis, but the crescent pattern does exist on the money). There are other figures or patterns on the ancient money, the more common is the so-called sun, moon, stars, clouds, birds, occasionally can also see the puzzling figures like the tiger head. There is also a culture behind these ornaments or patterns. China is a multi-ethnic country. In the process of coin development, due to the change of dynasties, the rulers are located in different regions, and the map decoration of coins is more rich and colorful, reflecting the national characteristics.

The earliest currency in China was natural seaweed, which is proved by the structure of Chinese characters. For example, where and the value of the word, the vast majority from the "bei". Decibel into poor, less for cheap, it can be seen that long ago has been the embodiment of value. During the Shang and Zhou dynasties, with the development of society, human beings mastered the smelting technology, and metal shellfish currencies appeared, such as copper shellfish, gold shellfish, etc., and nose money was the advanced form of shellfish coins, and copper coin in the Warring States Chu and Lu regions. In the pre-Qin period, we began to use fan casting. In the early stage, mud casting was basically one money and one fan. Later, the pottery fan, stone fan and metal fan were used, and the stack casting technology began to be used during the Six Dynasties. In the Tang Dynasty, it began to use turning sand casting. Compared with hard casting and clay overcasting, it reflects the simplification of

technology and the improvement of efficiency, and is another great progress of casting money technology. China is the first country in the world to use paper money. The use of paper money and jiaozi in the Northern Song Dynasty promoted the improvement and development of block printing.

2.3 Research on the artistic aesthetics of ancient coins

Zhou Sai "Analysis of the Beauty of Chinese Ancient Coin Culture and Art" discusses that ancient coins have the characteristics of diversity, nationality, integration and inheritance, which is the embodiment of the national historical and cultural development and social and economic situation. based on this, This paper analyzes the historical development of ancient coins in China, And introduce the types and historical functions of ancient coins, Finally, the cultural and artistic beauty contained in it; Wang Liheng studied the uniqueness and regional artistic and cultural forms of ancient coins in The Appreciation of Traditional Cultural Elements in Chinese Ancient Coin Aesthetics, Through the study of the written language, decorative theme, decorative art structure layout and decorative art design treatment of ancient coins, Analyze the characteristics of contemporary ancient coins biased to public entertainment; Li Fangjuan's "Ancient Spring Rhyme Ji Jin Style —— Words on ancient Chinese coins" through the analysis and identification of the coins of various dynasties in China, Comb out the evolution process of Chinese characters, Highlights the essence of Chinese calligraphy art; Wang Liheng studied the uniqueness and regional artistic and cultural forms of ancient coins in The Appreciation of Traditional Cultural Elements in Chinese Ancient Coin Aesthetics, Through the study of the written language, decorative theme, decorative art structure layout and decorative art design treatment of ancient coins, Analyze the characteristics of contemporary ancient coins biased to public entertainment; Feng Xinchun pointed out in the Ancient Coin Culture Covering the Art of Chinese Calligraphy that all kinds of characters on the ancient coins, It is a clear proof of Chinese calligraphy treasures. Many famous works add more color to the currency document law, but also make some famous wonderful ink based on the coins left over. Taste and appreciation of these money documents will not only greatly increase the form and content of coin collection and appreciation activities, but also help to improve the taste of collection activities and the cultural and artistic accomplishment of collectors. For calligraphy lovers, they can get great artistic inspiration and creative inspiration.

2.4 Laws and regulations of ancient coins

2.4.1 Laws and regulations on ancient coin trading

It is legal for China to buy and sell ancient coins, but relevant laws and regulations. According to the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics, cultural relics are of historical, art, science, value and are recognized as cultural relics by local cultural relics protection departments, among which ancient coins also belong to the category of cultural relics. Therefore, the sale of ancient coins needs to comply with the provisions of the Cultural Relics Protection Law.

The Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics: Article 50 citizens, legal persons and other organizations other than those that collect cultural relics may collect cultural relics acquired through the following means: (1) inheriting or accepting gifts according to law; (2) purchase from cultural relics stores; (3) purchase from auction enterprises engaged in the auction of cultural relics; (4) exchange or transfer of cultural relics legally owned by individual citizens; and (5) other lawful means prescribed by the State. Cultural relics mentioned in the preceding paragraph collected by citizens, legal persons or other organizations other than the cultural relics may be circulated according to law.

Article 51 citizens, legal persons and other organizations shall not buy or sell the following cultural relics: (1) state-owned cultural relics, except those permitted by the State; (2) precious cultural relics in non-state collections; (3) murals, sculptures and building components of state-owned immovable cultural relics, but murals, sculptures and building components of state-owned immovable cultural relics dismantled according to law are not under the provisions of paragraph 4 of Article 20 of this Law and shall be collected by cultural relics collectors; (4) cultural relics that do not conform to the provisions of Article 50 of this Law.

2.4.2 Laws and regulations on the rescue and protection of ancient coins

The Ministry of Culture and the People's Bank of China on strengthening the rescue and protection of ancient coins.

(On February 8, 1984)

Like other cultural relics, ancient coins are an important part of China's historical and cultural heritage. The Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Cultural Relics promulgated in November 1982 had clear provisions on the selection of cultural relics (including ancient coins).

It is understood that since a period of time, some areas or units will be the ancient copper coin situation is quite serious. To this, the society from all walks of life reflects very strong, the central leadership comrade also attaches great importance to.

In order to further implement the policies and laws of the protection of cultural relics and strengthen the rescue and protection of ancient coins, the following urgent notice is made:

1. Smelters and all other factories based on scrap copper must immediately stop smelting ancient coins and other cultural relics.

2. Smelters, waste materials recycling departments and other units, should strengthen the selection of ancient coins in waste materials. The selected ancient coins must be sealed separately and properly kept, and the local cultural administrative department shall be timely notified to receive them. They shall not be processed or sold by themselves.

3. The local cultural administrative departments shall timely receive the ancient coins sealed by the above-mentioned units. The deadline shall be completed within one month of receiving the notice.

4. Local cultural administrative departments shall receive ancient coins (excluding gold and silver coins) at the state allocation price of different waste materials or the supply price stipulated by the region, and may, according to the specific circumstances, give a commission fee of 15 percent of the above-mentioned price. All the received ancient coins, temporarily by the provinces, cities, autonomous region culture (cultural relics) department (bureau) on behalf of the Ministry of Culture cultural relics bureau concentrated to a number of cultural units for custody, waiting for processing. The funds for ancient coins received by the local cultural administrative departments shall be reported by the cultural (cultural relics) departments (bureaus) of the provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions to the one-way Bureau of Cultural Heritage of the Ministry of Culture for quarterly settlement, which shall be paid by the Cultural Heritage Bureau of the Ministry of Culture.

5. Upon receipt of this circular, the administrative departments of cultural (cultural relics) of all provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions shall immediately transfer the specific requirements of this circular to the relevant units in their respective areas and put them into practice. At the same time, the implementation situation should be inspected in time, and the inspection results should be reported to the Cultural Heritage Bureau of the Ministry of Culture quarterly within half a year.

Any unit or individual who refuses to implement the relevant provisions of this Circular and arbitrarily melts, damages, damages, treats, sells or steals ancient coins, or refuses to select, inspect or receive the above serious consequences, shall be seriously dealt with by the relevant departments according to the seriousness of the case.

2.5 Research on the construction dynasty of Luoyang capital

Research on the ancient capital of Luoyang, First of all, it involves the definition of the capital dynasty of Luoyang. As far as I have seen, seven main views have been formed, and there are actually many opinions in the theories. These seven views are:

(1) the nine dynasties said. Chen Qiaoyi believed that since the Eastern Zhou, nine dynasties, including the Eastern Han, Cao Wei, Western Jin, Northern

Wei, Sui (Emperor Yang), Tang (Empress Wu) and the Later Liang and Later Tang of the Five Dynasties, have built their capitals here.

(2) Ten dynasties said. According to Shi Nianhai, there were 10 dynasties that established the capital of Luoyang: Eastern Zhou, Eastern Han, Cao, Wei, Western Jin, Northern Wei, Sui (Emperor Yang), Tang (Wuzhou), Later Liang, Later Tang, and Later Jin.

(3) Eleven dynasty said. There are two theories. Li Xianeng believes that 11 dynasties in history built their capitals in Luoyang, but did not specify specific dynasties. Han onghou believed that the 11 dynasties that established the capital in Luoyang were Xia, Shang, Zhou, Han, Cao Wei, Jin, Northern Wei, Sui, Tang (including Wu Zhou), Later Liang and Later Tang.

(4) Twelve dynasty said. According to Zhao Zhiquan, there were 12 dynasties in Luoyang: Xia, Shang, Eastern Zhou, Eastern Han, Cao Wei, Western Jin, Northern Wei, Sui (Emperor Yang), Tang (Wu Zhou), Later Liang, Later Tang and Later Jin.

(5) The Thirteen dynasties said. There are also three theories. According to Su Jian, the 13 dynasties that established their capitals in Luoyang were: Xia, Shang, Western Zhou, Eastern Zhou, Eastern Han, Cao Wei, Western Jin, Northern Wei, Sui, Tang (including Wu Zhou), Later Liang, Later Tang, and Later Jin. Shi Weili believed that the dynasties with Luoyang as the capital included Xia, Shang, Zhou, Han, Wei, Jin, Northern, Wei, Sui, Tang, Wu, Zhou, Later Liang, Later Tang, and Later Jin 13 dynasties. According to Shi Nianhai, the Eastern Zhou, Kings of Henan (Shenyang at the end of Qin Dynasty), Eastern Han, Cao, Wei, Western Jin, Northern Wei, Sui, Wei (Li Mi), Zheng (Wang Shichong), Tang, Later Liang, Later Tang and Later Jin were the 13 dynasties that established their capital in Luoyang.

(6) Fifteen dynasties said. According to Meng Lingjun, the capitals in Luoyang existed, namely, Xia, Zhou, Western Zhou, Western Zhou, Western Han, Eastern Han, Cao, Western Wei, Western Jin, Northern Wei, Sui, Tang, Wu Zhou, Later Liang, Later Tang and Later Jin.

(7) Eighteen dynasties said. According to The General History of Luoyang, from the Yellow Emperor, 18 dynasties, including Emperor Ku, Xia, Shang, Western Zhou, Eastern Zhou, Western Han, Cao Wei, Western Jin, Northern Wei, Sui, Zheng, Tang, Wu Zhou, Later Liang, Later Tang, and Later Jin, established their capitals here. The exact statement is the thirteen dynasties.

2.6 Literature review of ancient coins

2.6.1 Research on ancient Chinese coins

Domestic ancient Chinese coin culture related research results, mainly around the archaeological academic level, from the point of monographs, soup cocoa "Chinese coin culture" is one of the few at home and abroad, from the shape of the Chinese ancient coin, material, technology, deep which reflect the cultural connotation of the research results. Peng Xinwei's History of Chinese Money combs

the development of Chinese currency since Summer coin from the perspective of economy and finance. Li Xia, Mr Xiao feng compiled the northern Chinese national currency history of xianbei currency, qidan currency, west liao currency, accompany the han dynasty currency, xixia currency, nuzhen currency and so on the northern minority currency sorting and research, for the minority period of currency casting, shape, Qian Wen, and circulation of the detailed study, to enrich the study of Chinese monetary history made a new contribution. From the results of the paper, Zhou Weirong summarized the development process of ancient Chinese coin and coin research in China in the study of Ancient Chinese coins and Coins, and emphasized the process and significance of studying ancient coins with scientific methods and technological means. Fu Xianyi, Ding Anguo in the characteristics of the ancient coin culture and its historical role discusses the main characteristics of the ancient coin culture: coin manufacturing technology, the shape of ideological content, coin text historic, the figure of nationality, coin issue political, coin circulation of regional, the artistic quality of coins, coin content of universality. Cui Yimin in the cultural connotation of the Chinese ancient coins and its historical status pointed out that the ancient coin is a kind of historical heritage, contains the extremely profound cultural connotation, series of money sequence is a complete social history, both image and vivid, is the treasure of the Chinese nation traditional culture, is also a content of the world material and cultural heritage.

2.6.2 Research on ancient coins in Luoyang

There are few monographs on Luoyang coin, so far only one book is CAI Yunzhang, Li Yunxing and Zhao Zhenhua "Luoyang Coin Discovery and Research", which is a comprehensive collation and summary of the archaeological discovery and research of coins in Luoyang area since the founding of the People's Republic of China, and is one of the rare research data of Luoyang coin system in China. It is concluded that Luoyang coins have four characteristics: first, coherent times and rich types; second, diverse shapes and systems and wide currency materials; third, different values and numerous countries; fourth, large unearthed quantity and strong scientific nature. These characteristics of Luoyang coins are very rare in other parts of the country."In a sense, the cultural connotation reflected by the Luoyang coins. It is a typical representative of Chinese coin culture, which occupies a very important position in the study of Chinese and even eastern coin culture ". Zhang Yinicang and CAI Yunzhang focused on the theory of Luoyang coins and Heluo Civilization on the development track of Luoyang coins and the enterprising spirit of Heluo civilization. It is pointed out that Heluo culture is the sum of ancient material and spiritual culture in the Yellow River and Luoshui intersection area with Luoyang as the center. Heluo culture is extensive and profound, and has a long history. It is not only the core of the Central Plains culture, but also the mainstream and essence of Chinese traditional culture. It is marked by the "Hetu Luoshu" and based on the history and culture of the ancient capital of thirteen dynasties. It has the distinct

characteristics of tradition, core, openness and the opposite sex, and has exerted a profound influence on the ancient Chinese politics, economy, culture and even the world civilization. The coherent, numerous and rich kinds of Luoyang coins are an important content of Heluo culture. Zhang Hongliang and Han Zhanpo in the Western Jin Dynasty in Luoyang, there are more than 100 tombs of the Western Jin Dynasty and more than 10,000 unearthed coins, including the Han Dynasty, Wang Mang and The Three Kingdoms period, mainly including half two, five baht, daquan, cargo spring, etc., with the characteristics of many types, small total amount and strong selectivity. Combined with the literature, coins were widely used in salary, taxation, reward, trading, etc.

2.6.3 Research on ancient coins abroad

Mark S. Peacock, *The origins of money in Ancient Greece: the political economy of coinage and exchange*: (Reviewing: David Schaps, *The Invention of Coinage and the Monetization of Ancient Greece*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2004; Richard Seaford, *Money and the Early Greek Mind: Homer, Philosophy, Tragedy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004; and Sitta von Reden, *Exchange in Ancient Greece*, London, Duckworth, paperback edition 2003), *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, Volume 30, Issue 4, July 2006.

Recent work on Ancient Greece sheds light on the origins of money and its effects on economy and society. This review essay analyses such work and relates it to themes familiar to economists. It examines monetary functions in the heroic world and the effects of introducing coinage in Classical Athens. It attends to the role of the state in the development of money and to the form which money took. It also considers the role of money in the administration of justice. In conclusion, the author asks whether money in the Near East pre-dates Greek money.

Johnson, M. (2018). Symbolism and Cultural Exchange in Ancient Coinage: A Comparative Study of the Greek and Chinese Empires. *Journal of Numismatic Studies*, 35(2), 105-132. In this study, Johnson delves into the symbolism found in the coinage of the ancient Greek and Chinese empires, examining the possible cultural exchanges between these two civilizations. The research highlights the similarities and differences in the representation of authority, religion, and societal values through the designs and inscriptions on coins. Furthermore, Johnson discusses how these symbols were used to assert political power, emphasize cultural unity, and express religious beliefs, drawing comparisons between the two empires and shedding light on their broader historical and cultural contexts.

Thompson, R. (2016). The Art of Ancient Coinage: Aesthetic and Cultural Significance in the Roman Empire. *Numismatic Chronicle*, 176, 45-68. This paper by Thompson explores the artistic and cultural significance of ancient Roman coins, focusing on the use of imagery, iconography, and inscriptions. The author discusses how these elements were used to convey political messages, promote the emperor's image, and reflect the cultural and artistic trends of the time. Additionally,

the paper provides an in-depth analysis of the evolution of Roman coinage, touching upon the influence of Greek artistic traditions and the role of coins as a medium for artistic expression in the Roman world.

Kapoor, A. (2019). *Coins as Storytellers: Decoding the Cultural and Historical Narratives in Indian Coinage*. *Indian Journal of Numismatics*, 14, 29-54. In this research, Kapoor uncovers the cultural and historical narratives embedded in the rich and diverse coinage of India. The author examines the symbols, images, and inscriptions on the coins, revealing the influence of various religious beliefs, political dynasties, and regional cultures on the design and evolution of Indian coins. Kapoor's study emphasizes the importance of coins as primary sources for understanding India's complex and multifaceted history, as well as the way they reflect the country's rich cultural heritage and diverse artistic traditions.

O'Brien, S. (2017). *Numismatic Iconography and Cultural Identity: A Case Study of Celtic Coins in Britain*. *British Numismatic Journal*, 87, 23-40. This paper by O'Brien investigates the role of numismatic iconography in shaping cultural identity, focusing on the example of Celtic coins in Britain. The study analyzes the designs, symbols, and motifs found on these coins, illustrating how they reflect the unique cultural and religious beliefs of the Celtic tribes and their interactions with the wider world. O'Brien also delves into the connections between Celtic coinage and other forms of material culture, arguing that these objects played a vital role in the construction and maintenance of a distinct Celtic identity in ancient Britain.

2.6.4 Study areas

In the study of ancient money, local archaeological activities provide us with valuable material materials, which have become the key to interpret the ancient economic, cultural and historical context. Luoyang, as an ancient capital with a long history, has attracted many researchers to carry out in-depth research on the coin. This study will focus on the following aspects:

First, the basic study of the ancient coins. This includes the discussion of the shape, picture decoration and casting process of ancient coins. The coins of each period have its own unique shape and graphic decoration, often implied behind the political, economic and cultural information of that time. At the same time, the process and technology of coin casting also reflect the level of science and technology and the progress of coin-making technology at that time.

Then, the study of the art and aesthetics of the ancient coins. Coins were not only a tool of economic transactions, but also the carrier of social culture at that time. Its design, carving and painting and ornaments all contain the aesthetic concepts and artistic style of that time, reflecting the cultural characteristics and artistic achievements of that era.

In particular, this paper will deeply discuss the currency of Luoyang in the Tang Dynasty. In the Tang Dynasty, as a prosperous period in Chinese history, its monetary system had a very high research value. As the political and

cultural center at that time, Luoyang's currency circulation and use reflected the social economic situation, cultural exchange and the reform of the social system in the Tang Dynasty. Exploring the currency of Luoyang in the Tang Dynasty is of great significance for understanding the society, culture and economy of the Tang Dynasty.

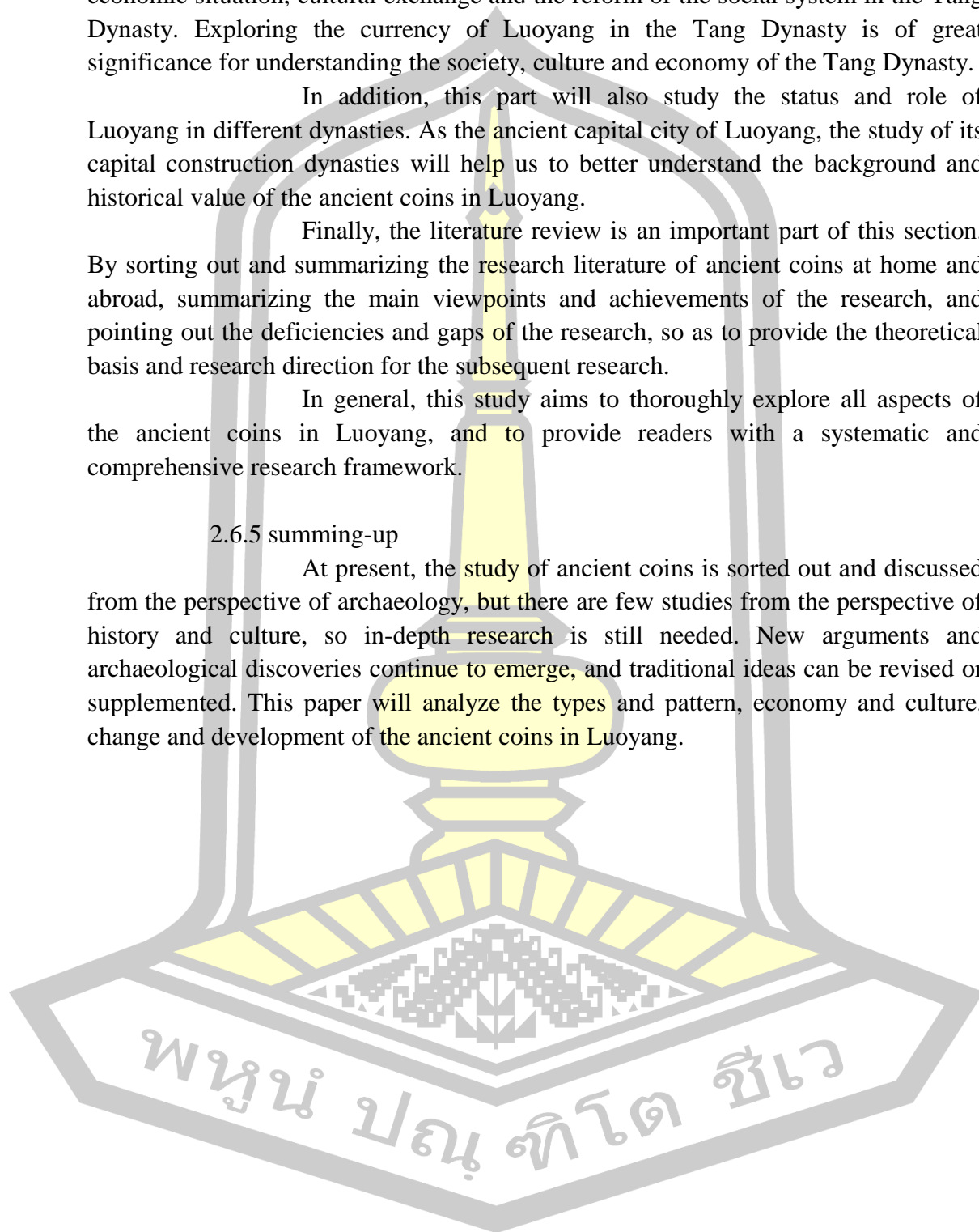
In addition, this part will also study the status and role of Luoyang in different dynasties. As the ancient capital city of Luoyang, the study of its capital construction dynasties will help us to better understand the background and historical value of the ancient coins in Luoyang.

Finally, the literature review is an important part of this section. By sorting out and summarizing the research literature of ancient coins at home and abroad, summarizing the main viewpoints and achievements of the research, and pointing out the deficiencies and gaps of the research, so as to provide the theoretical basis and research direction for the subsequent research.

In general, this study aims to thoroughly explore all aspects of the ancient coins in Luoyang, and to provide readers with a systematic and comprehensive research framework.

2.6.5 summing-up

At present, the study of ancient coins is sorted out and discussed from the perspective of archaeology, but there are few studies from the perspective of history and culture, so in-depth research is still needed. New arguments and archaeological discoveries continue to emerge, and traditional ideas can be revised or supplemented. This paper will analyze the types and pattern, economy and culture, change and development of the ancient coins in Luoyang.



Chapter III

Research Methodology

When studying any historical and cultural heritage, it is crucial to clarify the scope, content and method of research. Luoyang ancient coins are not only the currency in Chinese history, but also a powerful proof of Heluo culture and a part of historical civilization. Ensuring research accuracy and depth, a systematic and comprehensive approach is needed to study its historical and cultural values.

This chapter outlines the scope of the study, defines the content and objectives of the study and defines the methodology, tools and processes. Furthermore, the study period, location, population, and sample were described in detail to ensure the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the study. The study catalogue in this chapter is as follows:

3.1 Scope of Research

3.1.1 Research content

3.1.2 Research period

3.1.3 Research methods

3.1.4 Research area

3.1.5 Population and sample

3.2 Research Process

3.2.1 Research tools

3.2.2 Data collecting

3.2.3 Organizing and analyzing data

3.2.4 Presentation of information

3.1 Scope of Research

3.1.1 Research content

3.1.1.1 This study mainly discusses the history and development of ancient coins in Luoyang.

3.1.1.2 The literature review section provides an in-depth review of the study of ancient coins, covering its development, shape, aesthetics, regulations and other aspects.

3.1.1.3 The historical evolution of the ancient coins in Luoyang, especially the changes from the Xia and Shang dynasties to the late Qing Dynasty, was deeply studied.

3.1.1.4 The historical position and importance of Luoyang currency and its influence on economy and culture in the Tang Dynasty are mainly analyzed.

3.1.1.5 To explore the role and significance of tang Dynasty ancient Luoyang coins in economy, society and culture.

3.1.1.6 Finally, the results are summarized, discussed and provide suggestions and directions for future research.

3.1.2 Research period

Table 1 Research period of study The economic functions and social and cultural functions of the ancient coins in Luoyang during the Tang Dynasty

From June 2021 to June 2022, track the research progress and development frontier of ancient coin culture, improve the research framework of the cultural characteristics of ancient coins in Luoyang, collect and sort out relevant documents, and complete the literature review report.
From July 2022 to September 2022, determine the research scope of Luoyang ancient coins, formulate the outline of in-depth interview of Luoyang ancient coins, carry out field research, sort out data analysis, and form research reports.
From October 2022 to December 2022, Heluo culture and Luoyang ancient coins were deeply excavated, sorted out, sorted out and studied, and finally wrote the theoretical content of this article.
From January 2023- -February 2022, combined with the research results, the paper was prepared and further revised to form the first draft of the research paper.
From March 2023 to April 2022, conduct in-depth analysis, sorting and research on the data, design appropriate methods, and form one academic paper, which was published in the international journal retrieved by Scopus.
In July 2023, the supervisor will be invited to review and guide the thesis and form the final draft; apply for graduation defense to the relevant administrative department of the university and submit the research results.

3.1.3 Research methods

This study is a qualitative study.

3.1.3.1 Literature research method, Through the reading of archaeological literature, with the help of the relevant research methods, the history and development of Luoyang ancient coins, heyday and decline and specific reasons for detailed reading and comb, a comprehensive grasp of the content of the original literature, and analyze the history of the coin reflected in the substantive content, summarizes the cultural characteristics of the historical period and its role in the historical development.

3.1.3.2 Investigation method, Through the field investigation of Luoyang Museum, Luoyang Coin Museum, Luoyang Tianzi driving Six Antique City, understand the shapes and types of Luoyang coins in different historical periods, summarize the development of the shapes and types of Luoyang coins in different historical periods, and determine the Luoyang coins of the main dynasties to be studied.

3.1.3.3 Interviewing method , The respondents of this study include Luoyang researchers, archaeologists, ancient coin collectors and workers of government financial institutions. Through in-depth interviews with the respondents, they analyze the economic functions of Luoyang ancient coins and interpret the cultural symbols of different ancient coins.

3.1.4 Research area

The Luoyang Coin Museum, Luoyang son of Heaven drive six antique city.

3.1.5 Population and sample

Population. Luoyang school researcher, archaeologist, ancient coin collector, government financial organization workers. sample. It refers to some members that the researchers want to study, some of whom represent the whole group. The sample group can be divided into three groups: key information provider, practice information provider, and general informant.

3.1.5.1 Key information providers, about 5 people : Representative personnel CAI Yunzhang, currently the president of Luoyang Cultural Relics Collection Society, president of Luoyang Heluo Culture Research Association, director and academic committee member of China Numismatic Society. His main works include "Luoyang Coin Discovery and Research" and "Luoyang Coin and Heluo Civilization". Because Luoyang coins have been found in a large number in the past dynasties, the data of cultural relics that need to be sorted out are complex and diverse, which need to be compared and corrected one by one. On this basis, we need to visit and consult experts and scholars.

3.1.5.2 Practice information provider, about 5 people : Representative, Han Fengming, the president of Luoyang Cultural Industry Association, the chairman of Luoyang Tianzi Drive Six Antique City, is an ancient coin collector.

3.1.5.3 General informant, about 10 people : Visitors and ancient coin lovers.

3.2 Research Process

3.2.1 Research tools

3.2.1.1 Basic survey : Through the basic investigation of ancient coins in Luoyang, judging the age and different characteristics of ancient coins, explaining how it was produced in history and how it developed, and combing the development process of coins in each historical period in detail.

3.2.1.2 Through interviewing experts and scholars of ancient coin research and ancient coin collectors, the data of the types of ancient coins in Luoyang were obtained.

3.2.1.3 Interview guidelines are used for interview knowledge groups, practitioners, and general information groups. The tool includes both structured and unstructured interviews. The investigators constructed the interview guide according to the conceptual framework and objectives of the study.

3.2.2 Data collecting

3.2.2.1 Observation records were collected three times, once monthly.

3.2.2.2 Interview data will be collected in the form of recording and writing.

Discussion notes

The expert's point of view

Practice data collection

Sample data

Data from the practice activities

Comparative information of the data

3.2.3 Organizing and analyzing data

3.2.3.1 Literature

According to the numismatic data obtained by the Chinese Numismatic Society, 2 statistical bulletin ; Obtained 3 research reports on coin science and monetary history ; Reference monographs are: Heluo culture theory cluster, the han wei Luoyang city research, Heluo culture theory, Heluo culture research, Heluo culture and han nationality theory, etu book road, Luoyang coin discovery and research, "Chinese monetary history", "zhi-qiang dai coin literature", "the ancient Chinese currency", The Dictionary of Ancient Money, etc ; The reference list includes Dictionary of Chinese coins, Large List of Chinese coins, Map of Ancient Coins, Ancient Chinese Money Book, Luoyang coin and Heluo Civilization, History of Chinese currency culture ; Through literature review, 50 papers were downloaded from CNKI, and more than 20 excerpts were selected; the relevant research trends of coin were obtained from China, and 10 articles were downloaded from websites.

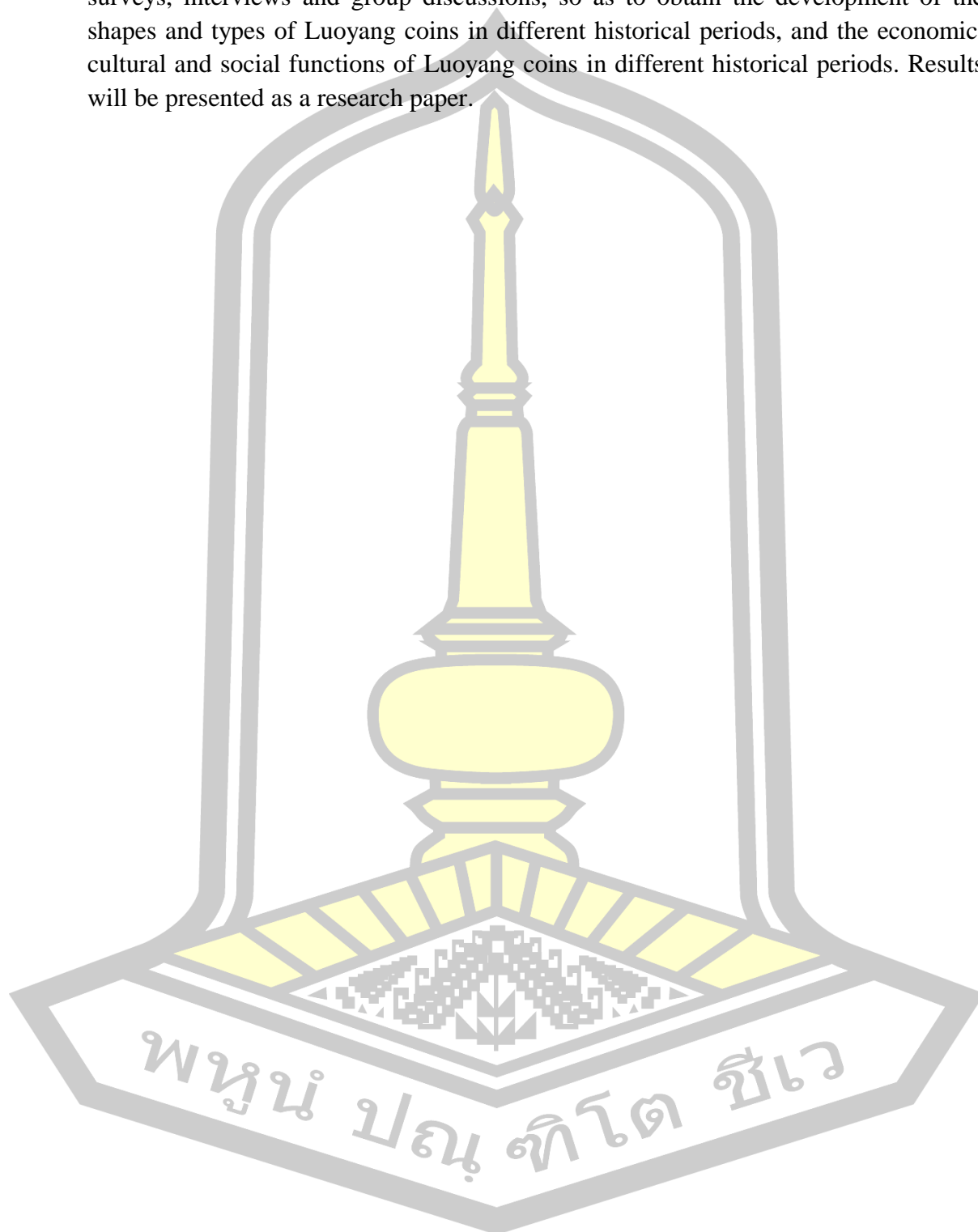
3.2.3.2 Data

Through the field investigation of Luoyang Museum, Luoyang Coin Museum, Longmen Antique City and Luoyang Tianzi Jia Six Antique City, the data of pre-Qin coins, Qin, Han, Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties coins, Sui, Tang and Five Dynasties and ten states coins, Song, Liao and Western Xia gold coins, gold and silver coins and banknotes were obtained. Results: Get a comprehensive preliminary understanding

The selection and use of data analysis methods for qualitative research can better explore the content of text, observations, and picture forms, helping researchers to obtain information and results.

3.2.4 Presentation of information

This study will use descriptive analysis to collect data from field surveys, interviews and group discussions, so as to obtain the development of the shapes and types of Luoyang coins in different historical periods, and the economic, cultural and social functions of Luoyang coins in different historical periods. Results will be presented as a research paper.



Chapter IV

Research Process

This chapter delves deeply into the rich tapestry of Luoyang's history, a millennia-old city, and its significance in Chinese civilization, with a specific focus on its ancient coins as a medium reflecting its societal, economic, and cultural shifts. Luoyang's coins, from their design to material, encapsulate vital information about the city's historical periods. While coin research has come a long way, there is a noticeable research gap, especially concerning the pivotal Tang Dynasty era when Luoyang was a melting pot of culture and commerce. Emphasizing the transformation and influence of coins across eras, this chapter aims to provide readers with an in-depth understanding of ancient Luoyang coins, shedding light on the city's complex societal structures, economy, and cultural heritage, especially during the Tang Dynasty.

4.1 Introduction to the historical development of Luoyang ancient coins

Luoyang, a millennia-old capital, is not only a political, economic, and cultural center in Chinese history but also one of the cradles of Chinese civilization. From ancient times to the Qing Dynasty, Luoyang played an extraordinarily pivotal role. As a medium of exchange, coins serve as powerful testimonies to the historical vicissitudes of this ancient city. Studying the ancient coins of Luoyang is an exploration of their status and impact in the history of Chinese currency, and an understanding of the economic, social, and cultural transitions they represent. Coins are more than just simple tools for exchange; they encapsulate rich historical information, offering a direct reflection of the economy and culture of an era or region. The design, material, patterns, and even the casting techniques of Luoyang's ancient coins are intimately connected with the production capabilities, trading methods, and cultural background of their times. In-depth research into these coins can reveal more about ancient Luoyang's social life, political systems, economic structures, and external interactions.

Although coin research has made strides in the academic realm, there remain considerable gaps and limitations in the study of Luoyang's ancient coins. Research on the currency of many periods in Luoyang's history has either not been extensively delved into or remains at a basic descriptive level. Especially for prosperous eras like the Tang Dynasty, studying its currency not only holds academic merit but also is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of this significant historical period.

Focusing on the Tang Dynasty for in-depth study is chosen not only because of its unique position in Chinese history but also because Luoyang during the Tang Dynasty was a grand fusion of culture and economy. The changes in currency during this era are particularly prominent. A thorough investigation into the currency of this period can offer us a vital perspective for comprehensively understanding Tang Dynasty's society, economy, and culture.

This chapter will provide a detailed overview of the historical development of ancient Luoyang coins, emphasizing the changes and impacts of coins across different periods. We will delve into the current state of research, analyze the existing gaps and limitations, and have an in-depth discussion specifically about the Tang Dynasty. Through this series of studies, we aim to offer readers a comprehensive and deep insight into the history of ancient Luoyang coins.

4.1.1 Study areas

This chapter will dig deep into the historical charm of Luoyang, an ancient city. Luoyang, as the ancient capital of China, has experienced the changes of many dynasties, and its rich historical background provides a wide range of resources for research. Among them, coins, as a reflection of history and culture, are the research focus of this chapter. Each coin handed down contains the political situation, economic situation and cultural situation of that time. Coins are not only a symbol of material civilization, but also the carrier of spiritual civilization, from which we can see the prosperity and change of the society at that time.

Especially in the historical period of the Tang Dynasty, Luoyang's position is even more unique. The Tang Dynasty was known as the golden period in Chinese history. During this period, Luoyang was not only economically prosperous, but also reached an unprecedented height. From the innovation of coinage technology to the wide circulation of coins, all highlight the characteristics of this era. Luoyang coins, from design to material, all condensed the historical characteristics of this period. The circulation of copper coins, the selection of metal materials, and the casting process of coins, each link was closely linked with the social economy at that time.

The economic and social functions of coins are also the core content of this chapter. In ancient times, coins were not only an economic trading tool, but also a link of social communication. It affects the operation of the market economy and shapes the mode of social communication. In addition, the patterns, inscriptions and shapes on the coins also contain rich cultural information, from which we can deeply interpret the connotation of Luoyang's history and culture. Although many achievements have been made in the study of coins, there are still many unexplored areas for the specific historical period of Luoyang, especially in the Tang Dynasty. Although the existing research reveals the economic and social functions of coins for us, there are still many research space worth exploring for the cultural connotation behind them, especially in a city with a long history.

In general, this chapter hopes that through the careful study of the ancient coins in Luoyang, readers can show a real and fresh ancient Luoyang, so that readers can have a deep understanding of the social, economic and cultural features of the city in various historical periods, especially in the Tang Dynasty, a period full of change and innovation.

4.1.2 An Overview of the Historical Development of Ancient Luoyang Coins

Luoyang, as a major cultural and economic center of ancient China, boasts a rich historical heritage, with its ancient coins standing as treasured representatives. To deeply grasp the genuine history, culture, and economic value of

Luoyang's ancient coins, multi-faceted research must be conducted. This holistic approach allows us to gain a more complete and accurate portrayal of these coins.

Museum collections serve as one of the most direct and authoritative sources. Many museums house vast collections of ancient Luoyang coins, which, after authentication by scholars and experts, have had their authenticity and historical value confirmed. By studying these museum collections, we can not only view the physical coins but also gather detailed descriptions, excavation locations, dating, and other pertinent information about them. This information provides us with invaluable firsthand data, assisting in a better understanding of the coins' historical context and manufacturing techniques.

Records from the antique market transactions also constitute a significant source of information. Although the antique market might involve some irregular or counterfeit dealings, by comparison and analysis, we can still extract valuable insights. For instance, the circulation quantity of a particular coin in the market, its trading price, and the evaluations from collectors can all shed light on the coin's economic value and social status.

Historical literature serves as a precious resource in the study of ancient Luoyang coins. Ancient texts, records, and even poems and stories may contain mentions of the usage and circulation of coins. These documents offer us a firsthand perspective, allowing insights into how people from ancient times viewed and utilized these coins, thereby enhancing our understanding of their sociocultural significance. Beyond the aforementioned sources, there are other research methodologies, such as engaging in discussions with local historians and collectors, or visiting ancient ruins and archaeological excavation sites. These methods can furnish us with an abundance of information and perspectives about the ancient coins of Luoyang.

By exploring various avenues for information about Luoyang coins, we can amass and analyze a wealth of data related to ancient Luoyang coins. This data comes from diverse sources, with each shedding light on a unique facet of Luoyang's ancient coinage. Only by synthesizing this myriad of information can we truly comprehend and appreciate the inherent value of Luoyang's ancient coins.

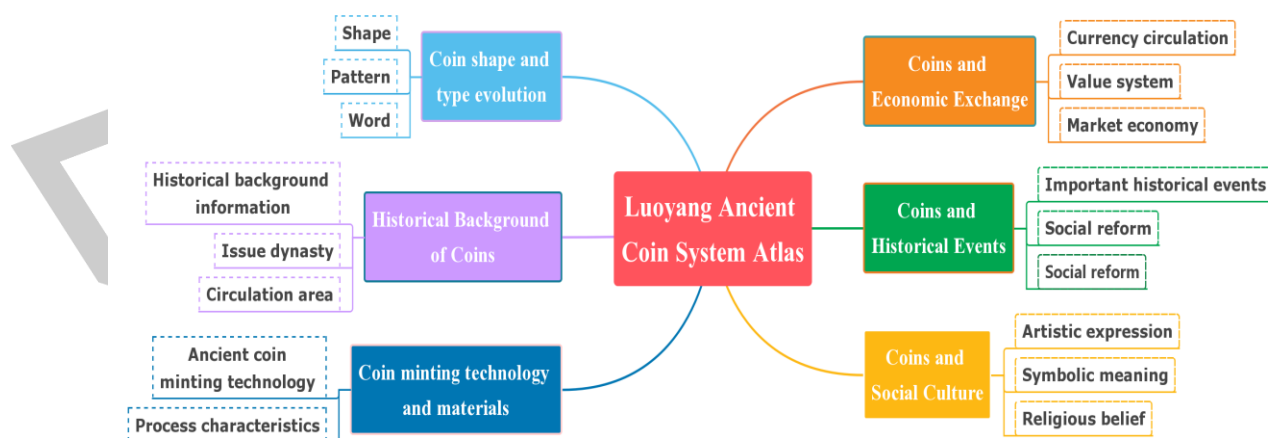


Figure 2 Atlas of Ancient Luoyang Coins

Figure 2 displays the data system atlas of ancient Luoyang coins. This atlas compiles invaluable data and information gathered from various channels, illustrating the historical evolution of Luoyang coins and the distinct characteristics of each era. This information not only offers crucial references for studying the historical development of Luoyang's ancient coins but also lays a solid foundation for delving deeper into their impact within the realms of economy, society, and culture. Different research channels provide a rich and unique perspective for studying ancient Luoyang coins. For instance, museum collections provide a visual representation of the coins' physical appearance and manufacturing techniques; records from the antique market offer insights into the circulation and economic value of ancient coins; historical literature, on the other hand, interprets the significance and status of these coins from cultural and societal perspectives. These diverse data sources make the research more three-dimensional and comprehensive.

By meticulously analyzing the data in the atlas, the research observes the evolution of shapes and types of Luoyang's ancient coins across different historical periods. For example, the materials, size, patterns, and inscriptions of coins from one period might differ from the previous era. These changes are often closely linked to the political, economic, and cultural contexts of the time.

The research can also reveal the unique features of ancient coins from different historical periods. For instance, one dynasty might have a preference for coins made of copper or iron, while another period might place greater emphasis on the design of patterns and inscriptions on the coins. These characteristics not only shed light on the technological and aesthetic preferences of each period but also assist us in delineating significant historical phases of ancient coins.

Ancient coins from Luoyang are not merely instruments of trade; they play an irreplaceable role in the economic, social, and cultural spheres. For example, the circulation of certain coins might reflect the trade networks and economic prosperity of the time, while the patterns and inscriptions on the coins could be associated with contemporary religious, cultural, and societal beliefs. These insights enable us to grasp more profoundly the historical and cultural context of ancient Luoyang.

4.1.3 The characteristics and source of ancient coins

As one of the abundant cultural heritages of the Luoyang region, ancient coins from Luoyang carry a long-standing history and bear significant cultural significance. This section will outline the development of Luoyang's ancient coins from the Xia and Shang periods through to the end of the Qing dynasty, with a focus on describing the evolution and changes in the shapes and types of coins across different dynasties.

From the Xia and Shang periods to the end of the Qing dynasty, ancient coins from Luoyang underwent a lengthy and diverse developmental journey, capturing the political, economic, and cultural shifts of different eras. Throughout this span, the shapes and types of Luoyang's ancient coins underwent several evolutions and transformations, showcasing their distinct characteristics and styles.

From the Xia and Shang periods to the Pre-Qin era, the origin and initial developmental phases of Luoyang's ancient coins reveal a gradual

transition from natural objects to a recognizable form of currency, marking a pivotal starting point in China's monetary history. During the Xia and Shang periods, the medium of exchange in the Luoyang region was still in a very primitive state. Shells, animal teeth, and bronze artifacts were common items of value at that time. Due to their rarity, utility, or symbolism, these items gradually gained recognition as valuable in social, religious, and economic interactions and were used as media for exchange. The sheen and shape of shells, the strength and rarity of animal teeth, and the craftsmanship and utilitarian value of bronze artifacts all ensured their esteemed status in society at that time.

By the Western Zhou period, with the further progression of society and the increasing complexity of the economy, the mode of exchange in the Luoyang region began to evolve, leading to the emergence of more standardized and unified items for exchange — the precursors to currency. Shell coins, bronze shell imitations, and bronze fish coins are representative of this period. As illustrated in Figure 2, these early forms of currency were significantly influenced in design by natural objects. For instance, the shape of shell coins resembled actual shells, while the bronze fish coins adopted the form of a fish. Such nature-inspired designs were not only a nod to tradition but also made the new mode of exchange more readily accepted by the masses.

While these early forms of currency might seem rudimentary by today's standards, they played an indispensable role in their time. Compared to the pure barter system, monetary exchange greatly increased trading efficiency, facilitated the production and circulation of goods, and spurred economic growth. Moreover, the introduction of currency also impacted societal division of labor. With the rise of a monetary economy, specialized industries and professions, such as coin minting, accounting, and storage, began to take shape, laying the groundwork for further societal advancements.

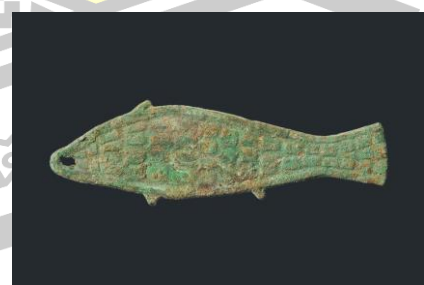
From the Xia and Shang periods through the Pre-Qin era, the evolution of ancient coins in Luoyang unveils a crucial shift from natural barter to monetary exchange. This transformation signified more than just a change in the form of items; it represented a significant metamorphosis in both the economic and social structures. From shells to bronze coins, each stage of progress mirrored societal advancements and the continuous evolution of human civilization.



(a) shell coins



(b) copper shells



(c) copper fish

Figure 3 Early Currency

As illustrated in Figure 3, the Qin-Han to medieval period represents a pivotal epoch in the history of ancient Luoyang coins, during which the form and types of currency underwent significant evolution and diversification. Entering the Qin-Han era, with the establishment of a centralized governance system and steady economic growth, the monetary system in the Luoyang region also underwent profound changes. Copper, due to its relatively abundant reserves and favorable physical properties, started to be widely employed in coin minting. During this time, a variety of copper-based currencies emerged in the Luoyang region, such as the knife coin, spade coin, and the half-liang coin.

Knife coins, shaped like short knives, typically had a handle and were often inscribed with details of the issuance location and weight. Spade coins, on the other hand, were rectangular currencies cast in imitation of ancient cloth goods, usually bearing distinct denominational markings. The half-liang was a round coin with a square hole in the center, facilitating stringing. Its name was derived from its standard weight—a half liang. Compared to their predecessors, these coins were more standardized and sophisticated in both craftsmanship and design. More importantly, they are widely recognized as true currency because, for the first time, they garnered large-scale national recognition and backing.

The institutionalization and standardization of this currency undoubtedly had far-reaching impacts on the economic life of the time. Firstly, standardized currency substantially reduced the complexity and difficulty of transactions, thereby enhancing market trading efficiency. Moreover, with money serving as a unified unit of account, commodity prices became more transparent, subsequently promoting market competition and goods circulation.

Beyond this, these copper coins also mirrored the socio-cultural sentiments of the era. For instance, inscriptions and patterns on the coins often provide us with invaluable insights into the rulers, policies, or societal beliefs of the time.

From the Qin-Han to the medieval period, the form and varieties of Luoyang's ancient coins underwent a series of evolutions, transitioning from simple natural exchange items to intricate copper currencies. These coins not only showcased progressively advanced manufacturing techniques but also became significant markers of the society, economy, and culture of the period. They stand as crucial milestones in the history of monetary development, laying a solid foundation for the evolution of subsequent currencies.



(a) knife coins



(b) spade coins



(c) half tael coins

Figure 4 Coins of Luoyang from the Qin-Han to the Medieval Period

As time progressed, the ancient coins of Luoyang evolved into more intricate and diverse forms and types. During the Sui and Tang dynasties, Luoyang emerged as the center of China's political and cultural spheres, exerting profound influence on the evolution of currency. Especially during the Tang dynasty, the Luoyang region saw an abundance of iron and copper coins. Among them, the square-holed coins and round-holed coins were the most iconic. Figure 4 showcases examples of Tang dynasty coins.

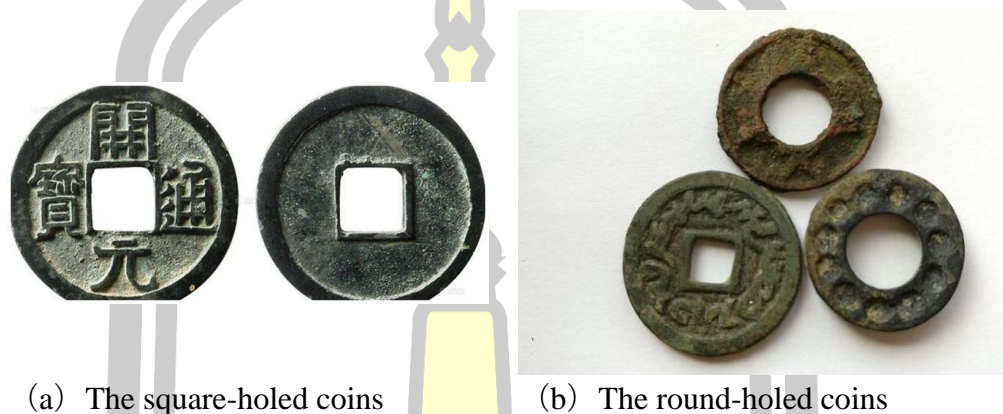


Figure 5 Tang Dynasty Currency

The ancient coins of Luoyang during the Tang dynasty played a pivotal role in economic exchanges. As the Tang Empire expanded its territories and flourished economically, money as a medium of exchange became increasingly prevalent and indispensable. Square-holed and round-holed coins held significant roles in the monetary system of the Tang era. The square-holed coins were commonly used domestically, while the round-holed coins were primarily for overseas trade. The circulation of these coins facilitated the exchange of goods and fostered commercial development, providing a significant boost to the economy of the Tang dynasty.

Beyond their crucial role in economic exchanges, the coins of Luoyang during the Tang dynasty also served as rich artistic objects and symbols of culture. The Tang era is celebrated as a golden age of ancient Chinese art and culture. As Luoyang stood as the political and cultural epicenter of the time, its coinage culture also saw immense advancement. The inscriptions and decorations on the square and round-holed coins were diverse, reflecting the aesthetic preferences and cultural landscape of the era. These coins not only embodied political imagery and the visage of rulers but also depicted societal customs, sentiments of scholars and literati, and even religious beliefs and philosophical notions. By examining the inscriptions and ornamentations on the Tang dynasty coins of Luoyang, we gain profound insights into the art, culture, and thought processes of Tang society.

The Tang dynasty holds a prominent place in Chinese history, with its political, economic, cultural, and artistic achievements leaving an enduring legacy for future generations. Luoyang, being a pivotal city of that era, saw its monetary culture encapsulating rich historical narratives and cultural essence. Studying Tang-era currency can shed light on the economic development traits and trajectory of the period, offering insights into the monetary systems and economic

exchanges of the time. Moreover, by analyzing the inscriptions and decorations on Tang coins, we can glean insights into the cultural aesthetics and philosophical perspectives of the society, uncovering traces of the societal atmosphere and cultural heritage.

As we transition to the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties, the ancient coins of Luoyang underwent extensive evolution in form and variety. As illustrated in Figure 5, starting from the two Song periods, copper coins were widely used during the Northern Song, while the Southern Song saw a greater adoption of lead coins. Additionally, the 'jiaozhi' of the Northern Song and 'huizi' of the Southern Song marked the preliminary emergence of paper currency, laying the groundwork for its extensive use in later eras. During the reigns of the Liao, Western Xia, Jin, and Yuan dynasties, each had its unique copper coin designs. Notably, the copper coins of the Liao and Western Xia, the copper currency of the Jin, and the coins from both the Yuan dynasty and the end-of-Yuan peasant revolts reflect the distinctive cultural and political backgrounds of these reigns. Paper currencies during the Jin and Yuan periods, furthermore, offered invaluable experience and insights for future monetary innovations. During the Ming and Qing eras, the designs of copper coins continued to diversify and evolve, including coins from the Ming, Southern Ming, and the peasant rebel forces at the end of the Ming period. The Qing dynasty introduced coins from the Three Feudatories and the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, as well as copper currency units. These coins not only held significant economic value but also bore witness to political and cultural shifts. Additionally, the introduction and circulation of paper currency during the Ming and Qing periods added a new chapter to the modernization of currency. Beyond the common copper and lead coins, there were iron coins, as well as gold and silver currencies. Especially significant were the gold and silver coins, such as gold bullion and coins or silver bullion and coins, which held substantial economic and political significance during certain periods and regions.



Figure 6 Coins during the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Qing Dynasties

Luoyang, often hailed as one of the cradles of Chinese civilization, has spanned several dynasties, and its history of currency development parallels its splendid cultural narrative, teeming with rich tales and transformations. The evolution of ancient Luoyang coins from the Xia and Shang periods to the end of the Qing dynasty represents a remarkable chapter in the annals of Chinese monetary history. In the Xia and Shang eras, the rudimentary form of currency was just beginning to emerge. Exchange mediums of that time were rather primitive, primarily using shells, which, due to their intrinsic value and rarity, served as items for bartering. This elementary mode of exchange mirrored the productivity and socio-economic structure of that period. As technology advanced and society progressed, there was a shift towards a more stable and convenient medium of exchange. Bronze, owing to its durability and resilience, gradually emerged as the ideal material for crafting currency. By the Western Zhou period, bronze shells and fish coins already showcased the embryonic form of a structured currency system. By the Warring States period, different states even minted their distinct currencies, such as the renowned knife and spade coins.

With Emperor Qin Shi Huang's unification of the six states, China embarked on the process of monetary standardization. The subsequent Han dynasty further advanced this trend, initiating the large-scale casting of copper coins, thus facilitating economic transactions. By the Tang and Song dynasties, buoyed by economic prosperity and market expansion, the variety and forms of currency began to diversify. Luoyang, being the economic and cultural hub of its time, witnessed its coin minting reaching a new zenith.

By the Ming and Qing dynasties, the forms and manufacturing techniques of currency entered a new phase. In addition to traditional copper coins, other monetary forms like silver taels emerged. These changes reflected the economic demands and technological advancements of the era, foreshadowing the advent of modern monetary systems.

The historical evolution of Luoyang's ancient coins holds significant academic and practical value for a better understanding and preservation of Luoyang's cultural heritage. Through in-depth research into the designs and types of ancient coins from different dynasties, one can gain a deeper insight into the history, economy, and culture of the Luoyang region. The findings from such studies are not only crucial in unveiling the countenance of ancient Luoyang society, tracing the trajectory of its economic development, and discerning the evolution of its arts and culture but also offer robust support for heritage conservation, historical research, and cultural continuity.

4.1.4 Monetary value in the economy

When studying the economic functions of Tang Dynasty coins from Luoyang, we first focus on how the origin and evolution of currency have impacted the economy. The origin of currency can be traced back to ancient times when trade was primarily conducted through barter. However, as society developed and trade increased, the limitations of barter, such as inconvenience and the difficulty in establishing value, became apparent. This led people to seek a universally accepted medium to facilitate trade, thus giving birth to currency.

In ancient China, the forms of currency were diverse, including shells, silk cloth, knife-shaped money, gold, and silverware, each of which played a distinct role in the economy. The Tang Dynasty had a particularly rich monetary system, consisting mainly of copper coins, silver money, gold and silver ingots, and silk products. The Tang Dynasty's understanding of the origin of currency was primarily influenced by the 'Princes-Made-Currency' theory presented in the text 'Guan Zi', which advocates state-regulated currency. According to this view, the advent of currency was deliberately designed by ancient monarchs to resolve the inconveniences and uncertainties in trade. Precious stones, gold, and knife-shaped money were set as high, medium, and low forms of currency, respectively, for trade and governance. This perspective gained widespread acceptance and adherence during the Tang Dynasty, represented by figures such as Zhang Jiuling (in 'The New Book of Tang', Volume 54, 'Treatise on Food and Money'), Lu Zhi, Bai Juyi, and Yang Yuling."

However, as time progressed and society underwent changes, the role and forms of currency underwent significant transformations. Currency not only facilitated trade but also became an important indicator for measuring economic prosperity and stability. In the Tang Dynasty, Lu Zhi pointed out, 'Ancient kings feared that the values of goods would not be well-matched, and that trade among people would be imprecise. Therefore, they established the system of currency to regulate appropriate weights and values' (from 'The Complete Works of the Tang Dynasty', Volume 465). This underscores the essential role that currency played in regulating prices and maintaining economic equilibrium. Bai Juyi argued, 'The ways of Heaven are ever-changing; hence, years of abundance are inevitably followed by years of scarcity. The resources of Earth are finite; hence, periods of surplus are inevitably followed by periods of shortage' (from 'The Collection of Bai Juyi', Volume 62). Therefore, the introduction of currency helped people trade between periods of bounty and scarcity, thus balancing the economy. Yang Yuling believed that 'sovereigns mint currency to balance myriad goods, facilitating trade, and unceasingly adjusting to changes' (from 'The New Book of Tang', Volume 52, 'Treatise on Food and Money'), indicating that currency played an irreplaceable role in trade and economic activities.

The impact of the origin and evolution of currency on the economy is a complex and far-reaching topic. As mentioned earlier, the 'Princes-Made-Currency' theory from 'Guan Zi' explains the origin of currency as a product of political power and governance, overlooking the intrinsic link between currency and commodity exchange. This skewed the understanding of the essence of currency. This perspective views currency as a tool for rulers to govern and maintain order, failing to recognize that currency itself spontaneously emerged in the process of commodity exchange and is, in fact, a special type of commodity. Such a superficial and erroneous viewpoint has led to misunderstandings and misconceptions about the nature of currency.

In contrast, Sima Qian's theory of the natural emergence of currency is closer to the actual origins of money. Although he did not recognize that currency is a special kind of commodity in itself, he did connect the creation of currency to the production and exchange of goods. He argued that various forms of currency arose from the development of 'agricultural, industrial, and commercial

trade' (from 'Records of the Grand Historian', Volume 30, 'Book on Equalization'). While this viewpoint might not delve deeply into the matter, it does objectively reflect the relationship between currency and economic exchange, focusing on the idea that currency arises within the context of economic interaction, and acknowledging its importance in economic development.

Indeed, the advent of currency is an inevitable result of economic development. In primitive societies, people traded goods directly, but as society evolved and trade increased, the limitations and inconveniences of barter became apparent. Consequently, people began seeking a universally accepted medium for facilitating transactions, leading to the birth of currency. Serving as an intermediate commodity with universal acceptance and stable value, currency offers convenience and efficiency to economic exchange. Its introduction has made economic transactions more efficient, promoting the circulation and exchange of goods and thereby driving economic growth.

As time went on, the forms of currency also evolved. In the Tang Dynasty, a variety of currencies like copper coins, silver coins, and gold and silver ingots were in widespread circulation. Different forms of currency served different functions within the economy; for example, copper coins were primarily used for small transactions, while silver and gold coins and ingots were often used for larger transactions and as stores of value. The diversity of currency types added flexibility and variety to economic exchanges, catering to different levels and scales of economic activity.

Besides facilitating trade, currency has had other significant impacts on the economy. The introduction of money has made economic calculation and bookkeeping much more convenient, thereby promoting the growth of commercial activities. Moreover, currency has become an important indicator for measuring economic prosperity and stability. During the Tang Dynasty, Bai Juyi noted, 'The ways of Heaven are ever-changing; hence, years of plenty inevitably alternate with years of scarcity. The benefits of the Earth are limited; therefore, abundance is always followed by contraction.' As such, the introduction of currency helps people trade across years of bounty and scarcity, balancing the economy. The role of currency also extends to the processes of government tax collection and trade, aiding the government in fiscal management and economic regulation.

The origins and evolution of currency have had a far-reaching impact on the economy. The emergence of currency has solved the inconveniences associated with bartering, promoted economic exchange and the circulation of goods, and thus propelled economic development. Different forms of currency have diverse roles in the economy, offering more choices for economic transactions. Additionally, currency has evolved into an important indicator of economic prosperity and stability, aiding governmental fiscal management and economic regulation. Therefore, a deep understanding of the origins and evolution of currency is crucial for grasping economic development and the role of money within it. The Tang Dynasty's understanding of the origin of money was limited to the 'Currency by Sage Kings' theory from the text 'Guanzi,' which impeded a deeper, more accurate understanding of the true nature of currency. In the study of the economic functions of Tang Dynasty currency in Luoyang, it's important to go beyond this traditional understanding to investigate the true impact of the evolution and origins of currency on the economy.

4.1.5 The monetary function in the economy

In Luoyang, the bustling capital city of the Tang Dynasty, the functions of currency were remarkably comprehensive. The ruling class of the Tang Dynasty had a well-rounded understanding of the role of money, considering it an extension of sovereign power and an essential tool for governance. In this pivotal political and economic center, currency served four major functions:

Firstly, in Tang-era Luoyang, currency was extensively used to standardize a diverse range of goods and facilitate trade, thereby contributing to the prosperity of commercial activities. The ruling elites emphasized the vital role of currency in regulating the socio-economic landscape and governing the state. Liu Zhi, in his treatise 'Discourse on Coinage,' mentioned that currency is the fulcrum of state power, not to be trifled with or delegated, but to be used for evaluating the value of goods and stabilizing prices. This ensured that commercial activities could run smoothly. The issuance and circulation of currency fostered commodity exchanges and pushed for commercial vibrancy, laying a solid foundation for the economic development of Luoyang during the Tang Dynasty.

Secondly, currency in Tang-era Luoyang also functioned as a mechanism for price control. Through the expansion and contraction of the money supply, prices were kept stable. Liu Zhi, in 'Discourse on Coinage,' stressed that control over the currency is a leverage point for the state's economic benefit, which should be regulated by the government. The balance between absorbing and injecting currency became one of the government's tools for economic regulation. This governmental control over currency ensured that price fluctuations were contained within reasonable bounds, thereby benefiting the maintenance of economic stability and the order of feudal governance.

Thirdly, currency in Tang-era Luoyang served as a balancing mechanism among different sectors of the economy, adjusting the relationships between agriculture, manufacturing, and commerce. Lu Zhi in 'Zizhi Tongjian' pointed out that the use of currency should be under governmental control to harmonize the interactions among various economic sectors. This allowed the growth of a commodity-based economy to remain within the limits that the feudal governance structure could accommodate. The circulation and use of currency contributed to a balanced interplay among agriculture, handicrafts, and commerce, promoting a virtuous cycle in the socio-economic fabric of the society.

Lastly, currency in Tang-era Luoyang played a role in curbing the expansion of regional powers. The Tang ruling class, recognizing the importance of currency, managed its issuance and usage to limit the growth of local magnates, thereby fortifying the foundation of feudal society. Bai Juyi, in his 'Bai's Longqing Collection,' emphasized that the weight and worth of currency directly impacted the value of all goods. A judicious regulation of currency helped in preventing the undue expansion of local powers, thus maintaining the stability and unity of feudal society. The understanding of the role of currency in ancient China underwent a lengthy evolutionary process. During the Tang Dynasty, the prevailing ideas about money were still largely influenced by the theories in 'Guanzi' concerning the 'weight and worth' of currency. On a macro level, there hadn't been significant advancements in the understanding of the role of currency. However, Tang Dynasty poet Bai Juyi

offered a novel perspective by emphasizing that currency could regulate the relationships among various sectors of the economy like agriculture, manufacturing, and commerce, which marked a certain level of progress. For a comprehensive understanding of the economic functions of currency in Tang-era Luoyang, further scrutiny into Tang Dynasty's perception of the role of currency is needed.

Liu Zhi, in his 'Discourse on Currency' written in the 22nd year of the Kaiyuan era, provided a thorough and systematic exposition on the role of currency. He stated, 'The rise of money has long-standing origins. It serves to balance the light and heavy, and to weigh the root and branch. Qi Huan applied this principle to dominate as a state, while Zhou Jing lost the way and people suffered from its misuse. Upon examining historical records, the rise and fall of nations are genuinely tied to this.' Liu Zhi stressed the pivotal role of currency in regulating socio-economic conditions and national governance. He argued that the weight and worth of currency determine the fluctuation of commodity prices, thus influencing the prosperity or decline of socio-economic conditions. Liu Zhi's multifaceted and layered exploration of the role of currency had a certain impact on the scholarly community during the Tang Dynasty.

The Tang Dynasty's views on currency were deeply influenced by Guan Zhong, the pre-Qin economic thinker, and his theory of 'weight and worth.' The ideas in 'Guanzi' formed a central concept about the authoritative nature of currency and its role as a regulatory tool in the hands of the state—a notion that was further refined and expanded upon during the Tang era.

Firstly, it's essential to clarify the concept of the 'weight and worth' theory in 'Guanzi.' Guan Zhong argued that the state should control the production and circulation of currency to make it a tool for realizing national interests. This view originates from a centralized perspective, emphasizing the authoritative nature of currency—that is, the value and circulation of money should be strictly controlled by the state and should not be entirely dependent on free market trading. In the Tang Dynasty, this idea was further developed and deepened. Although the commodity economy saw relative growth during this period, and market transactions became increasingly active, the state's control over currency did not wane. Money was seen as a political tool used to regulate the economy and stabilize society, functions that go beyond its role as a mere medium of exchange. This perspective diverges from modern economic definitions of currency by separating it from its purely economic value and placing greater emphasis on its political worth.

Moreover, Tang rulers did not consider currency as an independent commodity but rather as an embodiment of state power, closely tied to the state's fiscal and political governance. This is evident from the Tang Dynasty's monetary policies; the government intermittently intervened in the currency market, adjusting the quality and quantity of money to control commodity prices, stabilize the domestic economy, and consequently ensure political stability. Additionally, the right to mint coins was strictly controlled by the state. Unauthorized coinage was considered a serious offense, reflecting the importance placed on the authoritative and interventionist nature of currency.

This interventionist view on currency found widespread acceptance in the Tang Dynasty. Whether it was the royal family, aristocrats, or merchants, they all believed that currency was not merely a tool in economic activities

but also an embodiment of national political power. This also reflects the Tang Dynasty's unique understanding of the relationship between the state and the market, and between politics and economics—that is, state power should intervene in and control economic activities to ensure national governance and stability.

However, the Tang Dynasty poet Bai Juyi presented a novel perspective. He argued that currency could not only regulate the relationship between the agricultural, industrial, and commercial sectors, but also promote economic prosperity and stability by controlling the 'weight' of currency. He emphasized the role of money in regulating the economy and balancing the disparity between social wealth and poverty. This unique view on currency was relatively uncommon at the time and marked a certain advancement in the understanding of the role of money during the Tang Dynasty.

Luoyang, an ancient capital with a storied history, radiated unprecedented glory during the Tang era. As depicted in the painting 'Procession of the Emperor,' the Tang Dynasty saw vigorous international trade. Commercial activities flourished, bringing together goods from all regions. Not only were there domestic products like silk and ceramics, but exotic treasures from distant Western realms also made their way here. All these exchanges and circulations were facilitated by the involvement of currency. Money made commercial activities more convenient, allowing for the accurate measurement of the value of goods, making transactions both efficient and streamlined.

Moreover, as the political and economic epicenter, the stability of commodity prices in Luoyang was especially crucial. Here, money was not just a medium of exchange; it was a tool for economic regulation. Through meticulous control over the issuance of currency, Tang rulers successfully regulated prices, avoiding drastic fluctuations due to supply-demand imbalances, and ensuring the stability and prosperity of the market.



Figure 7 Tang Dynasty Artwork on International Trade

On a macroeconomic level, currency also played a pivotal role. It facilitated a smooth coordination of economic activities among agriculture, handicrafts, and commerce. Money acted as a bridge among these various economic sectors, enabling resources to flow freely between them and thereby spurring overall economic development. On the other hand, local powers were gradually becoming stronger, posing a certain threat to the central government. Against this backdrop, monetary policy also served as a means to curb the growth of local influence. By controlling the money supply to the local regions, the central government successfully limited the rapid accumulation of local wealth, ensuring a balance of power between the center and the peripheries.

The prosperity and radiance exhibited by Luoyang during the Tang Dynasty are inseparable from the development of its monetary economy. This ancient capital was not only a center for culture and art but also a confluence for economics and policy. The historical resources of Luoyang provide us with a valuable window to delve deep into the roles and significance of ancient currency, affording us insights into the mechanisms and wisdom of ancient economic systems.

4.1.6 Monetary status in a social culture

4.1.6.1 The Role of Money in Society

The ruling class of the Tang Dynasty clearly regarded money as an emblem of feudal sovereignty, never to be lightly handed over to anyone else. Behind this notion was an embodiment of the feudal rulers' intention to maintain control over national power. Luoyang, being a significant city of the Tang era, experienced increasing commercial activities. Money, serving as a medium for trade, enabled various goods to circulate freely in the market, significantly boosting commercial activities. This not only propelled the economic development of Luoyang itself but also facilitated trade interactions with the external world, making Luoyang a crucial hub for commerce.

Through adept control of money supply, Tang rulers successfully regulated commodity prices. In a major metropolis like Luoyang, maintaining stable prices was of paramount importance. By either withdrawing or injecting money into circulation, rulers could effectively manage price levels, ensuring the stable operation of the market. This did not just enhance the financial strength of the nation but also helped to maintain the stability of the feudal society, preventing social unrest triggered by price fluctuations. Money also played a role in balancing relations across different industries in Luoyang society. Agriculture, manufacturing, and commerce each held their own statuses in Luoyang during the Tang Dynasty. By finely tuning monetary policies, the Tang rulers could influence the economic gains across various sectors, ensuring that the development of a commodity economy remained within the bounds acceptable to feudal governance. This approach not only secured the stability of the feudal regime but also effectively averted social issues arising from excessive commercialization. To counter the growing strength of local powers, monetary policy also acted as a restraining factor. Being a key political center, any increase in the influence of local factions in Luoyang could pose a threat to central governance. By limiting the money supply, Tang rulers effectively curbed the rapid accumulation of wealth by these local powers, thus safeguarding the solid foundation of their feudal rule.

Money played a multifaceted and crucial role in the society of Luoyang during the Tang Dynasty. It was not merely a medium for economic transactions; it also served as a potent instrument in the hands of the feudal rulers. It was employed for a wide range of functions, such as maintaining national stability, regulating economic relations, and restraining local powers. This comprehensive understanding of the role of money contributed to significant progress and achievements in the monetary economy of Luoyang in the Tang era.

Numerous individuals within the Tang ruling class expressed their views on this matter. In the 22nd year of the Kaiyuan era (734 AD), Liu Zhi first articulated the central role of money in national governance from a macroscopic perspective in his treatise 'Discourse on Fountain Money' ('Quan Huo Yi'). He emphasized that the role of money went beyond commercial transactions; what was more critical was its regulatory function in the governance of the nation. Liu Zhi argued that the rise and fall of a nation were directly linked to its monetary policies. Being the economic and cultural center of the Tang Dynasty, Luoyang naturally became the focal point of the impacts of these monetary policies. Liu Zhi further explored the notion that money is the authority of a nation from five different aspects.

Firstly, Liu Zhi drew a parallel between the currency of his time and the ancient practice of issuing coins, explicitly stating that money is a symbol of royal authority. In a bustling commercial hub like Luoyang, control over currency becomes particularly crucial. If the issuance and management of money were to fall into the wrong hands, the ruler would lose their grip on the state, leading to far-reaching impacts on Luoyang's economic order.

Secondly, he delved into the relationship between money supply and price levels. In Luoyang, the stability of prices is directly tied to the fortunes of commerce. Liu Zhi argued that in order to maintain price stability, it's imperative to precisely control the money supply. An increase in the supply of money could lead to falling prices, while a decrease would push them up. Such a delicate balance is vital for the commercial prosperity of Luoyang.

Furthermore, Liu Zhi criticized the practice of private coinage. He believed that private minting would degrade the quality of the currency, affecting its stability and credibility. In Luoyang, if counterfeit money were to proliferate, the economic order would be severely disrupted, potentially leading to social upheaval.

Liu Zhi also noted that if individuals were allowed to mint coins and profit from it, labor would shift from agriculture to coin production, severely affecting Luoyang's food supply. Both the social stability and the livelihoods of Luoyang's inhabitants would be threatened as a result.

Lastly, he warned that allowing private coinage would exacerbate the gap between the rich and the poor. Those in poverty wouldn't have the means to mint coins and would become increasingly subordinated to the wealthy, who would grow ever more powerful. Such social inequality would lead to social unrest, putting Luoyang's stability at risk.

In the Tang Dynasty, the understanding and application of money penetrated various levels of government. It was not only a focus for rulers but also began to attract in-depth scholarly attention regarding its social functions and

impacts. Among these scholars, Lu Zhi and Yang Yuling offered particularly insightful and sharp perspectives.

In the tenth year of the Zhenyuan era (794 AD), the social and economic climate of Luoyang was at a crucial turning point. The monetary economy was gradually coming into prominence, and various commercial activities were increasingly frequent. Against this backdrop, Lu Zhi presented his views. He emphasized that ancient kings, in order to ensure price stability and prevent excessive market fluctuations, had specially formulated the 'Law of Coinage and Cloth.' This legislation clearly outlined the weight standards for currency, thus ensuring fairness and justice in transactions. Not only did Lu Zhi's commentary reflect his understanding of the importance of money, but it also revealed his steadfast belief in centralized power. He argued that the management of money was a vital responsibility of the state and should not be delegated lightly, lest authority be outsourced and national stability compromised. (Source: 'Zizhi Tongjian', Volume 234).

Yang Yuling, on the other hand, explored the regulatory role of money in the economy from another angle. He explicitly stated that when rulers devise monetary policies, their aim isn't merely to facilitate day-to-day transactions. More importantly, they seek to control the overall economy through money. In his view, the circulation and supply of money are key factors affecting prices, and subsequently, the entire economy. When economic fluctuations occur, manifesting as significant price increases or decreases, rulers can adjust monetary policies to ensure stable economic growth. (Source: 'New Book of Tang', Volume 52, 'Treatise on Food and Money II').

In Luoyang, these viewpoints hold extremely practical significance. As an important metropolis during the Tang Dynasty, Luoyang experienced increasingly prosperous trade activities, making price stability crucial to the livelihoods of its residents. Money, as the lifeblood of the economy, has a direct impact on the rise and fall of various industries based on its circulation speed and quantity. To ensure the stable prosperity of Luoyang and the harmonious lives of its people, rulers must precisely manage monetary policy.

Bai Juyi argues that money is more than just a simple tool for transactions; it plays a pivotal role in regulating the three major economic sectors: agriculture, industry, and commerce. He explicitly states that agricultural produce like grains and silk come from the hard work of farmers, industrial goods such as various tools are produced by the skilled hands of craftsmen, while wealth is circulated through the operations and transactions managed by merchants. However, the key to regulating and balancing these three sectors lies in the state's management of money. The value of money directly impacts the worth of agricultural, industrial, and commercial goods. Bai Juyi points out that if money is too scarce, the prices of agricultural products will drop, leading to hardships for farmers; and if money is too abundant, the prices of goods will fall, affecting the interests of workers and merchants alike. (Source: 'The Bai's Longqing Collection,' Volume 63, 'Strategies in the Forest II').

These perspectives are also reflected in the imperial edicts of the Tang Dynasty. Both Emperors Xuanzong and Xianzong explicitly mentioned the importance of money in their decrees. Xuanzong, in his edict titled 'Orders to

'Collect and Exchange Bad Money,' emphasizes that money is key to regulating supply and demand, and ensuring economic stability. The value of money determines the value of goods, which in turn affects the economic conditions of the entire country. Xianzong's edict explicitly states that monetary policies must have clear guidelines to ensure the stable value of money. Only in this way can one ensure that monetary policies benefit the people and promote stable economic development.

In a major metropolis like Luoyang, the perspectives of Bai Juyi and the emperors carry significant practical implications. The city's commercial activities are thriving, and its agriculture, industry, and commerce are all flourishing. Monetary policy directly impacts the lives and economic activities of its citizens. To ensure the prosperity and stability of Luoyang and to safeguard the interests of the people, the state must master monetary policy with precision to ensure the stable value of money. The rulers of the Tang Dynasty had a nuanced understanding of the management and application of money. They realized that money is not merely a tool for transactions; it also embodies the power and responsibilities of the state. Only by ensuring the stability of money can the prosperity and stability of the nation be guaranteed, thereby securing the welfare of the people. This profound understanding of money set a standard in the monetary economy for Tang-era Luoyang, offering invaluable lessons and experience for future economic management.

In the Tang Dynasty's perspectives on the role of money, different scholars and politicians had their own emphases. Liu Zhi's discourse, for example, appears particularly comprehensive and systematic. When exploring ancient China's historical understanding of the role of money, Bai Juyi's relatively novel viewpoint—that money plays a key role in regulating the three major economic sectors of agriculture, industry, and commerce—reveals his deep insights into the economic system. However, generally speaking, the Tang Dynasty's views on money still extend the 'Discourse on Weight and Lightness' found in the 'Guanzi'.

Du You provided a concise interpretation of the 'Discourse on Weight and Lightness' from the 'Guanzi,' stating that money serves as a means for ancient rulers to safeguard national wealth and manage public affairs. Its primary function is to balance the social economy, ensure price stability, and maintain income inequality within an acceptable range. By employing this approach, kings or emperors can consolidate all power, ensuring the loyalty and trust of their subjects. Essentially, this viewpoint from the 'Guanzi' posits that the importance of money lies in its ability to be regulated according to the state's political and fiscal needs, rather than purely market demands (Tongdian, Volume 8, 'Food and Commodities Eight: Currency'). Fundamentally, the 'Discourse on Weight and Lightness' serves as a policy instrument, aimed at adjusting the economy and achieving political objectives through monetary regulation. This perspective advocates that money should be under the control of the state, and its creation and utilization should be strictly overseen by the state. This implies that money is not just a simple medium of exchange; it is also inextricably linked with the state's fiscal policy and political governance. This is a quintessential viewpoint advocating state intervention in the economy, emphasizing the state's leading role in economic matters.

The views on money in ancient China were not monolithic but exhibited rich diversity across different historical periods and among various scholars. Nevertheless, they all recognized the significance of money in both

economic and political realms, and diligently sought the most effective means of management and utilization.

4.1.6.2 Art and Symbolism in Tang Dynasty Currency

In the long arc of Chinese history, currency has served not only as a medium of economic exchange but also as a historical record reflecting the social, political, and cultural context of the times. Among these, the currency of the Tang Dynasty is particularly noteworthy, encapsulating the zeitgeist of the era while integrating rich artistic nuances and deep cultural significance.

The Tang Dynasty, a golden age lasting 289 years, authorized the minting and issuance of only three types of currency recognized by the central government: the Kaiyuan Tongbao, the Qianfeng Quanbao, and the Qianyuan Zhongbao. During the An Lushan Rebellion, rebel leaders An Lushan and Shi Siming issued their own currencies, "De Yi Yuanbao" and "Shun Tian Yuanbao," respectively, to assert the legitimacy of their rule. These currencies were not only functional in the economic realm but also held unique value in the fields of art and semiotics.

Starting with the Kaiyuan Tongbao, the name of this coin translates to 'inaugurating a new era,' capturing the Tang Dynasty's determination and ambition to forge a new age. Its design was simplistic yet elegant, with smooth lines that set the standard for future currency designs. The coin was not only widely circulated domestically but also had a significant international impact, becoming an important currency along the Silk Road.

The Qianfeng Quanbao and Qianyuan Zhongbao were more reflective of the political backdrop of their times. Specifically, the Qianfeng Quanbao, minted during the Tianbao era, resonated with the 'Tianbao' reign title and symbolized the emperor's confidence in his rule and his optimistic vision for the nation's future. Meanwhile, the Qianyuan Zhongbao implied, through its name, the emperor's profound contemplation on governance, embodying the hopes and expectations for national prosperity and growth.

The currencies 'De Yi Yuanbao' and 'Shun Tian Yuanbao,' issued by An Lushan and Shi Siming respectively, served not merely as economic tools but also as symbols of their attempts to establish new regimes. Particularly noteworthy is the 'Shun Tian Yuanbao.' The characters 'Shun Tian' on the coin imply that Shi Siming claimed his rule was divinely ordained and supported, thus attempting to solidify his standing.

As the political, economic, and cultural hub of the era, Luoyang became the primary venue for the circulation of these currencies. These coins functioned not only as mediums of economic exchange but also as significant markers of people's social standing, tastes, and cultural refinement. Through these currencies, one can glimpse the social landscape of Luoyang at the time, experiencing the era's opulence and splendor.

The currencies of the Tang Dynasty encapsulate the essence of the period; their value in the realms of art and semiotics far exceeds their economic worth. They stand as testaments to history, carriers of culture, and crystallizations of art.

Kaiyuan Tongbao:

The name 'Kaiyuan Tongbao' has long become a legend in the annals of Chinese monetary history. As a major institutional innovation of the Tang Dynasty, this coin not only ended the seven-century-long reign of the 'Wuzhu Coin,' but it also set a standard for subsequent coin design, showcasing the Tang Dynasty's grand vision and foresight in economic policy.

In July of 621 AD, during the fourth year of the Wude era, Emperor Gaozu of the Tang Dynasty, Li Yuan, announced a monumental monetary reform: the abolishment of the 'Wuzhu Coin,' which had circulated in China for over 700 years. In its place, a new currency named 'Kaiyuan Tongbao' was minted. This was an unprecedented and audacious attempt, a complete overturning of the traditional naming systems of 'Zhu' and 'Liang' used in prior dynasties. The reason behind this sweeping change is not hard to understand.

By the dawn of the Tang Dynasty, the 'Wuzhu Coin' had gradually reduced in weight to around 2 grams, posing significant inconveniences for commercial transactions. Furthermore, it caused considerable loss for the general populace, creating a huge disparity between the coin's real value and its face value. The 'Kaiyuan Tongbao,' however, restored the coin's rightful weight, starting at around 4 grams upon its initial minting, thus ensuring its intrinsic value was well-protected. This change was warmly received by both traders and the common people, making the coin immediately popular in the marketplace.

Meanwhile, although subsequent Tang emperors also attempted to mint new coins, most failed to meet quality standards and saw only brief circulation in the market. In contrast, the enduring legacy of the 'Kaiyuan Tongbao' underscores its extraordinary significance. This coin was not only widely used during the Tang Dynasty but continued to circulate among the populace for over a thousand years, making it one of the most beloved 'square-holed coins' in history.

So, what makes 'Kaiyuan Tongbao' so cherished? The reasons are manifold. Firstly, as shown in Figure 7, its design is well-proportioned and aesthetically pleasing. Compared to the traditional 'Wuzhu Coin,' it appears far more refined and of higher quality. Secondly, the coin features neatly crafted text with smooth brushstrokes, reflecting not only the calligraphic artistry of the Tang era but also the dignity and majesty of the royal court. Lastly, the restoration of the coin's weight ensures its intrinsic value, protecting the general populace from the losses associated with devalued currency.





Figure 8 Kaiyuan Tongbao

The Kaiyuan Tongbao, minted in the early Tang Dynasty, is renowned for its well-proportioned design. This coinage not only showcased the highly advanced minting technology of the time but also symbolized the Tang Dynasty's robust national prestige and stringent quality standards for currency. Managed and produced under centralized state control, each coin embodies the government's keen attention and high aspirations. The standardized casting process ensured that every detail of the coin was finely crafted, with a diameter of approximately 25mm, thickness around 2mm, and weight close to 4 grams—dimensions that closely resemble modern coins, imparting a sense of durability and longevity.

However, as time passed, especially after the turmoil caused by the An Lushan Rebellion, both the social and economic fabric of the Tang Dynasty were severely impacted. Neglect from the central government, coupled with the prevalence of private minting, led to a significant decline in coin quality. The original casting molds were abandoned, and many craftsmen, seeking efficiency and profit, switched to simpler sand-casting techniques. This resulted in newly minted coins being significantly lighter, weighing less than 3 grams, and also smaller in diameter by approximately 2mm. Even more concerning was the deteriorating craftsmanship, as the text on these new coins became less aesthetically pleasing, with some even appearing blurred.

In addition, the Kaiyuan coins from the early Tang Dynasty featured only a moon symbol on the reverse side, embodying simplicity and purity. However, as the dynasty moved into its middle and later periods, the coins began to exhibit a broader array of designs on their reverse sides, such as stars and shifting patterns, marking a distinctive feature of later Kaiyuan issues.

When discussing the Kaiyuan Tongbao of the Tang Dynasty, its sturdy form is noteworthy, but another admirable feature is the exquisiteness of its script. Behind this lies a fascinating tale involving the great calligrapher Ouyang Xun. Serving as a high-ranking official, known as 'Giveshi Zhong,' Ouyang Xun was a man of both administrative competence and artistic brilliance. Over time, the role of 'Giveshi Zhong' evolved from an inner court position

to an external one, gaining significant political influence, as documented in 'Tongdian Zhiguan San.'

In this context, Ouyang Xun's calligraphy became tightly interwoven with matters of state, contributing his expertise to Tang Dynasty coinage. The script he used for the Kaiyuan Tongbao showcased the enchantment of Tang calligraphy, incorporating not just the 'Ba Fen' script but also Seal and Clerical scripts, reflecting the depth and versatility of Ouyang Xun's artistry. This marked the first time in history that a coin bore the name of a renowned calligrapher, signifying that the Tang Dynasty viewed coinage as a matter of national importance, far beyond a mere economic activity. This cross-disciplinary collaboration epitomized the openness and diversity of Tang culture. During this period, culture and art were seamlessly integrated with state affairs, mutually enriching each other. Through something as commonplace and minute as a coin, people could feel the pulse of the era and appreciate the cultural prosperity of the Tang Dynasty at its peak.

Ouyang Xun's involvement went far beyond crafting aesthetically pleasing coins; it was also an endeavor to promote and carry forward the culture and traditions of the Tang Dynasty. Each Kaiyuan Tongbao coin that passed through his hands served as a miniature encapsulation of Tang history and culture, embodying the era's prosperity and brilliance. This attention to the coinage also reflected the Tang Dynasty's focus on national economy. At that time, coins were not merely a medium of exchange but also a symbol of political power, serving as a means to display national strength and cultural sophistication to the world. Entrusting such an important task to Ouyang Xun underscores his stature and influence in that period.

The four characters of 'Kaiyuan Tongbao' are crisply executed with masterful brushstrokes. The calligraphy charms through a perfect fusion of Seal and Clerical scripts, highlighting not just the unique aesthetic of calligraphy but also setting a standard for future study and appreciation. Every stroke and line elucidates the era's pursuit of beauty and culture. While 'Kaiyuan Tongbao' can be interpreted in various ways, such as 'Initiating Universal Treasure,' its most widely accepted meaning is 'Currency of the New Epoch.' These four characters contain a philosophical depth that illuminates the Tang Dynasty's aspirations for the nation and its monetary system. It signifies not just the dawn of a new age, but also a vision for future prosperity and stability. The Kaiyuan Tongbao had a standardized weight of approximately 4 grams, providing a stable foundation for economic transactions and facilitating trade and market fluidity. The resultant metric system of 'one liang equals ten coins' replaced the previous 24-based system, making currency measurement more intuitive and convenient.

Emperor Gaozong of the Tang Dynasty once decreed, 'Kaiyuan Tongbao is the law for all generations.' This not only underscores Kaiyuan Tongbao's central role in the Tang Dynasty's monetary system but also emphasizes the long-term significance of a stable currency system for the nation. The stability of this system is evidenced by the fact that even as subsequent Tang emperors came and went, Kaiyuan Tongbao remained irreplaceable, providing a stable environment for commercial transactions.

Legends Associated with Kaiyuan Tongbao: In ancient China, every historical event or artifact often comes accompanied by a myriad of legends. The moon motif on the back of the early Kaiyuan Tongbao coins is a classic example of where legend and reality intertwine.

According to folklore, Ouyang Xun, the official responsible for casting the Kaiyuan Tongbao coins, initially produced a wax model to showcase the final design. Legend has it that either Empress Wende or Empress Taiwu, and even Yang Guifei, accidentally left an imprint on the wax model with their fingernails. This 'accidental' imprint eventually became the moon motif on the finished product. However, a closer examination of historical records reveals a severe timeline discrepancy. During the Wude era, the reigning emperor was Emperor Gaozu, Li Yuan; his son, Li Shimin, had yet to ascend the throne. How could Empress Wende of that time have been involved? This timeline inconsistency casts a shadow over the authenticity of the legend. Moreover, upon examining actual Kaiyuan Tongbao coins, one finds that the moon motif is not uniform. Some coins have one crescent moon, others have two, and some even have three; some also feature stars in addition to the moon. This diversity further undermines the narrative of an 'accidental imprint.'

Considering the Tang Dynasty's advanced coin-casting technology and management, it is more plausible that the moon motif was intentionally added by craftsmen or relevant administrative departments to differentiate between different editions, foundries, and mints. These markings could also serve anti-counterfeiting purposes, ensuring the authenticity and authority of the currency. While these legends may not be true, they still paint a vivid historical picture. They embody ancient people's endless curiosity and reverence for the royal family and cultural artifacts, adding a touch of mystery and romance to the cold hard facts of history. In ancient times, coins were not merely tools for economic transactions; they also carried rich cultural and historical information. Each coin is a testament to its era. Folk legends, whether true or false, reflect the culture of the time and offer a window into the social and cultural milieu of the period.

Huichang Kaiyuan:

During the Tang Dynasty's heyday, culture, religion, and economy were intertwined, and the Huichang Kaiyuan coinage stands as a symbol of this confluence. Buddhism was in vogue during this period. This was reflected not only in the realm of belief but also in the vast resources allocated to temple construction and the casting of Buddhist statues. Temples sprung up like mushrooms after the rain, each representing significant gold and copper resources. This heavy usage of copper posed a dilemma for the national minting process.

Upon ascending the throne, Emperor Wuzong of the Tang Dynasty, Li Yan, faced strained national coffers and a currency shortage. He began to contemplate a bold plan: to melt down Buddhist statues to cast coins. His aim was clear—to leverage the temples' resources to alleviate economic pressure on the state. In the fifth year of Huichang, Li Yan officially issued the decree to destroy Buddhist statues for coinage. This represented not only the obliteration of golden and copper Buddhist icons but also a severe setback for Buddhist influence. Many grand temples were demolished, and monks and nuns were compelled to renounce their religious life

and re-enter the labor force. The wealth of Buddhism, through this campaign, was converted into the state's currency. To commemorate this historic moment, coins bearing the inscription 'Huichang Kaiyuan' were specially minted. These coins also featured place names on the reverse side, serving both as a record of administrative divisions and aiding in management and verification. These distinctive coins became a crucial medium of exchange in the socio-economic activities of the time.

Initially, many devout Buddhists were opposed to the melting of religious statues for coinage. However, as currency supplies stabilized and markets began to flourish, economic revitalization was evident, and many began to endorse the policy. With time, the Huichang Kaiyuan coins became more than just a form of currency; they were a testament to an era of transformation. These coins reflect the choices and courage of a dynasty and an emperor in the face of a national crisis. They stand as historical witnesses, chronicling the evolution of a society from cultural prosperity to economic rejuvenation.



Figure 9 Huichang Kaiyuan

As shown in Figure 8, the Huichang Kaiyuan coinage, produced during a specific historical period of the Tang Dynasty, represents a unique epoch. These coins differ not only in form and craftsmanship from the official 'Guanlu Kaiyuan' coins but also carry a rich historical context and signify societal shifts.

Compared to the Guanlu Kaiyuan coins, the Huichang Kaiyuan versions exhibit noticeable differences in size, weight, and color. While the craftsmanship of the official Guanlu coins may be more refined, the relatively rougher texture of the Huichang Kaiyuan coins imparts them with a unique value. This difference could arise from the urgency involved in their minting and the variations in coinage technology across different regions. The backside of the Huichang Kaiyuan coins bear the name of the location where they were minted—'Jing' representing the capital, 'Chang' signifying Yangzhou, for instance. This not only aids in the management and identification of the currency but also enhances their regional characteristics and collectible value. Due to the multiplicity of minting locations, comprehensively collecting these coins poses a genuine challenge for collectors.

The various regional editions of Huichang Kaiyuan coins show differences in craftsmanship. Some coins have uneven edges, and the inscriptions are relatively blurred. This further reflects the technological disparities in coinage techniques across different regions at the time. Since the Huichang Kaiyuan

coins were only minted for a brief period during Emperor Wuzong's reign, their rarity is self-evident. Following Wuzong's death, the production of these coins was promptly ceased. Therefore, despite their brief production run, their value in the ancient coin collection market remains relatively high.

The Huichang Kaiyuan coins are not just archaic currency but also serve as a testament to the social, political, and economic transformations of the Tang Dynasty. For researchers and collectors alike, they represent a slice of history, a cultural embodiment worthy of deep exploration and cherished preservation.

Qianfeng Quanbao:

As the first coin officially minted under an era name during the Tang Dynasty, Qianfeng Quanbao serves not just as a testament to the evolution of currency, but also symbolizes the intricate interplay of political and economic forces of the time. During the reign of Emperor Taizong, the Tang Dynasty experienced rapid economic and social prosperity, known historically as the 'Rule of Zhenguan.' During this period, the state enjoyed political stability and economic growth. However, the situation began to change after Emperor Gaozong ascended to the throne. Starting in 649 CE, a series of natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, and locust plagues wreaked havoc on agriculture, leading to mass displacement of farmers. These calamities placed a tremendous strain on the national treasury, significantly reducing tax revenue, and exacerbating social unrest. To maintain Tang rule, Gaozong initiated several military campaigns, particularly against Goguryeo, which led to a sharp increase in military expenditures. His personal lavishness and numerous construction projects further exacerbated the financial deficit.

Caught between economic and political pressures, Gaozong, after consecrating Mount Tai in the first year of the Qianfeng era, decided to mint a new currency—Qianfeng Quanbao. Valued higher than the existing Kaiyuan coins, the new currency was intended to alleviate the financial strains of the period. However, this new monetary policy failed to win public support. Merchants and citizens, fearing a loss in the transition to the new currency, began to hoard old coins, halt transactions, and refuse to accept the new currency. The panic induced by this policy further led to soaring prices, severely threatening national stability.

In early spring of 667 CE, Gaozong faced a decisive moment. He chose a return to tradition, ordering the cessation of the new Qianfeng Quanbao coins and reinstating the circulation of the old Kaiyuan currency. This decision not only reflected Gaozong's reevaluation of the existing monetary policy but also demonstrated his deft maneuvering in deflecting blame onto his predecessors while maintaining his own image and authority.

Monetary policy has always been a crucial factor in a nation's economic stability, both in ancient times and today. The initial aim of introducing Qianfeng Quanbao was to alleviate fiscal pressures. However, the currency's inadequate value led to skyrocketing prices and market turmoil, endangering the livelihoods of the general populace. The grave social consequences undoubtedly made Emperor Gaozong deeply aware of the flaws in his decision-making.

However, faced with the dilemma, Gaozong didn't simply evade the issue or persist in his error. Instead, he chose a wiser approach for course correction. In his official documents, he looked back at the early stability and prosperity of the Tang Dynasty, specifically mentioning the accomplishments of Emperor Gaozu in restoring order and Emperor Taizong's 'unchanged governance.' This not only served as praise for his predecessors but also subtly conveyed a message: the failure of Qianfeng Quanbao was not solely his personal mistake but was influenced or suggested by previous rulers. The ingenuity of this strategy lies in how Gaozong skillfully shifted the blame onto his predecessors without overt accusations, opting for a more tempered and diplomatic approach. This maneuver both avoided a public clash with the revered former emperors and provided him a plausible rationale. When he later proposed policies 'for the benefit of future generations,' he demonstrated his foresight and emphasized the importance of reverting to the Kaiyuan currency.

Furthermore, the image of a 'filial son and wise grandson' that Gaozong portrayed in his edicts reflects his political acumen. In ancient times, honoring and following the will of one's ancestors was of paramount importance. Any deviation from this principle could invite criticism and opposition. Therefore, by deliberately stressing his respect and continuation of ancestral wisdom, Gaozong not only lent credibility to his decisions but also showcased his filial piety and reverence, earning him greater support and understanding.



Figure 10 Qianfeng Quanbao

Qianfeng Quanbao, a Tang Dynasty coin minted for a brief span of just seven months, has left an indelible mark on the annals of history. As shown in Figure 9, compared to traditional coins like Kaiyuan Tongbao, Qianfeng Quanbao is distinct not only in size and weight but also in its unique craftsmanship. This uniqueness is evident in its well-defined shape and artistic calligraphy, as well as in the choice of material. Qianfeng Quanbao contains up to 40% white copper, giving it a more striking appearance, vibrant color, and superior durability compared to other copper coins, making it resistant to corrosion.

Owing to these unique features, Qianfeng Quanbao is highly coveted among collectors, becoming a prized possession for many. This is reflected in its steadily increasing market value, which has soared from 70 yuan in 1980 to a high of 2,000-3,000 yuan today. This nearly 40-fold increase in value serves as a testament to its unique position and the attention it receives in the field of ancient coin collection.

Despite its illustrious status, there's an intriguing legend behind the naming of Qianfeng Quanbao. In ancient times, coin names usually followed certain rules and traditions, such as 'Tongbao,' 'Yuanbao,' or 'Zhongbao.' However, the name of Qianfeng Quanbao breaks with convention, leaving room for speculation. A widely circulated tale suggests that the original name submitted for Emperor Gaozong's approval was 'Qianfeng Yuanbao.' However, the Emperor accidentally misread it as 'Qianfeng Quanbao.' In the feudal society of ancient China, an emperor's word was law, and every utterance was considered an unalterable command. Therefore, although it was a minor slip of the tongue, this decided the coin's name. Qianfeng Quanbao—a slightly unconventional name yet imbued with historical resonance—thus became inseparably linked with this unique coin.

Qianyuan Zhongbao:

Qianyuan Zhongbao is a distinctive coin that serves as a record of China's ancient monetary reforms and historical shifts, encapsulating the complex political, economic, and cultural changes of its time. This unique coin was minted during the Qianyuan era of Emperor Suzong of the Tang Dynasty, and its existence is closely tied to the historical events that shaped that period. The Anshi Rebellion, a significant political upheaval in Chinese history, not only altered the political landscape but also had far-reaching effects on the economy and society. The uprising forced Emperor Xuanzong into exile in Shu, while Suzong, also known as Li Heng, ascended the throne in Lingwu. He was confronted with a chaotic nation and the burdensome task of quelling the rebellion.

In the autumn of the first year of the Qianyuan era, the national treasury was ill-equipped to handle the escalating military expenditures. Against this backdrop, the Qianyuan Zhongbao coin was minted. Notably, this was the first time in Chinese monetary history that a coin was named 'Zhongbao,' a term that underscored its significance and exceptional value. The coin's value was calibrated in a continual process of adjustment in response to actual market conditions. Initially, the weight of the Qianyuan Zhongbao small coin was set equal to that of the long-circulating Kaiyuan Tongbao, but its value was twice as much. This decision met with widespread public resistance initially. Many people refused to use the new coin, as it undeniably increased their economic burden. To adapt to the market and enhance the coin's circulation, Emperor Suzong had no choice but to adjust his strategy, adopting a one-to-one value ratio to facilitate its acceptance.

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Figure 11 Qianyuan Zhongbao

As shown in Figure 10, subsequent actions became even more aggressive. The issuance of large coins, with a diameter reaching up to 28mm and a weight increased to approximately 8g, clearly aimed to further raise funds for military expenditures. An even bolder move was the minting of a larger variant of Qianyuan Zhongbao, distinguished by deep grooves and heavy wheels on its reverse, weighing around 20g. Remarkably, its value was set at a staggering fifty Kaiyuan Tongbao coins, reflecting the central government's urgent fiscal needs at the time.

Behind the birth and circulation of Qianyuan Zhongbao lies the intricate interplay of politics, economics, and culture during the Tang Dynasty. This special currency, despite its exquisite design and craftsmanship, led to hyperinflation due to its inflated value compared to the Kaiyuan money, causing significant societal upheaval.

The Qianyuan Zhongbao coin has rich features, not only showcasing classic smooth-back styles but also incorporating different motifs like crescent moons beneath them and vermilion birds. Additionally, it contains other symbolic elements like clouds above or below, and stellar patterns, adding a touch of ancient mystique to the coin. However, no matter how artistic, its economic attributes could not be overshadowed. The devaluation of Qianyuan Zhongbao evidently eroded its market credibility, and public acceptance of this currency was limited. Despite this, it continued to circulate for an extended period within the Tang Dynasty, earning the distinction of being one of the longest-circulating minted coins of that era.

However, it's important to note that the circulation of Qianyuan Zhongbao was fraught with deeper, underlying issues. The 'New Book of Tang, Volume Four on Food and Currency,' meticulously records the societal unrest and tribulations of this period. Fluctuating monetary policies led to soaring prices, with the cost of rice reaching an astonishing seven thousand coins per bushel. Starvation was rampant, as were unsettling accounts of people dying from hunger.

To make matters worse, the capital saw a surge in the illicit minting of what was called 'false money,' exacerbating economic chaos. Despite government crackdowns, the situation seemed to worsen. Zheng Shuqing, the then mayor of the capital region, publicly executed nearly 800 criminals involved in the

illegal minting within just a few months, highlighting the depth of the lawlessness at the time.

Additionally, to honor and incentivize soldiers contributing to the quelling of rebellions, the Tang Dynasty specifically minted gold and silver Qianyuan coins as rewards. While ostensibly a recognition of their valor, this action also revealed the precarious state of the empire's finances and its desperate need for precious metals.

However, the destiny of Qianyuan Zhongbao eventually trended towards its own demise as the larger coins failed to circulate. The majority of these were repossessed by the Tang Dynasty and remelted to create Buddhist statues. This move was not only an acknowledgment of the currency's failure but also a reflection of the prevalence of Buddhist culture at the time and the dynasty's reliance on religious faith. Overall, while Qianyuan Zhongbao was artfully designed, its practical application encountered numerous difficulties, serving as a striking cautionary tale in the annals of Tang monetary policy.

'De Yi Yuanbao' and 'Shun Tian Yuanbao':

The 'De Yi Yuanbao' and 'Shun Tian Yuanbao' coins were conceived against the backdrop of the tumultuous period known as the 'An Lushan Rebellion.' The rebel leader Shi Siming gradually took center stage after An Lushan met his end at the hands of his own son. Rather than restoring order, An Lushan's death only gave rise to a new scramble for power. Shi Siming swiftly neutralized the threat posed by An Lushan's son, subsequently declaring himself king and later even assuming the title of emperor, as a direct challenge to the reigning Tang Dynasty emperor. Born out of this chaotic milieu, the De Yi Yuanbao and Shun Tian Yuanbao coins are enmeshed in a complicated web of power struggles, religious beliefs, and monetary policies.

The De Yi Yuanbao was minted when Shi Siming crowned himself 'King of Yan,' while the Shun Tian Yuanbao emerged after he declared his own emperorship. Both these currencies are masterpieces of minting craft, especially the De Yi Yuanbao. As illustrated in Figure 11, the recurring moon pattern on the reverse side of the coin adds a layer of mystique, accentuating its extraordinary significance. Yet what's even more intriguing is the subtle meaning behind the coin and the shifts in Shi Siming's mental outlook.



Figure 12 De Yi Yuanbao

In ancient times, Emperor Wu of the Jin Dynasty was deeply unsettled upon learning that his dynasty was fated to last only one generation. This story reached the ears of Shi Siming, instilling in him a profound sense of dread regarding the character for 'one.' To symbolize the longevity and stability of his empire, he intentionally used the formal script for 'one,' writing it as '壹' on the De Yi Yuanbao coin. He hoped that this nuanced change would bring lasting peace and prosperity to his dynasty. However, as he faced a series of military setbacks, Shi Siming began to question the 'inauspicious energy' that might have been embedded in the De Yi Yuanbao. As a result, he decided to abandon it. As shown in Figure 12, he minted a new coin, the Shun Tian Yuanbao, hoping that it would earn him the blessings of Heaven's Mandate.



Figure 13 Shun Tian Yuanbao

However, beyond the underlying beliefs and power struggles, these two types of coins also faced serious economic challenges. When compared to the circulating Kai Yuan coins of the time, the weight of De Yi Yuanbao and Shun Tian Yuanbao was approximately four times greater, yet they were purported to be worth a hundred Kai Yuan coins each. This high face value undoubtedly led to significant currency depreciation and severely limited their use in the marketplace. Historical records indicate that merchants at the time generally avoided these large-denomination coins in favor of the more stable Kai Yuan coins. This financial misstep also foreshadowed the short lifespan of Shi Siming's regime; he was soon killed by his own son, bringing an end to the An-Shi Rebellion.

Today, these two types of coins are exceedingly rare. The De Yi Yuanbao is especially scarce, with only around 300 pieces estimated to exist. While the Shun Tian Yuanbao is slightly more common, there are only approximately 4,000 of them. This rarity has elevated both coins to the status of highly sought-after artifacts in the realm of ancient coin collecting. The De Yi Yuanbao is particularly elusive, giving rise to the saying, 'Shun Tian is easier to find; De Yi is hard to come by.'

4.1.7 Monetary significance in social rituals and religion

In the socio-cultural landscape of ancient China, death was not merely seen as the cessation of life, but as another form of life's transformation. The ancients believed that the deceased departed the physical world to enter a mysterious underworld in spirit form. This belief has deep roots in Chinese consciousness and has been passed down through generations. The link between the corporeal world and the underworld doesn't simply sever upon death; it is sustained through an array of rituals and ceremonies. This rich backdrop of faith offers profound insight into the unique role that currency in ancient Luoyang held in beliefs and rituals. Confucius' philosophical teachings provided a sturdy theoretical foundation for ancient China's religious and cultural traditions. In his 'Analects', specifically in the section on governance, he explicitly speaks of the decorum owed to the deceased, emphasizing that both the living and the dead should be treated with respect. To Confucius, funeral rites and sacrifices serve not only as tributes and memorials to the departed but more importantly, as a bridge that sustains the harmonious relationship between the living and the dead.

As the capital of the Tang Dynasty, Luoyang was unquestionably the cultural, economic, and political heart of China during its time. Against this backdrop, currency in Luoyang bore more than just economic value; it symbolized cultural beliefs and spirituality. In ancient society, currency was more than just a medium for economic transactions. It was imbued with a certain mystical power, a power rooted in people's reverence for life, death, and their religious beliefs. As such, currency became much more than a mere tool in economic activities; it also served as an important symbol in faith and ritualistic practices.

In funeral and sacrificial rituals, currency from Luoyang served as one of the offerings given to the deceased, embodying the living's sentiments of grief and wishes for the departed. It represented more than just economic value; it also served as an emotional and spiritual anchor. Behind this practice lay the ancient fear of death, the curiosity about the unknown, and the commemoration and remembrance of the deceased. These profound beliefs were vividly manifested in the ancient currency of Luoyang. These coins were not just mediums for economic transactions; they were also conduits for culture and faith, carrying the ancient Chinese contemplations on life and death, their pursuit of religious beliefs, and their reverence for rituals. In this context, Luoyang currency served not merely as an economic tool but as a vessel for the transmission of belief and culture.

From the perspective of ancient Chinese beliefs and cultural traditions, the unique role of Luoyang currency in funeral and sacrificial ceremonies cannot be overlooked. They carry not just economic value but, more importantly, they embody the ancient Chinese's deep thoughts and pursuits concerning life and death, faith, and rituals. This unique significance makes Luoyang currency an essential vessel for understanding ancient Chinese beliefs and culture, offering invaluable clues for our understanding today.

In the ancient traditions of China, the understanding and beliefs about life and death have been gradually shaped and developed over the course of history. We can observe that, for a long time, the Chinese ways of soul consolation have shown two distinct phases due to the influence of culture and religion. Initially, before the spread of Buddhism across China, folk beliefs and concepts about life and

death had already laid a deep foundation for Chinese culture. Traditional views emphasized the duality of the soul: after death, 'the corporeal spirit returns to the Earth, while the ethereal spirit ascends to Heaven.' This belief originates from the notion that the corporeal aspect of the spirit, being more material, returns to the Earth, while the ethereal aspect, being purer and more spiritual, ascends to a celestial realm. This handling of the soul after death reflects the ancients' profound understanding and awe concerning life and death.

However, as illustrated in Figure 13, the advent of Buddhism brought about a significant shift in these traditional beliefs. According to Buddhist doctrine, the physical composition of life is made up of the 'Four Great Elements': flesh, blood, body heat, and breath, which correspond to the elements of earth, water, fire, and wind, respectively. Death is viewed as the dissolution of these Four Great Elements. This perspective disrupts the traditional dualism of the soul and emphasizes that only one spirit exists after death. This spirit's fate in the afterlife is determined by its deeds in the living world; it undergoes judgment in the underworld and consequently, the direction of its future reincarnation is decided.



Figure 14 Buddhist Elements in Tang Dynasty Tomb Murals

By the Tang Dynasty period, this Buddhist conception of the afterlife had gained widespread influence in society. The imagined underworld was a terrifying realm governed by the Ten Kings of Hell, their judges, and a host of frightful figures like the ox-headed and horse-faced guardians, as well as various forms of torture. This viewpoint gradually became the common understanding among ancient Chinese people of what the world after death entailed. Driven by fears of this netherworld and hopes for peace in the living world, people began to develop rituals aimed at appeasing the spirits of the dead and bribing underworld officials, all in the hope of securing a carefree life in this world and avoiding punishment in the next. During the Tang Dynasty, these rituals evolved into a more folk-customized form known as 'Shousheng Jiku,' a practice that afforded individuals greater agency in preparing for their own life and death. This was not just a ritual but a deeply ingrained

social custom, shaping Chinese perspectives on life and death and gaining wide acceptance among the populace.

In studies concerning ancient Chinese folk beliefs and rituals, certain specific phenomena have often been overlooked due to their unique complexities. 'Shousheng Jiku' is one such custom. Although it had a profound impact and held a significant position in folk traditions, academic studies seem to have focused mainly on its origins and interactions between multiple faiths, leaving the deeper cultural implications and socio-economic factors, as well as its interplay with daily life, largely unexplored.

Associate Professor Wei Bing from the School of History and Culture at Sichuan University breaks this mold in his latest work, 'Saving for the Next Life.' Professor Wei ingeniously chose the journey of the Tang Emperor to the underworld, as described in the classic story of 'Journey to the West,' as his point of entry for the study. This tale not only offers a vivid depiction of ancient conceptions of the afterlife and perspectives on life and death but also sheds light on society's general awareness and acceptance of the 'Shousheng Jiku' custom. Through an in-depth analysis of this episode, Professor Wei comprehensively elucidates the socio-economic and cultural forces behind 'Shousheng Jiku,' tracing its historical origins, evolution, changes, and dissemination.

Professor Wei's research not only delves deeply into the complex cultural origins behind the folk belief of 'Shousheng Jiku,' but also reveals its intricate relationship with Luoyang currency in matters of faith and ritual. This multidisciplinary approach, which integrates classical texts and modern research, opens a new avenue for exploring the interplay and impact of belief, ritual, and economy in ancient Chinese society.

Within the rich tapestry of religious and spiritual beliefs in ancient China, the conceptions of death and the afterlife constitute a core component. Professor Wei Bing categorizes the ancient Chinese ways of soul-securing into four main types: Ascension to Immortality, Rebirth in Pure Land, Judgment and Reincarnation in the Underworld, and 'Shousheng Jiku.' These methods not only reflect the cultural and spiritual aspects of ancient society but are also closely tied to its socio-economic fabric.

Among these, 'Ascension to Immortality' is the oldest form of soul-securing and is heavily influenced by primal beliefs and Daoist thought. This method requires a rigorous set of technical guidelines to ensure that the deceased can ascend to the realm of immortals and enjoy an eternal divine life. Popular modern tomb-raiding novels like 'Ghost Blows Out the Light' and 'The Grave Robbers' Chronicles' have drawn from this traditional concept, bringing it back into the public spotlight. Influenced by Buddhist thought, research also highlights the method of 'Rebirth in the Pure Land.' This approach emphasizes the earthly practice of the deceased, suggesting that only those who have achieved a certain level of spiritual attainment can be guided by Buddhas and Bodhisattvas to enter the peaceful and luminous Pure Land.

The concept of 'Judgment and Reincarnation in the Underworld,' on the other hand, aligns more closely with a retributive worldview. Here, the spirit of the deceased must undergo strict judgment and endure numerous tortures in the underworld, with their eventual rebirth pathway determined by their actions in their previous life.

Unlike the aforementioned three methods, 'Shousheng Jiku' offers a novel perspective. It does not overly emphasize the judgment and torment of souls but shifts the focus towards quantifying one's earthly deeds through a sort of 'financial contract,' thereby determining one's fate in the afterlife. The emergence of this concept prompts us to consider whether belief and ritual have also been profoundly influenced by the increasingly mature economic backdrop, particularly the Luoyang currency system of ancient times.

The belief systems closely related to economic and monetary concepts start to become evident in Tang Dynasty literature. During this period, religion and spirituality were not solely explorations of life, death, and transcendence, but also closely tied to daily economic activities. The Daoist text 'Wushang Miyao' ('The Supreme Secret Essentials') reveals such thought: all beings, constrained by fate and destined to be under the jurisdiction of the Underworld, have their wealth or poverty managed by the underworld authorities. People have 'borrowed' the wealth for their current life from these underworld agencies before birth. Those who are wealthy in this life have had their fortunes predetermined by the underworld, while those who face poverty and hardship are repaying debts they incurred in the underworld during past lives or other periods. These debts are 'repaid' in their earthly lives, leading to various difficulties and challenges.

The 'Buddha Speaks of Shousheng Sutra,' unearthed from the Xixia Heishui City, further corroborates this concept and even adds a Buddhist interpretation. In this text, Buddha explicitly states that beings in the continent of Jambudvīpa have 'borrowed' the wealth for their current lives from the 'Five Grades of Storehouses' governed by the Twelve Zodiac Signs before their birth. The repayment of these 'loans' is tightly connected to their behavior and fate in the earthly realm. Virtuous acts and moral deeds can 'repay' these debts, allowing individuals to acquire wealth, status, and longevity in the earthly realm. Conversely, if they fail to 'repay' these karmic debts through good deeds, they may face poverty, low status, and a short lifespan.

These ancient texts paint a picture for us, revealing that in ancient China, people firmly believed that the fate of human lives was closely tied to economic transactions with the underworld. This concept was not just a manifestation of religion or belief; it also had deep connections with the economic system of the time, monetary perceptions, and societal values. It reflects the significant role that the Luoyang currency played in social life, beliefs, and rituals.

In the faith and rituals of Tang Dynasty Luoyang, people were deeply fearful of the judgments of the underworld and sought various ways to avoid the torments of reincarnation and to repay the 'underworld debts' accumulated for their 'Shousheng'—longevity and well-being in the afterlife. While traditional practices like idol-making, scripture-copying, and doing good deeds were always considered the main means of removing karmic obstacles from past lives, starting from the late Tang period, the burning of paper money began to emerge as a new method for repaying these 'underworld debts.' This ritual, known as 'Jiku,' symbolized people's desire to transcend the cycle of life and death and integrate into the underworld's economic system. After the paper money was burned, it was believed to be stored in the underworld's treasury, waiting to be claimed by the deceased either in the underworld or in their next life. This not only signified that the debts accumulated

in one's life were being repaid, but also accrued merits for the next life. This concept complemented the then-prevailing economic and storage ideologies in Luoyang.

The 'Buddhist Shousheng Sutra' further emphasizes the importance of the 'Jiku' ritual, indicating that through this method, people can avert eighteen kinds of calamities. These perils range from natural disasters to man-made harms, reflecting the deep societal fears of uncertainty and danger at the time. As for the absence of the fourth calamity mentioned in the text, scholar Jiang Shoucheng posits that it might be due to an oversight on the part of the copyists of the 'Buddhist Shousheng Sutra.' This also highlights the randomness and incompleteness inherent in the transmission of ancient documents. Moreover, those who practice the 'Jiku' ritual can also benefit from the protection of the Ten Great Bodhisattvas. These Bodhisattvas embody various attributes of auspiciousness, blessings, and guardianship, playing significant roles in people's hearts and bolstering their confidence in matters concerning the afterlife and their future fate.

In summary, the rituals involving the burning of paper money and 'Jiku' not only reflect the Tang Dynasty Luoyang citizens' profound concern and coping strategies towards the underworld but also unveil the close relationship between the monetary economy, faith, and rituals at that time. This interconnection is both cultural and economic, offering us a lens through which we can observe how beliefs and economy in ancient Luoyang society mutually influenced and integrated with each other.

4.2 Economic, social and cultural functions of ancient coins in Luoyang in the Tang Dynasty

4.2.1 Historical Significance and Importance of Tang Dynasty Luoyang Currency

To sum up, the Tang Dynasty is recognized as the golden age in Chinese history, not only because of its political unity and stability and economic prosperity, but also because of its cultural openness and inclusiveness. During this period, Chang'an, the capital of the Tang Dynasty, was naturally a glorious center, but Luoyang, as the eastern capital of the Tang Dynasty, also carried extraordinary importance. Its profound history and unique geographical location make it become another focus of this prosperous age.

Luoyang, an ancient city with a long history, assumed the heavy responsibility of the political, economic and cultural center of the empire together with Chang'an in the Tang Dynasty. In order to consolidate their rule over the Central Plains, Li Zhi and Wu Zetian of the Tang Dynasty established the eastern capital in Luoyang. This not only restored Luoyang its former prosperity, but also further strengthened its core position in the imperial economic and political map.

At that time, Luoyang's extensive transportation network made it an important commercial town in the world. A large number of caravans and envoys often stayed here, and goods from south to north circulated to the four directions through here, making Luoyang an important hub of domestic and foreign trade. Under such an economic background, the currency market of Luoyang also prospered, and the currency exchange became the dominant economic transactions, reflecting the economic vitality and status of Luoyang in the Tang Dynasty.

In order to meet the increasingly prosperous market demand, Luoyang government not only increased the number of money casting, but also carried out in-depth research and development and improvement in technology. Among them, the introduction of the new coin technology makes the production of money more refined, circulation more extensive. Copper money and iron money, because of their relatively stable value and easy circulation characteristics, have gradually become the dominant currency in the market. Unlike precious metals such as gold and silver, the rich reserves of copper and iron and their relatively low prices make them more suitable for large-scale coinage. The widespread circulation of these two currencies has undoubtedly greatly contributed to the prosperity of economic activity. Both the trade between countries, and the daily trade of street vendors, are inseparable from the intervention of these currencies.

In addition to economic transactions, currency circulation has also greatly promoted the development of cultural exchanges. As the ancient cultural and economic center, Luoyang attracted a large number of foreign envoys, merchants and scholars. They brought not only foreign currency, but also brought foreign art, books, knowledge and technology. The integration of these foreign elements with the local culture made Luoyang an important window and center for cultural exchange at that time.

For example, the well-known Silk Road formed close trade links between Luoyang and the Far East, Central Asia and Europe. These exchanges not only promote the circulation of goods, but more importantly, also open the door for cultural, religious and academic exchanges. Religious cultures such as Buddhism and Taoism, as well as academic fields such as medicine, astronomy and mathematics, have achieved unprecedented development.

As the eastern capital of the Tang Dynasty, its development and prosperity in this period were inseparable from the overall scene of the Tang Dynasty. The extensive circulation and development of currency not only promoted the economic prosperity of Luoyang, but also became a key medium for social progress and cultural exchanges, adding a more splendid addition to the ancient capital.

In addition, the cultural prosperity of the Tang Dynasty also had a positive influence on the development of currency. The Tang Dynasty was the peak period of Chinese culture, and great achievements were made in art, literature, science and technology. The coin of the Tang Dynasty is not only an economic means, but also carries a rich cultural connotation. The decoration, Qian wen and the casting technology on the coin all show the artistic style and aesthetic concept of the Tang Dynasty. At the same time, the literati of the Tang Dynasty also praised and described the beauty and importance of coins in the form of poetry and prose, linking them with culture and history. Therefore, the study of the Tang Dynasty currency can not only reveal the economic situation and commercial development at that time, but also help to understand the cultural connotation and aesthetic taste of the Tang Dynasty.

The Tang Dynasty, known as the golden age in Chinese history, reached its peak in political stability, economic growth and cultural prosperity. Money, as an important symbol of a country's economic and cultural development, undoubtedly played a pivotal role in this period. Especially in the capital Luoyang, this position is more prominent. In this chapter, we deeply explore all aspects of the

ancient coins in Luoyang of the Tang Dynasty, hoping to provide readers with a comprehensive and in-depth understanding.

First of all, as for the shape and type of ancient coins, the monetary system of the Tang Dynasty was more perfect and stable than that of the previous dynasties. In the mint technology, the Tang Dynasty adopted advanced manufacturing methods to ensure the uniformity and durability of the currency. In addition, the design of the coin also reflects the aesthetic values and cultural characteristics of the time. For example, the copper coins were often engraved with the words "Kaiyuan Tongbao", which not only represented the emperor and the government at that time, but also reflected the strong national strength of the Tang Dynasty.

In terms of economic role, the currency of Luoyang in the Tang Dynasty undoubtedly played a key role in promoting market transactions, commercial development and economic prosperity. Copper money and iron money were circulated widely, promoting the sale and exchange of goods. At the same time, the unification and stability of the currency also provided a stable trading environment for the merchants, which undoubtedly played a role in promoting the economic prosperity and commercial prosperity of the Tang Dynasty.

In terms of cultural connotation, money is not only an economic tool, but also a carrier of culture. The words, patterns and symbols on the currency of the Tang Dynasty all contain rich cultural and historical information. For example, the patterns on some coins may have been related to Buddhism, Taoism or folk beliefs of the time, which provides valuable clues to the religion and culture of the Tang Dynasty.

Through the study of the Luoyang currency of the Tang Dynasty, we can have a deeper understanding of the social, economic and cultural background of the Tang Dynasty. During this period, not only the currency developed rapidly, but also the business and culture reached an unprecedented peak. As the cultural and economic center of that time, Luoyang's currency undoubtedly played a crucial role in this process.

The ancient coins in Luoyang of the Tang Dynasty opened a window to the society, economy and culture of the Tang Dynasty. Through the in-depth study of its shape, type, economic function and cultural connotation, we can not only better understand the monetary system of the Tang Dynasty, but also have a glimpse of the economic situation, business model and cultural characteristics of that era. I hope the discussion in this chapter can provide readers with a new perspective and a deeper understanding of this glorious era.

4.2.2 Significance and Value of Tang Dynasty Currency Research

The study of the Tang Dynasty currency is of great significance and value for understanding the economy, society and culture of the Tang Dynasty. In this chapter, the importance of the currency of the economy, society and culture of the Tang Dynasty. Through the in-depth study of the currency of the Tang Dynasty, we can fill the existing research gaps and provide new understanding.

The Tang Dynasty was a period of commercial prosperity in Chinese history, and currency played a key role in economic exchange. By studying the shape, quantity and circulation range of money in the Tang Dynasty, we can understand the monetary

system and economic exchanges in the Tang Dynasty. The casting, circulation and use of money in the Tang Dynasty reflected the level of economic development, commercial and trade activities, and the formulation and implementation of monetary policies.

The currency of the Tang Dynasty occupied an important position in Chinese history, and the economic prosperity and social opening provided a solid foundation for the stable development of the currency of the Tang Dynasty. Compared with the complicated money system of the previous dynasties, the monetary policy of the Tang Dynasty was very stable and effective, and only seven or eight kinds of coins were issued, among which only three kinds were recorded in the official history, namely, "Kaiyuan Tongbao", "Qianfengquanbao" and "Qianyuan Chongbao". This stable situation is due to the positive characteristics of the currency in the market circulation of the Tang Dynasty, which is also one of the important characteristics of the prosperous Tang Dynasty.

In the early days of the Tang Dynasty, the rapid development of economy attracted wide attention of the whole society. In this context, money as an important tool of economy, its development and change has received special attention. Among them, the emergence and issuance of Kaiyuan Tongbao undoubtedly occupied a pivotal position in the monetary history of the early Tang Dynasty.

In Kaiyuan Tongbao, as the representative currency of the early Tang Dynasty, its name has already indicated the political and economic stability of the time, and the rulers' expectations for the future prosperity of the country. This kind of coin has been widely recognized and used in the society, and has become the dominant currency in the circulation market. Its exquisite production, excellent material and suitable size, making it deeply loved by people in daily trading.

In order to maintain economic stability and protect the interests of the people, the rulers of the Tang Dynasty imposed strict control over the value of the currency. They are well aware of the serious consequences of excessive currency depreciation or inflation on the country's economy and people's livelihood. Therefore, despite the face of various external pressures and internal difficulties, they still strive to ensure that it has a reasonable currency value and strong purchasing power, so that it can be stable circulation in the market. This prudent and pragmatic governance strategy for the people has also won broad support and trust from the people.

However, monetary development in history has not been smooth sailing. In the first year of Qianlong (666), Emperor Gaozong decided to issue the large denomination of Qianfeng Quanbao, trying to further strengthen the circulation and stability of the currency through this large denomination currency. However, this decision did not achieve the desired effect. Although the issuance of Qianfeng Quanbao, which attracted some attention and pursuit in the market at first, soon triggered inflation, made prices rise and affected the normal operation of the market. The rulers soon realized this problem and decided to stop casting Qianfeng Quanbao and restart the previous Kaiyuan Tongbao. This decision reflects the Tang Dynasty government's flexibility to monetary policy and its great importance to economic stability. Although Qianfeng Quanbao was short-lived, its emergence provided valuable experience and lessons for the currency development of future generations. In the middle period, the rebellion of An and Shi brought social unrest, and the economy of the Tang Dynasty began to decline. The state money system was in

chaos, and private money flooded. After Tang Suzong came to power, he launched the Qianyuan Heavy treasure in the first year of Qianyuan (758), which was the tenth year and then 50. However, the actual purchasing power was not match and became a lot of money. During this period, the government also cast the calendar ingot and Jianzhong Tongbao and other coins. These coins rarely appeared in the Central Plains in archaeological excavations, but they were found as important witnesses in the communication and influence of the Silk Road civilization in the Western Regions.

In the late Tang Dynasty, the economy recovered somewhat, and the Xiaoping money system recovered, among which "Huichang Kaiyuan" became a major landscape. In order to solve the problem of currency shortage, the state governments have cast money on the spot and added place names on the back, of which 23 kinds have been handed down or unearthed. However, this scene is actually at the cost of the abandoned temple destroying the Buddha and casting money. Emperor Wuzong of the Tang Dynasty took extreme measures, abolishing the temple, bronze statues and bells were entrusted to cast money, which solved the problems of economic tension and monetary shortage at that time, but also left a deep imprint on history (Wu Zong Ji of the Old Tang Dynasty).

The historical status and importance of tang Dynasty currency cannot be ignored. From the stability of the monetary policy, monetary system stability and change, to the currency in the tang dynasty economic prosperity and the positive performance, to the recession monetary system chaos and monetary control special measures, the tang dynasty monetary research for our understanding of the tang dynasty economic, social and cultural development provides important clues.

The Tang Dynasty was a period of complex social structure and multicultural coexistence. As a medium of economic exchange, money reflects the changes in social class, occupational division of labor and social relations. By studying the distribution, use scope and circulation channels of money in the Tang Dynasty, we can understand the economic differences, the composition of social classes and the performance of social mobility in the Tang Dynasty.

The Tang Dynasty, as an important period in Chinese history, showed its unique vision and political wisdom for its monetary system innovation and adjustment. Shortly after its establishment, the Tang Dynasty made major adjustments to the country's monetary policy, in an attempt to form a more reasonable and stable economic system.

At that time, the five-baht money could no longer meet the booming socioeconomic needs. The leadership of the Tang Dynasty was well aware of this, so in July of the fourth year of Wude, the decision makers made a bold decision: to abolish the five-baht money and officially launch the "Kaiyuan Tongbao". The launch of this currency is not only a change in monetary policy, but also an important sign of the Tang Dynasty to show its independence, confidence and strength. Kaiyuan Tongbao not only has excellent materials, but also inherits the ancient Chinese tradition in the design, and at the same time fully demonstrates the innovative spirit of the Tang Dynasty.

It is worth noting that although the Tang Dynasty made major reforms in coins, it did not completely abandon the traditional monetary system. The silk currency system inherited from the Wei, Jin and Southern and Northern Dynasties was still retained in the Tang Dynasty. This "money and silk" monetary system is

actually a diversified economic strategy. The core idea of this strategy is that through the coexistence of multiple currencies, different market needs can be better met, thus making the whole economic system more stable and resilient.

However, this strategy also poses a series of problems. Especially after Zhenguan, with the further development of economy and the gradual withdrawal of silk in the market, there was a serious shortage of copper coins, which was called "money shortage". This problem not only brought great inconvenience to the market transactions, but more seriously, it affected people's confidence in the economic policies of the Tang Dynasty.

Of course, the Tang Dynasty government attached great importance to this issue. Many attempts to solve this problem by increasing the speed of coinage, introducing new materials and technologies, or reforming the monetary system. However, due to various reasons, including the complexity of social economy, the limitation of technical conditions and the influence of various political factors, this problem has not been fundamentally solved until the end of the Tang Dynasty.

In terms of the consumption level, we can look at the purchasing power of money and the price level. At the beginning, during the reign of Emperor Gaozu of the Tang Dynasty, the capital valley was expensive, and even prohibited Tu Gu inside the pass. Ten years later, when Emperor Taizong of the Tang Dynasty succeeded to the throne, prices were still at high everywhere. However, only three years later, the situation began to improve: "three years to Zhenguan.... three or four money".

In the period of Tang Gaozong, the early prices were also low. For example, in the fifth year of Yonghui, only two and a half money per millet in Luzhou. However, in the first year of qianfeng, to cast qianfeng quanbao, with one when ten big money, resulting in merchants, rice and silk prices soared. At the same time, successive years of military use have led to sluggish agricultural production, but also exacerbated the soaring prices. For a long time, the Guanzhong area reached 400 or 400 yuan. From Wu Zetian's proclaim as emperor to the restoration of Emperor Zhongzong of the Tang Dynasty, natural disasters continued and prices continued to soar. "This money" was widely seen in various places.

When Emperor Xuanzong held the throne for nearly fifty years, the politics of the Tang Dynasty gradually stabilized and the economy developed vigorously. By receiving evil money and increasing the circulation of copper coins, the currency value and purchasing power of Tongbao currency are maintained at a high level. At that time, each Wen Tongbao could buy 3.9 jin of rice, such a price level and monetary purchasing power became an important symbol of the Tang Dynasty.

However, with the outbreak of the "Anshi Rebellion", the Tang Dynasty turned from prosperity to decline. Frequent natural disasters, excessive collection and the outbreak of peasant uprisings led to soaring prices and made people's lives difficult. Datang early desirable price level and currency purchasing power has become the past.

Throughout the Tang Dynasty, consumption was based on luxury. Tianbao years, the family of "a plate of expensive, cover the property of ten". In the Wu zong Dynasty, prime minister Li Deyu spent about 30,000 yuan. Du Cong,

the prime minister of the late Tang Dynasty, "spent ten thousand yuan in a day". In contrast, the annual income of ordinary families is only a few thousands, but the daily cost of the rich and here. This luxurious consumption concept also influenced the economic and cultural development of the Tang Dynasty society to a certain extent.

At the same time, the inscriptions, patterns and patterns on the currency of the Tang Dynasty also reflected the values, religious beliefs and cultural features of the society at that time. Through the study of the currency of the Tang Dynasty, we can deeply discuss the social diversity, cultural exchange and social change of the Tang Dynasty. The Tang Dynasty was a prosperous period of Chinese culture, and great achievements were made in art, literature, science and technology. As a form of cultural art, the currency of the Tang Dynasty carried the aesthetic concept, cultural connotation and historical records at that time. By studying the patterns, money articles and casting techniques of Tang Dynasty currency, we can understand the style, aesthetic taste and technical level of Tang Dynasty art. At the same time, the literati of the Tang Dynasty praised and described the beauty and importance of coins in the form of poetry and prose, linking them with culture, history and society. Through the study of the currency of the Tang Dynasty, we can reveal the connotation and extension of the Tang Dynasty culture, and deeply explore the artistic concept, cultural exchange and historical memory of the Tang Dynasty society.

The monetary history of the Tang Dynasty was closely linked to the economic trend, reflecting the rise and fall of this great dynasty. From the early days of the Tang Dynasty to its heyday, the value and price of money have experienced twists and turns, highlighting the close relationship between the country's economic and political situation.

In the early establishment of the Tang Dynasty, the regime realized that the coinage policy was of great significance to the stability of the country, so it made an important decision in the fourth year of Wude: to abolish the five baht money and promote "Kaiyuan Tongbao" as the main circulating currency. This policy marks the datang's further attention to the monetary economy. At the same time, the ancient system of "both money and silk" continued in the Tang Dynasty, and both physical money and metal money provided diversified means of trading for the economic prosperity in the early Tang Dynasty.

However, prosperity is always accompanied by challenges. As a traditional currency, silk gradually faded out of the market, which led to an increase in the demand for copper coins, and the supply of copper coins, forming the so-called "money shortage". This problem has not been effectively solved in the Tang Dynasty for a long time, reflecting the imbalance between the money supply and the economic demand.

During the period of Emperor Gaozu and Emperor Taizong of the Tang Dynasty, prices remained high, which undoubtedly increased the living pressure of the people. However, with the progress of The Times, during the Zhenguan period, the economy appeared a temporary improvement, and prices gradually stabilized. However, this situation did not last long. In the first year of Emperor Gaozong of the Tang Dynasty, the market was chaotic due to the new coin casting, and prices rose again. In addition, successive years of war, agricultural production decline, prices soared, people's livelihood has been seriously affected.

The Tang Xuanzong period can be said to be the economic peak of the Tang Dynasty. The government has issued a series of stable monetary policies, which effectively maintain the currency value and purchasing power of Tongbao currency, and provide a relatively stable environment for people's life. The economic prosperity and price stability in this period are the bright proof of the prosperous Tang Dynasty.

But the good times did not last long. With the outbreak of the "Anshi Rebellion", the prosperous image of the Tang Dynasty was hit hard. Social unrest, frequent natural disasters, coupled with heavy taxes and civil protests, have led to a severe economic recession and soaring prices. People's living standards have been challenged, and the decline in the purchasing power of money is in sharp contrast to the decline of the Tang Dynasty.

After the outbreak of the "Anshi Rebellion", the centralized structure of the Tang Dynasty was seriously challenged. The rise of local warlords, the country's fiscal revenue was greatly affected. In addition, the loss of population and farmland desolation caused by the war directly led to a sharp decline in grain production, further aggravating the rise in prices. In this environment, the purchasing power of money declined sharply, and a large amount of bad money and fake money flooded the market, leading to a crisis of trust in the market, which seriously hindered trade and business activities.

In order to stabilize the economy and resume production, some local warlords even began to coin coins, further weakening the central government's control over the currency. This decentralized monetary system made the economy of the late Tang Dynasty more chaotic, and the value of the currency fluctuated violently, leading to further hardship in the life of ordinary people.

Culturally, the literature and art of this period began to reflect the social unrest and the disappointment of the people. For example, the nostalgia of the past boom and the helplessness of reality begins to appear, reflecting people's concern about the current situation and confusion about the future. However, it was in such an environment that the poets of the late Tang Dynasty, such as Bai Juyi and Du Mu, expressed their criticism of the society and their deep thinking on life through their works.

As time passed, the external nomads also began to threaten the territorial integrity of the Tang Dynasty. This external pressure has further exacerbated the domestic economic crisis. In response to external threats, the central government had to increase taxes, further pressing already poor people. Excessive tax burden and the ongoing economic crisis provided the soil for the subsequent peasant uprising.

In general, through a thorough study of the currency of the Tang Dynasty, we can examine the history of the Tang Dynasty from a new and more comprehensive perspective. This not only provides us with a unique perspective on the social economy, culture and politics of the Tang Dynasty, but also helps us to better understand and evaluate the process and development logic of history. It is hoped that this research method and viewpoint can provide new ideas and directions for future historical research.

Chapter V

Conclusion Discussion and Suggestion

This chapter offers a succinct recapitulation of the study's findings, drawing insights from the historical evolution of currency. By delving into the nuanced transformation of Luoyang's monetary systems, the analysis illustrates how currency not only reflects the city's socio-economic metamorphosis but also aligns with China's broader historical tapestry. The Tang Dynasty stands out as a pivotal era, during which currency transcended its economic utility to embody cultural and religious significance. Through this monetary examination, the chapter aims to elucidate the importance of Luoyang's coins in interpreting ancient Chinese civilization.

1. Conclusions
2. Discussion and Analysis of Research Findings
3. Research Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

After an in-depth study of the historical development of ancient Luoyang's currency and its critical role in economics, society, and culture, we gain a profound understanding of how this significant city in Chinese history is deeply intertwined with the nation's macro-historical shifts through its currency evolution. Historically regarded as the heartland of China, Luoyang's currency history serves not just as a record of the city's past but also as a microcosm of China's economic, social, and cultural evolution. From simple metal exchanges in the Xia and Shang dynasties to the complex monetary systems by the end of the Qing dynasty, we can observe how Luoyang's developmental trajectory is interwoven with China's fate at each stage.

The development of ancient Luoyang's currency—especially the changes in its forms and types—is more than just technical or craft advancement. Behind every adjustment in the currency's design or the introduction of a new form of money, there are deeper political, economic, and socio-cultural forces at play. Each type of currency stands as a testament and reflection of the stability of the ruling power, economic prosperity, and cultural flourishing at that time. Therefore, studying ancient Luoyang's currency offers insights into the history of Luoyang and, by extension, the entire history of China.

The Tang Dynasty, considered a golden age in Chinese history, had an undeniable impact on the development of Luoyang's currency. With the flourishing of the Silk Road and the consolidation of centralized authority, Luoyang emerged as an economic, cultural, and political hub. Money in this period became more than just a simple medium of economic exchange; it evolved into an essential tool for cultural interaction, political governance, and social order. Luoyang's currency symbolized not just wealth and power but also became a carrier of cultural meaning and social values. Amidst the Tang era's economic prosperity and frequent trade, Luoyang's currency underwent unprecedented transformations in its form, function, and status. Money became not only a medium for commodity exchange but also a symbol of state authority and a conduit for cultural transmission. It held an irreplaceable role in

various sectors like economy, politics, culture, and society. Culturally speaking, the currency of Luoyang was closely linked to literature, art, and religion of the time, leaving an indelible imprint on Luoyang and the broader tapestry of Chinese civilization.

Currency, as a witness to human civilization and economic development, reveals the economic and cultural changes of a nation and an era through its historical evolution. Since ancient times, people have sought more efficient means of exchange, transitioning from simple barter to standardized monetary systems, thereby establishing currency's irreplaceable central role in economics. Luoyang, a pivotal intersection of culture and economy in Chinese history, has been particularly noteworthy for the changes and applications of its currency.

By the Tang Dynasty, with the increasing complexity of the economic system, currency became more than just a simple medium for transactions. Especially within the taxation system, the relationship between currency and governmental finance became inseparable. Governments utilized monetary regulation to influence market economies, encourage or restrict trade activities, and ensure stable fiscal revenue. Thus, currency served as a bridge for interactions between governments, markets, and citizens. In this intricate economic network, the role of Luoyang's currency became increasingly pivotal, functioning not only as an economic lubricant but also as the core and driving force of the entire economic system.

However, the influence of currency during the Tang era extended far beyond economics. Its role in social culture was also significant. Ancient Luoyang coins, with their unique patterns and symbolic meanings, were not merely simple trading tools but carriers of an era's memories and cultural heritage. In literary works, poets' depictions and praises of currency reflected the economic prosperity of the time and people's pursuit of wealth. In various festivals and activities, currency served as a symbol for blessings, commemorations, and interactions, becoming an indispensable part of daily life.

Furthermore, the role of currency in religion and rituals was non-negligible. During the Tang period, with the prevalence of Buddhism, currency often integrated with religious rituals, serving as a tool for blessings and warding off evil, thus transcending its economic value to assume a sacred character. Whether used as offerings or as distributed welfare, currency formed an inseparable relationship with beliefs, deities, and rituals.

Studying ancient Luoyang coins is not merely an historical examination of metal artifacts but a profound analysis of ancient Chinese society. Through an in-depth exploration, we can not only better understand ancient Luoyang but also glean valuable lessons and insights for modern society. While research on ancient Luoyang coins has already achieved certain milestones, many unexplored areas and depths still await future scholars for further investigation.

5.2 Discussion and Analysis of Research Findings

As an important part of ancient Chinese currency, the historical development and cultural connotation of Luoyang ancient coins have always attracted the attention of researchers. This chapter will review the current research status and achievements of the historical development of ancient coins in Luoyang, analyze the

depth and breadth of the research of ancient coins in Luoyang in different dynasties, and point out the gaps and limitations of the existing research.

At present, some progress has been made in studying the historical development of ancient coins in Luoyang. Wang Yue clearly pointed out that ancient coins are not only cultural relics, but also represent the changes of an era, which has far-reaching historical significance, and analyzed the value significance of ancient coins from the perspective of technology and historical and cultural inheritance. Yu Yunhai deeply excavated the origin and development of coins and characters, emphasizing the close relationship between Qian Wen and calligraphy art, showing the organic combination of economy and art. Deng Zhiqiang discussed the development process of the ancient currency and the social, economic and cultural values through the analysis of the characters related to the ancient coins. Such research enable us to better understand the role and influence of ancient money in social culture, providing a new perspective on the cognition of ancient society.

Shen Duanmin's research found the particularity of the ancient monetary appellation culture. Through the exploration of the change of monetary appellation and the diversity of expression forms, we can better understand the cultural connotation and social background of ancient currency in different historical stages. Guo Fangfang's research focuses on the evolution of China's ancient monetary system. Through the historical review and analysis of the monetary system reform, she put forward the suggestions to maintain the authority of the regulatory subjects and diversify the regulatory means, which provides a useful reference for the reform of the monetary system in contemporary China.

Scholars have identified, classified and arranged the ancient coins of different dynasties. They made an in-depth study on the shape, decoration, writing and casting technology of coins, revealing the historical evolution and cultural connotation of ancient coins in Luoyang. Zhang Zhisheng's research mainly focuses on the ancient copper coins. Taking the educational activities of Qingcheng County Museum as an example, he explored the casting technology of ancient coins and coins. Ma Yu and others, from a new perspective, pay attention to the application of ancient coin elements in the packaging design of cultural and creative brand products, and conduct example analysis, which provides a new direction for the design of cultural and creative brand products. At the same time, some studies also involve the economic, social and cultural role of coins, which provides important clues for us to deeply understand the practical application and significance of ancient coins in different dynasties.

However, there are still some gaps and limitations in the study of Luoyang ancient coin. Existing studies have differences in the depth and breadth of ancient coins in Luoyang in different dynasties. Some studies focus on important historical periods such as Han, Song, Qing, while relatively few studies on other dynasties. As a result, our overall grasp of the historical development of ancient coins in Luoyang is not comprehensive enough, and the development status and characteristics of coins in some dynasties still need to be further studied.

Existing studies also have some limitations in their research methods and content. Some studies focus more on the description of shape, ornamentation and casting techniques, but less on the economic, social and cultural roles of coins. This makes us understand the practical application and significance of Luoyang ancient

coins in different historical periods. At the same time, some studies have a relatively limited discussion on the artistic and cultural value of the ancient coins in Luoyang, and the interpretation of the money text and decoration of the coins still needs to be improved.

Given the above research gaps and limitations, this study focuses on the study of Tang Dynasty currency. As a prosperous period in Chinese history, the development and application of Luoyang ancient coins in this period were of great significance. The study of the Tang Dynasty currency can deeply understand the social, economic and cultural appearance of the Tang Dynasty, and reveal the monetary system and economic exchanges at that time. At the same time, as the carrier of artworks and cultural symbols, the Tang Dynasty coins are also of great value for revealing the artistic style, cultural values and ideas of the Tang Dynasty.

Economically, the changes of ancient coins in Luoyang reflect Luoyang to some extent, and even more generally, is the context of the whole economic development of China. From the earliest simple form of exchange, to the progress of mint technology, and then to the complexity of monetary economy in the Tang Dynasty, the evolution of Luoyang coins presents a miniature version of macroeconomic development. Especially in the interaction between the tax system and money, we observe that money has surpassed the basic function of its medium of exchange, and is more deeply intertwined with the policies of the country, the behavior of the government, and the economic behavior of the society as a whole.

On the social and cultural level, Luoyang ancient coins have become a powerful carrier of social and cultural memory. From the description in literary works, it is not difficult to find that coin is not only a material tool in economic activities, but also endowed with a variety of emotions and values by people. In many ancient documents, coins are often used as a metaphor, reflecting the pursuit and yearning for wealth, power and social status at that time. At the same time, the use of coins in festivals and religious ceremonies also makes it become a link between people, beliefs and gods, and becomes a medium of cultural and religious communication.

The study has also noted that the patterns, characters, and shapes of coins have changed during different historical periods. Behind these changes, they often contain the political intention, propaganda strategy and social and cultural values shaping and guidance of the rulers at that time. Therefore, coins can also be seen as an interweaving of politics and culture, which reflects not only the will and strategies of the rulers, but also the lives, beliefs and values of ordinary people.

Therefore, the study of the historical status and importance of the Tang Dynasty currency cannot be ignored. By exploring the shape, type, economic function and cultural connotation of ancient coins in Luoyang in the Tang Dynasty, this study can fill the gap of existing research, enrich the understanding of the historical development of ancient coins in Luoyang, and provide a new perspective and deep exploration direction for the research of ancient coins in Luoyang.

5.3 Research Recommendations

After an in-depth study of ancient Luoyang coins, we realize that there remains ample room for further exploration and expansion in their historical, economic, social, and cultural aspects. With this in mind, we offer the following

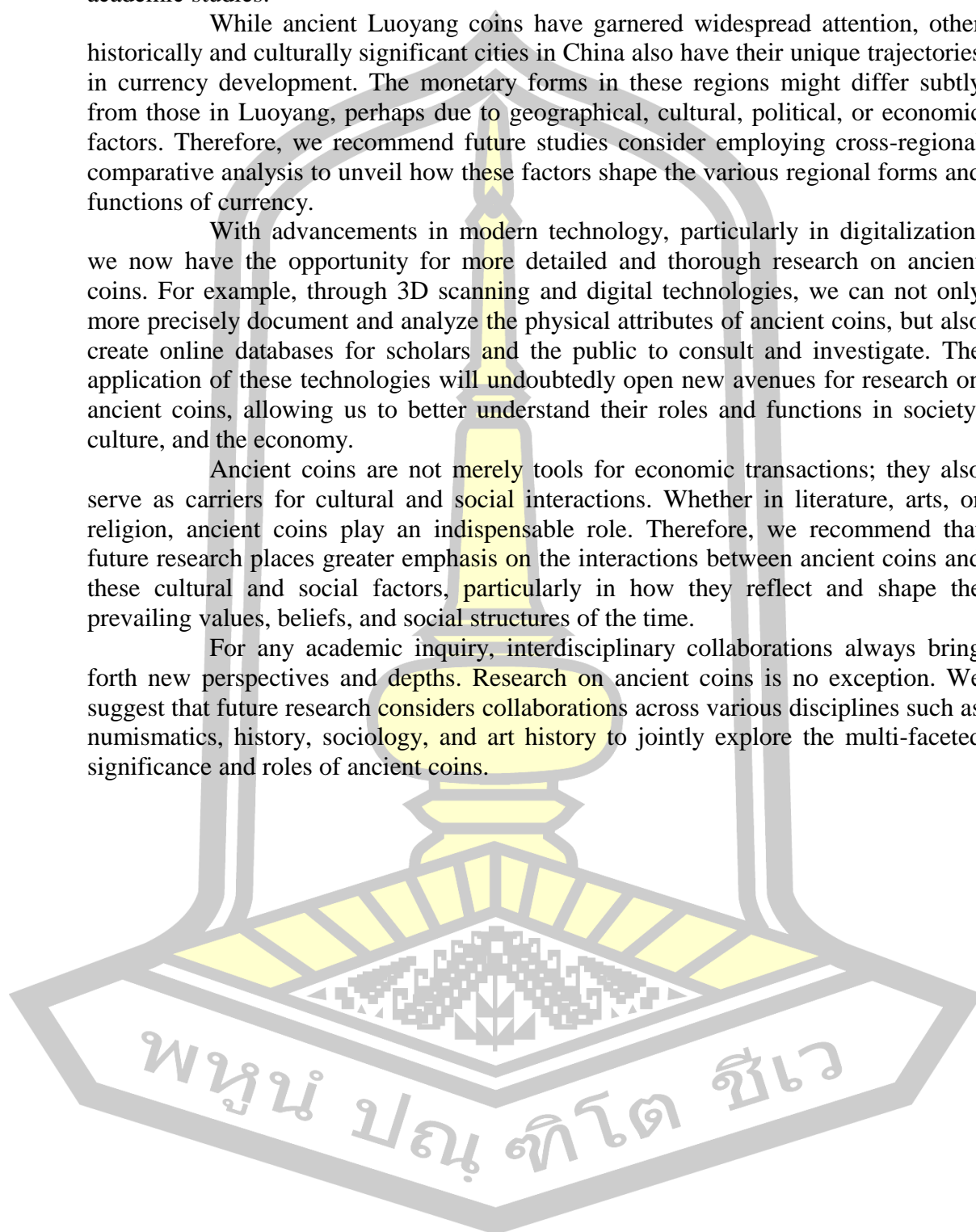
research recommendations to provide new perspectives and directions for future academic studies.

While ancient Luoyang coins have garnered widespread attention, other historically and culturally significant cities in China also have their unique trajectories in currency development. The monetary forms in these regions might differ subtly from those in Luoyang, perhaps due to geographical, cultural, political, or economic factors. Therefore, we recommend future studies consider employing cross-regional comparative analysis to unveil how these factors shape the various regional forms and functions of currency.

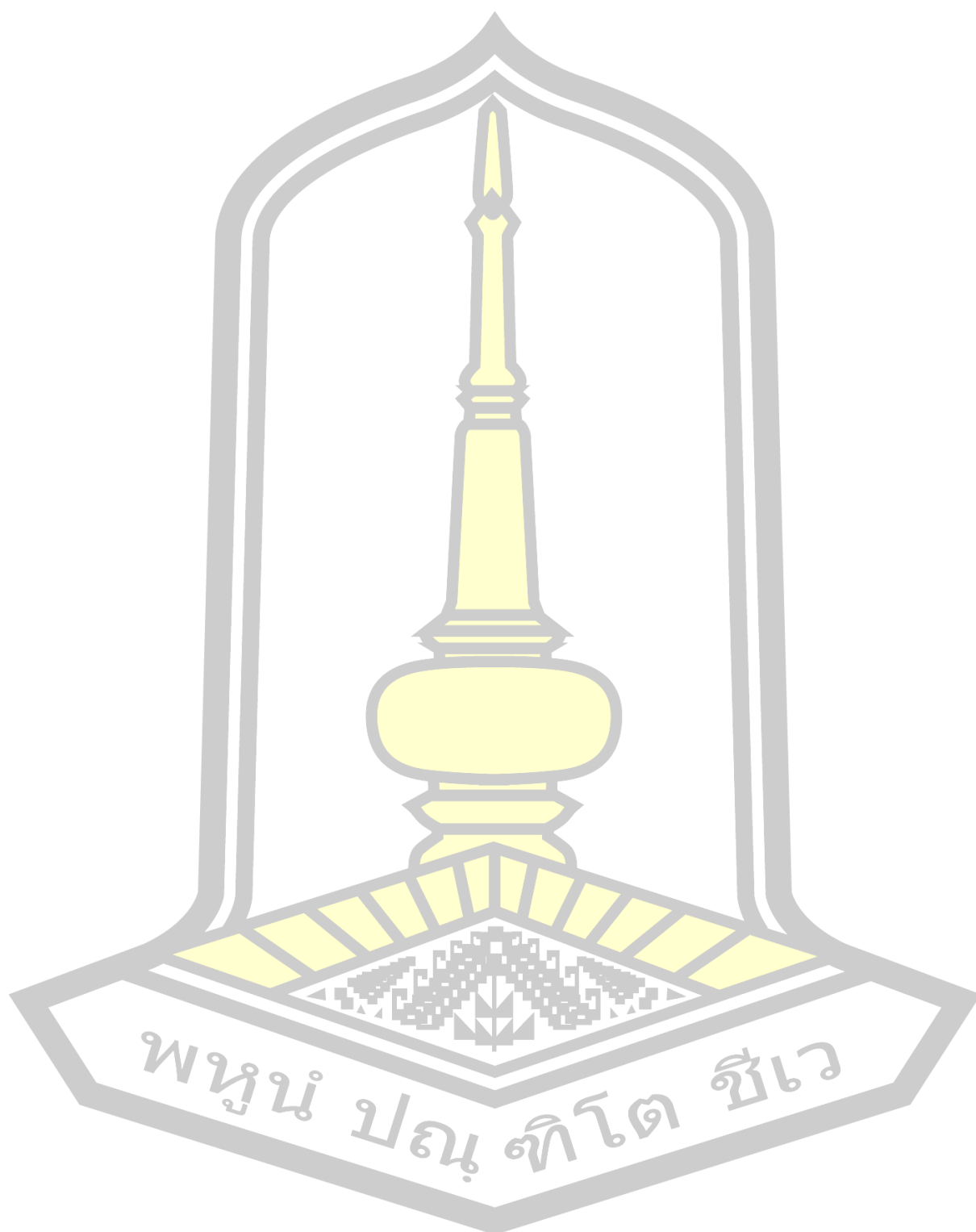
With advancements in modern technology, particularly in digitalization, we now have the opportunity for more detailed and thorough research on ancient coins. For example, through 3D scanning and digital technologies, we can not only more precisely document and analyze the physical attributes of ancient coins, but also create online databases for scholars and the public to consult and investigate. The application of these technologies will undoubtedly open new avenues for research on ancient coins, allowing us to better understand their roles and functions in society, culture, and the economy.

Ancient coins are not merely tools for economic transactions; they also serve as carriers for cultural and social interactions. Whether in literature, arts, or religion, ancient coins play an indispensable role. Therefore, we recommend that future research places greater emphasis on the interactions between ancient coins and these cultural and social factors, particularly in how they reflect and shape the prevailing values, beliefs, and social structures of the time.

For any academic inquiry, interdisciplinary collaborations always bring forth new perspectives and depths. Research on ancient coins is no exception. We suggest that future research considers collaborations across various disciplines such as numismatics, history, sociology, and art history to jointly explore the multi-faceted significance and roles of ancient coins.



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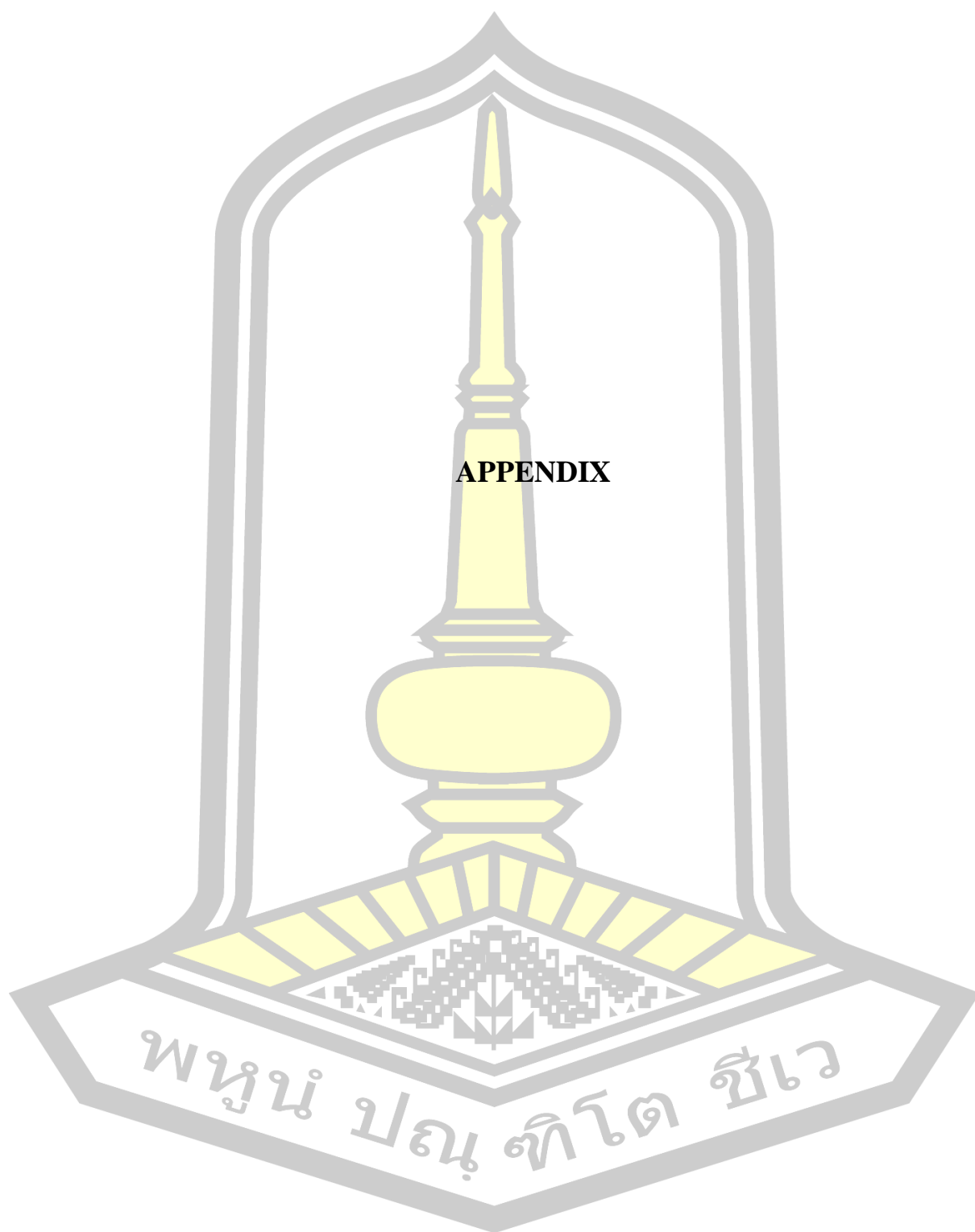
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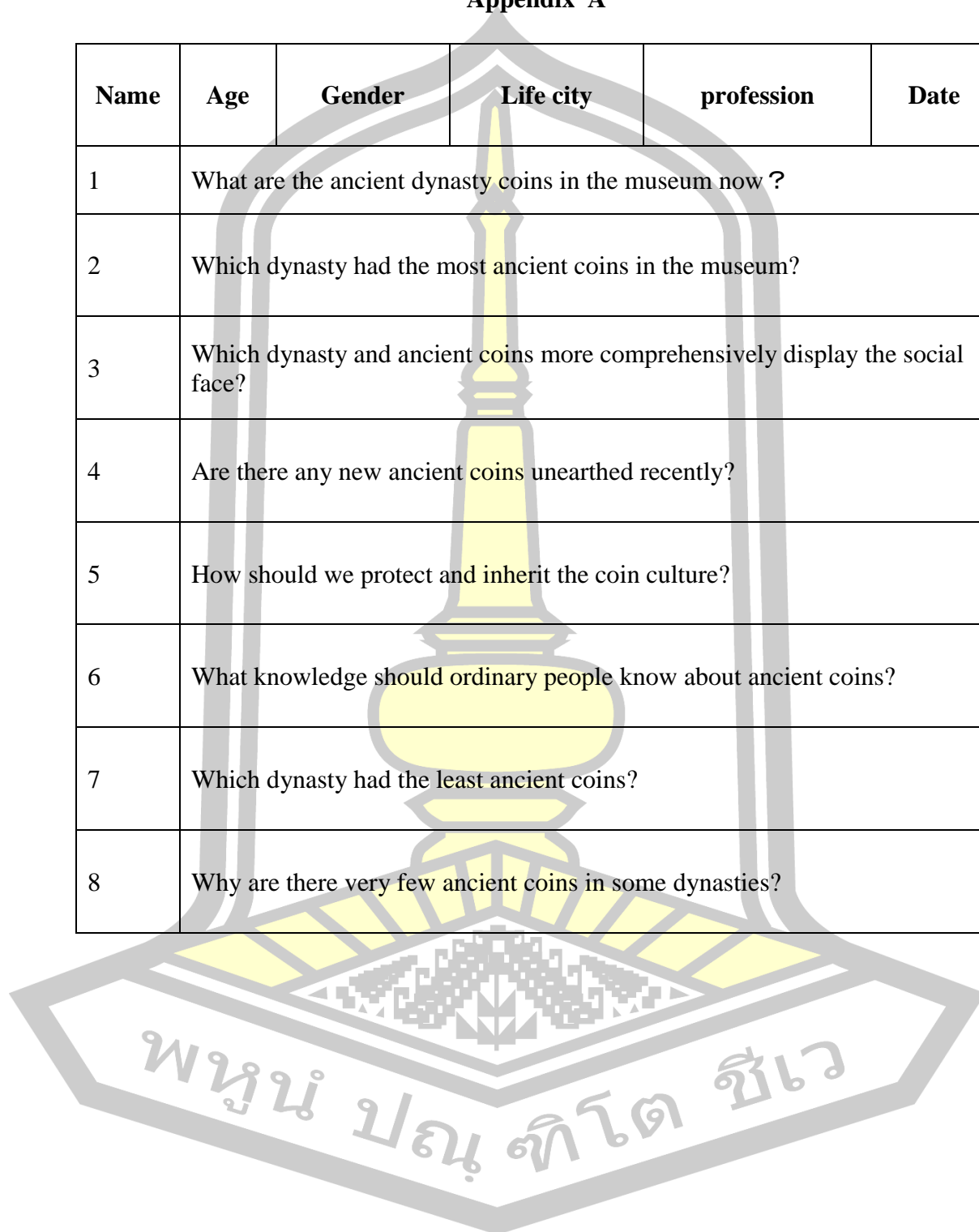
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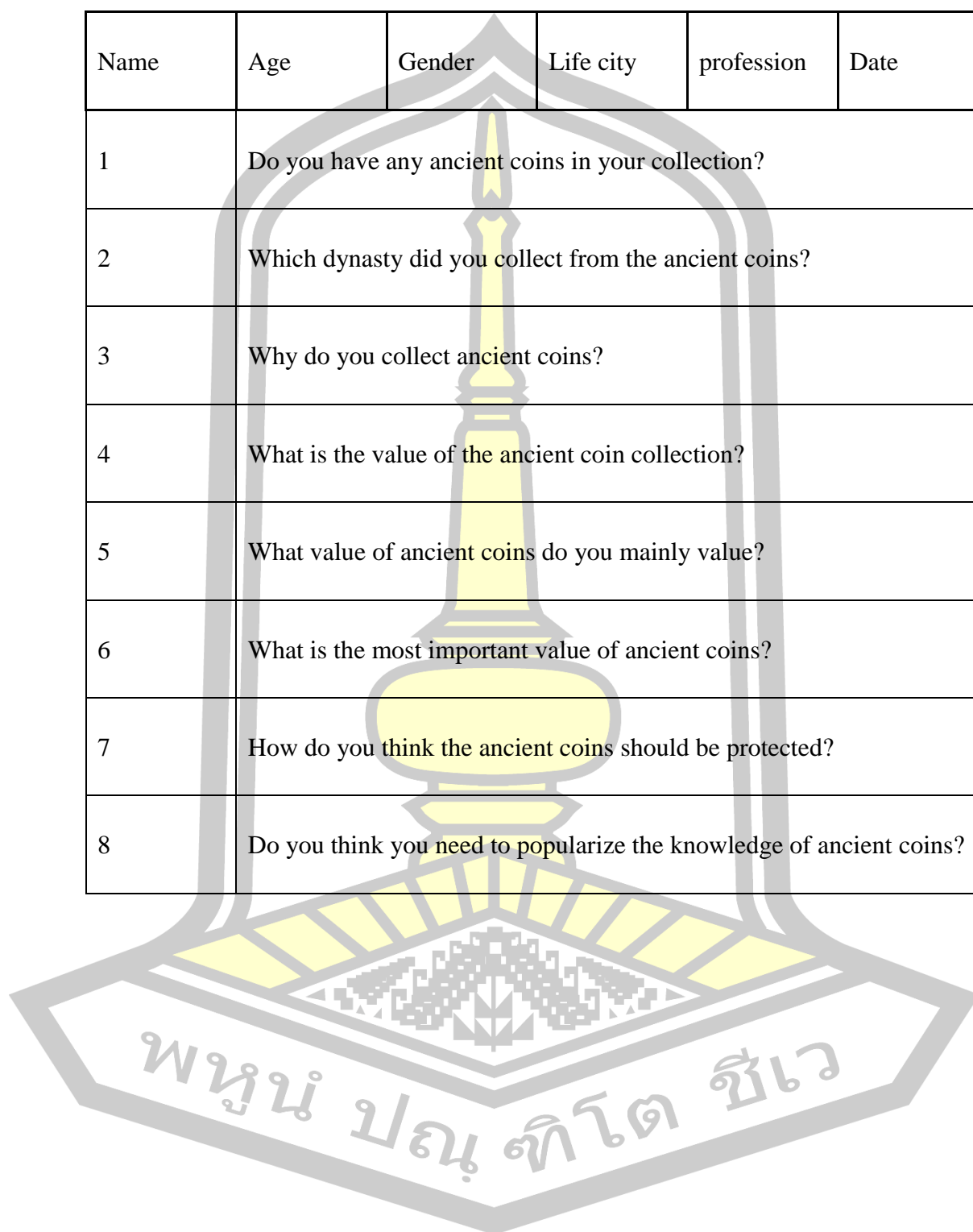
Appendix A

Name	Age	Gender	Life city	profession	Date
1	What are the ancient dynasty coins in the museum now ?				
2	Which dynasty had the most ancient coins in the museum?				
3	Which dynasty and ancient coins more comprehensively display the social face?				
4	Are there any new ancient coins unearthed recently?				
5	How should we protect and inherit the coin culture?				
6	What knowledge should ordinary people know about ancient coins?				
7	Which dynasty had the least ancient coins?				
8	Why are there very few ancient coins in some dynasties?				



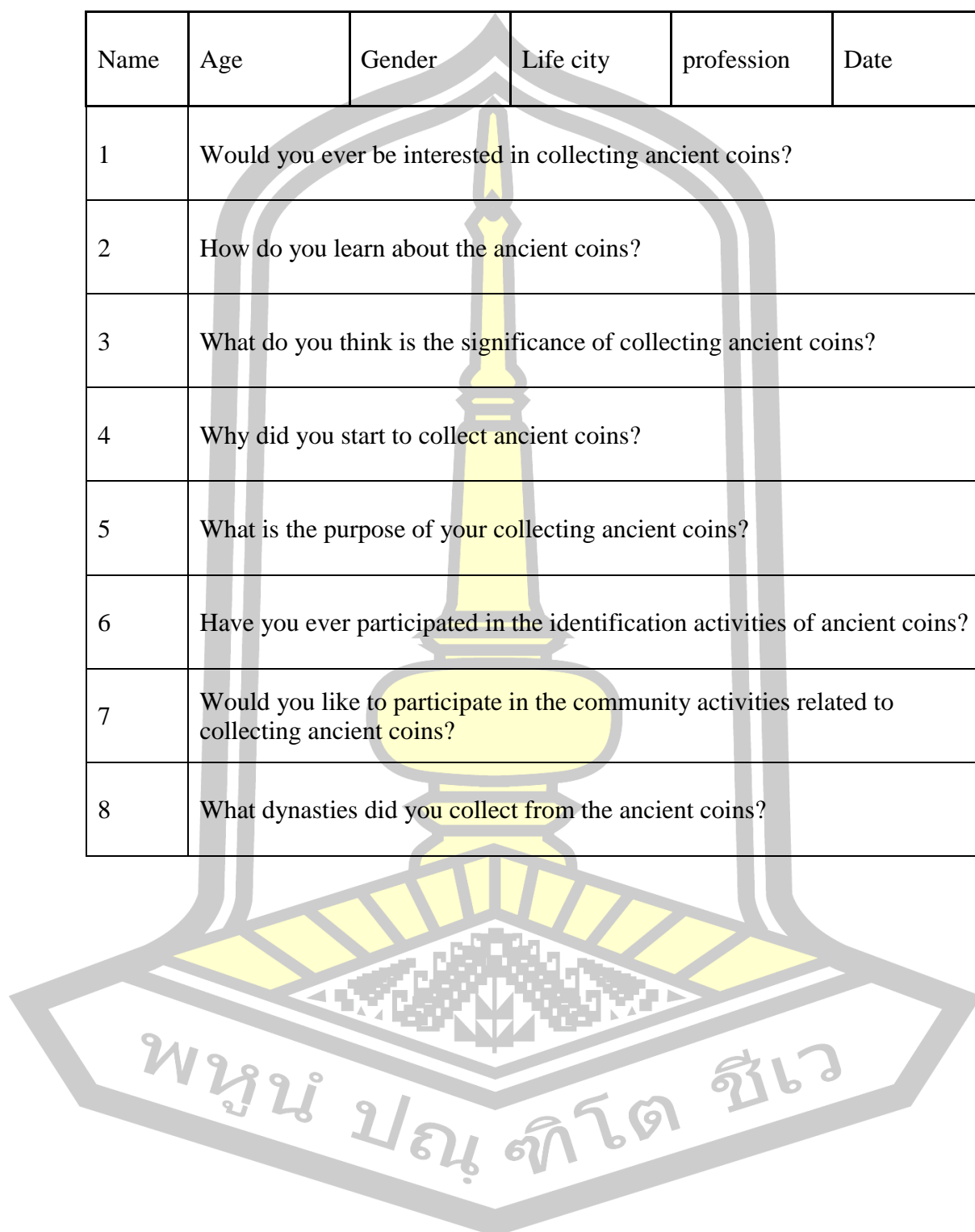
Appendix B

Name	Age	Gender	Life city	profession	Date
1	Do you have any ancient coins in your collection?				
2	Which dynasty did you collect from the ancient coins?				
3	Why do you collect ancient coins?				
4	What is the value of the ancient coin collection?				
5	What value of ancient coins do you mainly value?				
6	What is the most important value of ancient coins?				
7	How do you think the ancient coins should be protected?				
8	Do you think you need to popularize the knowledge of ancient coins?				



Appendix C

Name	Age	Gender	Life city	profession	Date
1	Would you ever be interested in collecting ancient coins?				
2	How do you learn about the ancient coins?				
3	What do you think is the significance of collecting ancient coins?				
4	Why did you start to collect ancient coins?				
5	What is the purpose of your collecting ancient coins?				
6	Have you ever participated in the identification activities of ancient coins?				
7	Would you like to participate in the community activities related to collecting ancient coins?				
8	What dynasties did you collect from the ancient coins?				



Appendix D

The above questionnaire survey is mainly distributed to three categories.

1. Ancient Coin museum staff. 2. University teacher engaged in the study of ancient coin history. 3. Ancient coin collectors.

Name of Interviewee

List of interviewees

Key Informants			
Number	Name	Age	Career
01	Cai Yunzhang	67	President of the Cultural Relics Collection Society
02	Shi Haoming	50	Museum curator
03	Liu Zixua	60	teacher lecturer
04	Liu Mingyu	52	Coin collectors
05	Zhang Yaoqi	45	Coin lovers
06	Lu Yuxi	42	Museum staff members

Casual Informants			
Number	Name	Age	Career
01	Han Fengming	51	President of the cultural Industry Association
02	LI Ruibo	68	Museum curator
03	Shang Kai	52	Museum staff members
04	Wan Jiabao	43	Museum staff members
05	Li Meixuan	57	teacher lecturer
06	Jia Junyi	53	teacher lecturer
07	Liu Bingyi	63	teacher lecturer
08	Wei Zhihan	48	Font advertising designer
09	Huang Tianyin	43	Coin collectors
10	Guo Yuqi	49	Coin collectors
11	Wang Jiahao	56	Coin collectors
12	Zhang Muyun	53	Coin collectors
13	Zhou Jia	59	Coin lovers
14	Shang Xin	60	Coin lovers
15	Wang Zijia	61	Coin lovers

General Informants			
Number	Name	Age	Career
01	Wang Haoyi	51	teacher lecturer
02	Lu YUXi	50	visitor
03	Ni Chunxi	56	visitor
04	Guo Yunqi	61	visitor
05	Zhou Shuyu	43	visitor
06	Lu Yiun	41	Museum staff members
07	Du Wenyu	40	Museum staff members

08	Wang Tianyou	51	teacher lecturer
09	Bai Weihao	55	teacher lecturer
10	Ren Jinhao	57	teacher lecturer
11	Xu Heyu	40	teacher lecturer
12	Hu Kexin	59	Museum staff members
13	Ma Wenbo	49	Museum staff members
14	Zhao YIchen	61	Museum staff members
15	Yu Fang	48	Museum staff members



BIOGRAPHY

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Research grants & awards	-
Research output	-

