



THE APPLICATION AND DESIGN RESEARCH OF DECORATIVE STYLES OF WESTERN
HAN DYNASTY JADE ART IN CONTEMPORARY



XIAOYAN MAO

Graduate School Srinakharinwirot University

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ศิลปศาสตรดุษฎีบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาศิลปวัฒนธรรมวิจัย
คณะศิลปกรรมศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ
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ลิขสิทธิ์ของมหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ

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HAN DYNASTY JADE ART IN CONTEMPORARY



A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of DOCTOR OF ARTS
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Faculty of Fine Arts, Srinakharinwirot University

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THE DISSERTATION TITLED
THE APPLICATION AND DESIGN RESEARCH OF DECORATIVE STYLES OF WESTERN HAN
DYNASTY JADE ART IN CONTEMPORARY

BY
XIAOYAN MAO

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(Assoc. Prof. Dr. Chatchai Ekpanyaskul, MD.)
Dean of Graduate School

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Title	THE APPLICATION AND DESIGN RESEARCH OF DECORATIVE STYLES OF WESTERN HAN DYNASTY JADE ART IN CONTEMPORARY
Author	XIAOYAN MAO
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Thesis Advisor	Associate Professor Ph.D. Sathit Thimwatbunthong
Co Advisor	Assistant Professor Ph.D. Ina Puyuthanon

This research is the application and design research of decorative styles of Western Han Dynasty jade art in contemporary art. The objective of this study is to explore the characteristics and cultural connotations of decorative styles in Western Han Dynasty jade arts, aiming to provide inspiration for the application of traditional elements in contemporary jade carving design.,which was analyzed 120 representative jade artifacts from three prominent museums, supplemented by in-depth interviews with six industry experts.This study delves into the characteristics, aesthetics, contemporary design insights, and Strategies regarding decorative styles in Western Han Dynasty jade arts. The results of the study reveal that the decorative styles of Western Han Dynasty jade arts possess a high level of aesthetic appeal and profound cultural connotations, exerting a profound influence on contemporary art and design. Three Strategies are proposed: integration of new technologies with traditional crafts, cross-form integration to ignite new inspiration, and promotion of cross-cultural exchange.

Keyword : Western Han Dynasty jade art, Design Strategies, Decorative styles,
Contemporary jade carving

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Han Dynasty is one of the great significant dynasties in Chinese history. It is the second unified dynasty after Qin. It has made outstanding achievements in politics, culture, economy, and art, marking the establishment of a feudal society in China. It also laid a very important foundation for the history of China. Western Han Dynasty jade carvings played a link between the past and the future. The early jade carvings of the Western Han Dynasty mainly inherited the jade carving forms of the Pre - Qin Period. After the mid-Western Han Dynasty, due to the growing national power and economic and cultural prosperity, the jade carvings also had new developments and breakthroughs compared with the previous generation. New jade wares Forms emerged one after another. During this period, the number of open carvings, high-relief sculptures, and round sculptures increased significantly, and the artistic expression became more mature. Coupled with the prevalence of thick burials in the Western Han Dynasty, the number of jade wares unearthed during this period and the exquisite craftsmanship were unmatched by other eras. By the late Han Dynasty, political corruption and social turmoil had limited the development of jade wares, and the quantity and quality of unearthed jade wares were not as good as those in the early and middle periods. Therefore, the jade wares of the Western Han Dynasty referred to in this project mainly refer to the jade wares of the early middle period of the Western Han Dynasty. Taking the jade wares of the early and middle period of the Western Han Dynasty as the research object, we can explore the aesthetic thoughts, creation concepts, cultural connotations and other contents presented by the jade wares of the Western Han Dynasty by studying the decorative shapes of the jade wares in this period; Taking the decorative styles of Western Han Dynasty jade carvings as an example to study contemporary artists' perception of traditional elements in contemporary art creation, and to explore a broader road of artistic innovation.

First of all, applying the decorative styles of Western Han Dynasty jade arts to contemporary art creation can make people re-understand and pay attention to ancient culture. Exquisite Western Han Dynasty jades should not just lie quietly in the museum for people to appreciate, but they should be revitalized in the new era. By combining the decorative styles of ancient jades with the language of contemporary art, artists can arouse people's interest and attention to ancient culture. This helps to promote the inheritance and protection of cultural heritage, so that more people can understand and cherish ancient culture. Secondly, contemporary artists usually innovate and reinterpret when applying ancient jade to decorate shapes. They may recombine, reconstruct or give new meaning to traditional decorative elements to fit the context and aesthetic concept of contemporary art. This kind of innovation and reinterpretation helps to revitalize ancient culture and inject new vitality into the inheritance and protection of heritage.

1.2 Importance of the Study

1.2.1 Inheritance of cultural heritage

The protection and inheritance of cultural heritage have always been highly valued by countries worldwide. In 1972, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) emphasized the importance of cultural heritage protection in its World Heritage Convention. Thailand's Cultural Heritage Protection Law states that the goal of protecting cultural heritage is to preserve and inherit Thai cultural heritage. China, with a civilization history of over 50,000 years, attaches great importance to the protection and inheritance of cultural heritage. In the past decade, China has successively enacted several laws and regulations, such as the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage (2011), Law of the People's Republic of China on Protection of Cultural Relics (Revised Edition)(2007), and Administrative Measures for the Protection of World Culture Heritages(2006), which have played a proactive role in the protection and inheritance of cultural heritage. The inheritance of cultural heritage requires integration with contemporary culture and life, incorporating traditional cultural elements into modern

designs to truly imbue ancient culture with new vitality. By integrating the decorative styling of Western Han Dynasty jade artifacts into contemporary artistic creation, we can re-examine and imbue ancient cultural symbols with new meanings while also inheriting and protecting this cultural heritage.

First of all, applying the decorative styles of Western Han Dynasty jade arts to contemporary art creation can make people re-understand and pay attention to ancient culture. Exquisite jades of the Western Han Dynasty should not just lie quietly in the museum for people to appreciate, but they should be revitalized in the new era. By combining the decorative styles of ancient jades with the language of contemporary art, artists can Arouse people's interest and attention to ancient culture. This helps to promote the inheritance and protection of cultural heritage, so that more people can understand and cherish ancient culture. Secondly, contemporary artists usually innovate and reinterpret when applying ancient jade to decorate shapes. They may recombine, reconstruct or give new meaning to traditional decorative elements to fit the context and aesthetic concept of contemporary art. This kind of innovation and reinterpretation helps to revitalize ancient culture and inject new vitality into the inheritance and protection of heritage.

In short, the study of the application and design of decorative styles of Western Han jade arts in contemporary art creation is very important for the inheritance and protection of cultural heritage. By integrating ancient jade decorative shapes into contemporary art creation, we can re-examine and give new meaning to ancient culture, while stimulating people's awareness of cultural heritage protection. At the same time, it also provides new ways and perspectives for the inheritance and innovation of traditional art.

1.2.2 Dialogue and expression across time and space

Studying the application and design of Western Han jade decorative styles in contemporary art creation can promote dialogue and expression across time and space. Dialogue and expression across time and space refers to the interaction and inspiration between artists, works or artistic styles in different time and space.

Contemporary artists can gain creative inspiration and creative motivation by studying and appreciating Western Han Dynasty jade carvings. This means that by combining ancient jade decorative shapes with contemporary art, we can establish connections, dialogues and exchanges between different time and cultural backgrounds.

First of all, by applying ancient jade decorative styles elements in contemporary art creation, we can create a language and visual expression that spans the ages. As a unique art form, ancient jade has a profound historical and cultural background. When artists apply it in contemporary art creation, they bring ancient symbols and meanings into modern society, and reinterpret and express them through the language of contemporary art. Such dialogues across time and space can not only broaden the thinking of artists and enable them to obtain new artistic forms and expressions, but also enrich the connotation and form of contemporary art, making it more historically significant and culturally profound. Furthermore, by studying and applying the cross-temporal dialogue of ancient jade decorative shapes in contemporary art creation, we can promote communication and understanding between different cultures. Modern art forms were introduced into China from the West, and the concept of contemporary art is inextricably linked with Western art. As an important part of Chinese traditional culture, ancient jade wares have unique cultural symbols and artistic value. The combination of the two can provide a cross-cultural experience and dialogue opportunities for domestic and foreign audiences. By appreciating and understanding this kind of cross-cultural artistic creation, people can increase their understanding and respect for different cultures, and promote exchanges and cooperation between cultures.

Therefore, studying the application and design of the decorative styles of Western Han jade arts in contemporary art creation is of great significance for promoting dialogue and expression across time and space. It not only enriches the connotation and form of contemporary art, but also strengthens the communication and understanding between different cultures, and promotes the dialogue between art and culture across the ages.

1.2.3 Conducive to innovation and experimental exploration of jade carving

Studying the application and design of Western Han jade decorative styles in contemporary art creation plays an important role in promoting the exploration of innovation and experimentation. Jade carving itself is a very experimental art. Ancient jade carving craftsmen processed jade through their long-term experience in carving jade. However, the ancients said that "it is difficult for gods to cut through jade", and the interior of jade is ever-changing. Before the final work is completed, No one knows the internal conditions of jade, which makes jade carving art full of randomness and mystery, and also makes jade carving creation itself extremely experimental and exploratory, which is consistent with the experimental and exploratory nature of contemporary art practice.

It is not uncommon to see cross-border experiments and innovative attempts by applying ancient art forms to contemporary art creations, but there are not many works that apply Western Han Dynasty jade arts to contemporary art creations. The characteristics and forms of ancient jade decorations are often quite different from the traditions of contemporary art, and the collision of the two can produce new artistic languages and forms. By reinterpreting and changing the decorative styles of ancient jade wares, artists can create contemporary works of art that are different from tradition and unique in personality. The innovative techniques of contemporary art can also provide a new framework and form for the expression of Western Han Dynasty jade arts, creating both Bold and avant-garde experimental creations with traditional cultural connotations. Such experiments and innovative explorations help to promote the development and progress of art, while injecting new vitality into contemporary art.

Therefore, it is of great significance to study the application and design of decorative styles of Western Han Dynasty jade arts in contemporary art creation to promote the exploration of innovation and experimentation. It provides artists with new creative inspiration and resources, promotes cross-border experiments and innovative attempts in art forms, and stimulates artists' creativity and imagination. Such research

helps to promote the development and progress of art and inject new vitality and innovation into contemporary art.

1.2.4 Enriching Data for Relevant Academic Research

Academic research plays a crucial role in exploring the application and significance of decorative styles of Western Han jade arts in contemporary artistic creation, serving as a vital source and platform. Numerous scholars and academic institutions are dedicated to conducting in-depth studies on the decorative styles of Western Han jade arts. They share their research findings through academic papers, research projects, and scholarly conferences, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the subject.

These researchers analyze and interpret the cultural, historical, and artistic contexts of jade ornamentation styles, exploring their connections and possibilities in contemporary artistic creation. The academic research in this field fosters extensive discussions and viewpoints, allowing researchers, artists, and audiences to gain a more holistic understanding of the application and significance of decorative styles of Western Han jade arts in contemporary art. This study also injects new momentum and insights into the academic community.

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To analyze the characteristics, cultural connotation, aesthetic expression and artistic value of the Western Han Dynasty jade art.
2. To propose strategies for applying elements of Western Han jade artifacts to contemporary jade carving art design.

1.4 Research questions

1. What is the symbolic meaning and cultural significance of the decorative styles of Western Han jade arts?
2. What are the current aesthetic trends of jade arts and how do contemporary young individuals perceive them?

3. What is the value and significance decorative styles of Western Han jade arts in contemporary art?

4. What are the strategies for incorporating elements of Western Han jade arts into contemporary jade carving art?

1.5 Research Scope of Definition

1.5.1 Scope of time

The Han Dynasty lasted from 206 B.C. to A.D. 220. From 206 B.C. to 48 B.C., it was a period of prosperity when the country was prosperous and the people were strong at the beginning of the Western Han Dynasty. Thanks to the efforts of the emperors on behalf of the Han Dynasty, the economy of the Han Dynasty was prosperous, the political situation was stable, and the culture was prosperous, which was the early period of the Han Dynasty; from 48 BC to 9 AD, due to the young emperor and the fall of imperial power, the regime gradually declined, until Wang Mang usurped the Han Dynasty in 8 AD, the history of the Han Dynasty took a turning point and went downhill. The economic and cultural development of the Han Dynasty at this stage entered the previous stage. Therefore, the jade wares of the Western Han Dynasty in this study mainly refer to jade wares made between 206 BC and 8 BC.

1.5.2 Scope of region

The research focuses on the period of the Western Han Dynasty in China, especially the middle and early period. The Regional scope of the study is mainly the areas ruled by the Western Han Dynasty during this period. The decorative shapes of jade articles in other regions or cultural backgrounds are not within the scope of this study.

1.5.3 Scope of resources

This study primarily investigates representative jade artifacts from three museums: Xuzhou Museum, Nanchang Relic Museum for Haihun Principality of Han Dynasty and Nanyue King Museum.

1.5.4 Scope of interviews

The interviewees mainly consist of contemporary Chinese jade carving artists, jade carving masters, and industry experts.

1.6 Expected Results

1. To supplement the research gaps in related fields and expand the understanding of decorative styles of jade wares in this period.
2. To inspire creative inspiration and innovation, expanding the modes of expression and artistic language in contemporary art.
3. To help arouse public interest and appreciation for Western Han jade arts, promoting the conservation and inheritance of cultural heritage.
4. To facilitate cross-cultural exchange and understanding, fostering not only Thais' comprehension of Chinese culture but also dialogue and interaction among diverse cultures.

1.7 Definition of Terms

1.7.1 Western Han Dynasty Jade

The Western Han Dynasty Jade refers to the jade craftsmanship produced during the Western Han Dynasty of China (206 BC to 8 BC). These artifacts encompass various jade carvings, jade ornaments, and jade decorative items, crafted from jade stone through techniques such as carving and polishing. The Western Han jade artifacts studied in this paper primarily refer to jade objects unearthed from the tombs of Western Han vassals, which mainly consist of flat and highly decorative jade objects.

1.7.2 decorative styles of Jade

The decorative styles of Jade refers to the external forms and patterns formed by carving, engraving, or other processing techniques on the surface of jade objects. These decorative styles can encompass various geometric patterns, images of animals and plants, abstract symbols, human figures, etc. The study in this paper focuses on the composition, craftsmanship, and ornamentation of decorative styles of Jade.

1.7.3 Contemporary Art

Contemporary art refers to artistic forms and creative practices created, presented, and explored within the current era. This study primarily focuses on contemporary jade carving art, which specifically pertains to innovative jade carving art produced in China over the past two decades. This subset of jade carving art differs from traditional jade carving in terms of design concepts and imagery, emphasizing innovation, free expression, and diversity.



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discusses the historical background, development and characteristics of the decorative styles of Western Han jade arts, as well as the underlying aesthetic principles. First of all, it expounds the origin and development of the jade decoration in the Western Han Dynasty, reveals the aesthetic principles contained in the jade decoration in the Western Han Dynasty, including design principles, methods and cultural spirit, and also discusses the reasons for the existence of jade and the thought of jade inheritance. At the same time, it also analyzes the status quo of jade research in the Western Han Dynasty, and discusses the development trend of related research through expert opinions and theoretical literature. Further, an overview of the current status of the contemporary jade carving market is provided, including the situation and trends of the Chinese jade carving market, as well as the status of the Thai jewelry market. Finally, the application of traditional elements in contemporary jade carving design is discussed. It summarizes the inspiration drawn from the decorative styles of Western Han jade arts, how to ingeniously integrate traditional elements in the creation of contemporary jade carvings, and inject new vitality into the creation. It comprehensively analyzes the history, aesthetics and application value of the jade decoration in the Western Han Dynasty, as well as its application value in the contemporary art market, providing a full theoretical support for this study.

2.1 The historical background of the decorative styles of Western Han Dynasty jade arts

2.2 The development and characteristics of decorative styles of Western Han Dynasty jade arts

2.3 Research status of Western Han Dynasty jade arts

2.4 Current situation of contemporary Chinese jade carvings

2.5 Analysis of the Jewelry Market in Thailand

2.1 The historical background of the decorative styles of Western Han Dynasty jade arts

The Han Dynasty was a unified dynasty established by Han Gaozu Liu Bang in 202 BC, with a strong national power and a prosperous economy. Especially in the early Han Dynasty, after the recuperation of Han Gaozu in the early Han Dynasty, the rule of Wenjing by Emperor Wenjing, the prosperity of Hanwu by Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty, and the rule of Xiaoxuan by Emperor Zhaoxuan of Han Dynasty, the national power of the Western Han Dynasty became stronger than ever. Over the past 150 years, China's economy, politics, culture, art and other aspects have achieved tremendous development, providing a stable social foundation for the production and manufacture of jade articles and the development of jade culture(Hao, H. F. & Feng, J. P., 2011).

2.1.1 Stable and Prosperous Political Situation

During the Western Han Dynasty, the Western Han Dynasty inherited the Qin system. Compared with the turmoil during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States Periods and the heavy corvee taxes of the Qin Dynasty, the emperors of the Western Han Dynasty mostly adopted a policy of recuperation, and carried out partial reforms on the politics, economy, religious etiquette, and laws of the Qin Dynasty. Screening and succession made the Han Dynasty, a regime started by peasant uprisings, quickly transition to a feudal regime. Through the efforts of successive kings, the political situation in the Western Han Dynasty was stable and the culture and economy flourished, which provided a high-quality material foundation for the development of jade wares.

2.1.2 Inclusive Ideas

During the Spring and Autumn Period, the Confucian master Confucius, combining the characteristics of jade's hard and smooth texture, promoted the concept of "comparing virtue to jade" as a moral standard and introduced new moral concepts, thus officially extending the concept of wearing jade to the social ethical level(Hu, Y. F. & Zhang, R. H., 2022). During the period of Emperor Wu of the Western Han Dynasty, the idea of "abandoning all schools of thought and respecting Confucianism alone" was adopted. Confucianism occupied the dominant position of ideology. The "Eleven Virtues"

of trust, music, loyalty, heaven, earth, morality, and morality have become the code of conduct for the whole society from top to bottom. As a result, jade wares in the Western Han Dynasty not only continued to perform the function of the sacrificial ritual system of the previous generation, but also developed into a decoration. Jade is widely worn and popular across the country. People in the Western Han Dynasty believed that Peiyu could not only ward off evil spirits, but also show the image of a gentleman, so this custom has been passed down for a long time, and many people still follow it today. With Emperor Wu of the Western Han Dynasty attacking the Xiongnu in the north, Nanping the Lingnan, expanding the Western Regions to the west, and Liaodong to the east, a series of military actions to expand the territory, and Zhang Qian's envoy to the Western Regions to open up the Silk Road, the Western Han Dynasty integrated a variety of ideas. The diversity of decorative shapes has laid the ideological foundation(Chen,W.2018).

2.1.3 Advanced Production Tools

With the development of science and technology, iron tools were widely used in the Western Han Dynasty, and the tools for treating jade also evolved from bronze tools to iron tools. Compared with bronze tools, iron tools have prominent advantages: better toughness and more High hardness(Wu, 2021). The high toughness and high hardness of iron make iron have better forging performance, and can be made into more refined and durable jade tools, especially small tools for tucking, bumping, hooking, removing, etc., which greatly improves the The efficiency of jade treatment and the fineness of jade treatment in Western Han Dynasty. It is no exaggeration to say that the widespread use of iron tools had a revolutionary impact on the development of jade craftsmanship in the Western Han Dynasty.

Generally speaking, in the early and middle Western Han Dynasty, the political situation was stable, the economy was developed, the culture was prosperous, the productive forces were strong, and all aspects of society had achieved remarkable development. It reached an unprecedented peak in the Western Han Dynasty and had an indelible impact on the development of jade articles in later generations.

2.2 The development and characteristics of decorative styles of Western Han Dynasty jade arts

The earliest jade wares were mainly simple tools, such as blades, axes, and arrowheads. With the passage of time, jade production technology has gradually improved, and more complex and exquisite handicrafts have appeared. Ancient Chinese jade wares include various utensils, such as jade Zhang, jade cong, jade bi, jade cups, etc., as well as various accessories, such as jade pendants, jade rings, etc. Jade has been widely used and spread in Chinese history. They are not only used as daily necessities and decorations, but also as a symbol of noble status and power, and are often used in court etiquette and sacrificial ceremonies. So far, China is still one of the most important jade producing areas in the world, and jade craftsmanship has been inherited and developed. The ancient jade art had a profound influence on later generations and became one of the treasures of Chinese traditional culture.

2.2.1 Origin of Jade (Pre-Qin Period)

China's jade civilization has a long history. Judging from the current archaeological discoveries, the origin of Chinese jade can be traced back to the late Paleolithic period in the primitive society. It is located in Xiaogushan Fairy Cave, 45 kilometers southeast of Haicheng, Liaoning, more than 10,000 years ago. Three chopping implements made of tremolite jade were unearthed at the site in the late Paleolithic Age, which are the earliest jade artifacts discovered so far. The embryonic stage of Chinese jade in the history of the Paleolithic Age. About 8000 years ago, during the origin period of jade artifacts, their forms were relatively primitive and crude, with simple decoration(Li, X. Z. & Sun, Z. Y., 2024). Then in the Neolithic Age, Chinese ancestors continued to polish jade into tools or decorations. The widespread use of jade was closely related to the development of stone carving technology in that period. At that time, the ancestors used their diligence and wisdom to make jade , Huang, ring, wall, pipe, beads, bracelets and other decorative jade and jade tools such as axes, chisels and shovels. Jade has always been given a special status in Chinese culture and is regarded as a symbol of auspiciousness, beauty and holiness.

The ancient Chinese regarded jade as a precious treasure because of its spirituality and supernatural power. It was believed that jade had supernatural powers to ward off evil spirits, ward off evil spirits, and protect people from disasters and diseases. In the later period of the Neolithic Age, the increasing complexity of primitive societies, along with the development of architecture and handicrafts, also brought new driving forces for the "evolution" of jade processing techniques(Li, X. Z. & Sun, Z. Y., 2024). Jade was used to make sacrificial utensils and fetishes in ceremonies, and this stage is also known as the "sacred jade stage". A large number of jade articles from Hemudu Culture, Majiabang Culture, and Songze Culture in the Neolithic Age, Hongshan Culture, Liangzhu Culture, Mount Shan Culture, Dawenkou Culture, and Majia Culture in the later period are all displayed to the people. In the middle and late period of the Neolithic Age, jade played a very important role in prehistoric civilization. This period was also the first climax of jade treatment in the history of Chinese jade development. Many scholars in the industry have also proposed the concept of "Jade Age". They believe that compared with the Stone Age, Bronze Age, and Iron Age in Western archaeology, China still lacks a jade age, which fully reflects the importance of jade in China. important position in history.

With the development of productive forces in the new era, the accumulation and distribution of wealth is uneven, and people's hierarchical differentiation gradually appears. After more than a thousand years of development, social civilization with classes has emerged as the times require. China has entered the Xia, Shang and Zhou dynasties of the Bronze Age. During this period, jade gradually became a symbol of power, status and social status. Jade culture entered the era of royal jade. Princes and nobles would wear jade articles, such as jade bi, jade pendant, jade belt, etc., to show their power and status. Jade was also widely used in the funerals of nobles, and was regarded as a funerary object and a symbol of the underground kingdom. The Xia Dynasty was the establishment period of Chinese slave society and the transitional period from the Stone Age to the Bronze Age. This period developed on the basis of inheriting the tradition of jade industry in the Stone Age. Jade wares were

both practical and beautiful. The Erlitou site in Yanshi, Henan Province is the most famous cultural site belonging to the Xia Dynasty and the Shang Dynasty. Unearthed jade kui, jade Zhang, jade Ge, jade hole knife, jade knife, jade Yue Jades decorated with teeth are the main jade wares, with exquisite decoration and exquisite workmanship.

The Shang Dynasty represents an important stage in the development history of ancient Chinese jade artifacts and jade culture. During this period, significant achievements were made in terms of forms, decorations, craftsmanship, as well as customs related to the use of jade(Ding, Z. & Ye, S. X., 2021). During this period, "jade" and "stone" were distinguished. According to the written records of jade wares, the jade carving industry is developed and the craftsmanship is exquisite, and the craft of combining gold and jade has been created. Today Anyang, Henan Province is the capital city of the Shang Dynasty that lasted for more than 250 years. Jade wares also include several ancient jade wares from the Hongshan and Shijiahe cultures. "Fuhao" is one of the concubines of Yin Wang Wuding, the first well-documented female military commander in Chinese history, and an outstanding female politician. The jade wares unearthed from Fuhao's tomb include ritual vessels such as cong, bi, huang, and yuan, portraits, head portraits, elephants, lions, bears, cows, horses, sheep, monkeys, rabbits, eagles, geese, ospreys, parrots, cicadas, and praying mantises. , frogs, birds and other animals, birds, insects and birds, as well as birds and phoenixes. These jade wares include seven categories of ritual vessels, ceremonial guards, tools, utensils, decorations, works of art, and miscellaneous wares. However, due to limited written records, it is very difficult to accurately explain the functions of these jade wares and classify them. In any case, it has shown people the superb level of jade treatment and superb jade carving ability in the Shang Dynasty.

First of all, the jade wares of the Shang Dynasty are superior in material selection and exquisite in workmanship. The brown skin remains, carved into the carapace of a soft-shelled turtle, and the head, abdomen and feet are all bluish-white, with a natural charm. Secondly, the shape of jade carvings is exaggerated and vivid,

exaggerating the head with symbolic techniques, emphasizing the facial features, especially good at shaping the eyes. Ferocious appearance, so as to achieve masculine and mighty effect. The decorative shape of Shang Dynasty jade is a peak in the history of Chinese jade carving art. During the Shang Dynasty, jade artifacts exhibited a solemn style, often imbued with a sense of sacredness and featuring diverse forms. Geometric-shaped jade objects and animal-shaped ornaments were most common, satisfying both the fusion of royal and divine authority and the aesthetic demands of merchants for jade artifacts(Wang, X. & Rao, S., 2020). There are many creations in craftsmanship and decoration. Shang Dynasty jade is the art of lines. It was processed into various shapes, which laid the foundation of plane technology for later generations of jade carving technology.

The Zhou Dynasty (1046 BC-256 BC) is the longest dynasty in Chinese history and the third slavery dynasty after the Xia Dynasty and Shang Dynasty. It has a history of 790 years and is divided into the Western Zhou Dynasty (about the 11th century BC) - 771 BC) and the Eastern Zhou Dynasty (770 BC - 256 BC), and the Eastern Zhou Dynasty was divided into two periods: the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period. Due to the changes in social economy and politics, the concept of ritual system in Zhou Dynasty was updated. During significant ceremonial occasions such as sacrifices, the Zhou people had a comprehensive system for the use of jade artifacts. These typical and weighty objects became symbols of political authority. Under the Zhou Dynasty's system of feudalism and patrilineal descent, to facilitate governance, the Zhou king ordered feudal lords to regularly pay homage(Zhang, J. Q., 2019) . The ritual jade and decorative jade closely related to the ruling class also changed accordingly, and the types of decorative jade increased. The types of jade wares in the Spring and Autumn and Warring States Period mainly include: bi, cong, pipe, bead, pendant, pendant, string decoration, le, yuan, ring, jue, gui, zhang, handle-shaped vessel, dagger, belt hook, mirror frame, dagger, etc. , most of which are ritual vessels, and a few are living tools. Jade, as an ornament to show the status of nobility, is accompanied by the wearer day and night. A gentleman has no reason, and

jade does not go away. Jade symbolizes the virtues of a gentleman. There are seven virtues, nine virtues, and eleven virtues. The evolution of jade ware, compared with the more three-dimensional jade carvings in the Shang Dynasty, and the Western Zhou Dynasty still left traces, the jade wares in the Spring and Autumn Period became more and more flat, with fewer varieties, but more refined production. In the Spring and Autumn and Warring States tombs that have been excavated, most of them were buried with jade objects, and they were large in number and exquisitely crafted. For example, more than 3,000 jade wares were unearthed from Chu tombs in Xichuan, Nanyang, Henan Province during the mid-Spring and Autumn period. There are one or two hundred jade wares unearthed in general tombs. Some of them are exquisitely crafted, such as the 16-section dragon jade pendant unearthed from the tomb of Marquis Yi of Zeng in Sui County, Hube.

The Qin Dynasty was the first unified multi-ethnic centralized feudal country in Chinese history. In 221 BC, Qin Shihuang unified the six countries and ended the war and division of the Warring States Period. However, due to the "death of Qin II", The life span of the Qin Dynasty was short, so it did not make outstanding contributions to the development of jade wares, which played a link between the past and the future.

2.2.2 The prosperity of jade (Han Dynasty)

The jade artifacts of the Han Dynasty inherited the artistic characteristics and craftsmanship of the pre-Qin period, continuously exploring and innovating, achieving the third peak period of jade artifacts in Chinese history (Peng, M. X., 2021). The jade processing technology has made outstanding progress compared with previous dynasties. It mainly made jade wares for princes and nobles. The ritual wares gradually decreased, but decorative jade and funeral jade were greatly developed. During the Han Dynasty, people revered jade artifacts, believing that they could attain eternal life through these objects after death. Hence, individuals during this period had a special affection for jade artifacts, especially the abundant burial jades, which symbolized their longing for immortality. People hoped that through the medium of jade

artifacts, they could transcend into the realm of immortals, thus becoming truly extraordinary and achieving the status of "immortals"(Chen, W., 2018). These include jade bi, jade huang, jade kui, jade cong, jade seal, jade seal, jade pei, jade stick heads, round jade wares, jade seat screens, inlaid jade wares, jade swords, jade gang sockets, etc. According to the archaeological data released so far, there are nearly a thousand jade tombs unearthed in the Han Dynasty, and they are mainly concentrated in the middle and early Western Han Dynasty. The princely tombs account for a large proportion (Table 1). In the tombs of these princes. From the perspective of geographical distribution, except for Tibet and Taiwan, all provinces and autonomous regions in China have found them, but they were relatively concentrated in the princely kingdoms with high political status and strong economic strength at that time, while the princely states in remote areas were weak in economic strength. And relatively few. Precisely because most of the existing Western Han jade wares were buried with princes and princesses, they can basically reflect the highest level of jade craftsmanship and artistic style at that time.

"The gem cannot be polished without friction". The carving process of jade is inseparable from the production of tools. The development of handicrafts in the Han Dynasty created conditions for the innovation of jade carving skills, which brought the jade carving skills of the Han Dynasty to a new level. Round carving, hollow carving and other techniques are widely used, making jade carvings richer in shape, more exquisite in decoration, and more diverse in style. Most of the jade wares before the Han Dynasty were flat reliefs. In the Han Dynasty, carving techniques were introduced, and the number of round carvings, high-relief carvings, and openwork carvings increased significantly, making the shapes of jade wares more layered. Craftsmen of the Han Dynasty were good at using round carvings to carve animals and figures. There are both real-life characters and gods; there are real-life animals such as cows, horses, sheep, pigs, bears, leopards, etc., and there are also winged mythical beasts such as ligers and tigers that do not exist in reality, the so-called To ward off evil spirits, it is also like a celestial horse(Liu, Y. H. & Liu, S. Z., 2020). using high-relief sculptures to make jade

sword decorations, openwork carvings were used to express the contours of plane shapes, and then decorated with various inscribed lines on the surface, making the jade wares of the Han Dynasty appear changeable and majestic. style of.

2.2.3 Prosperity and development of jade wares (Sui, Tang, Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties)

After the Han Dynasty, Chinese history has experienced a feudal society for nearly 1,800 years, and dynasties have changed, but jade culture has never been interrupted. From 220 A.D. to 581 A.D., China experienced a period of more than 300 years of division and separatism. It was called the period of Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties in history. In addition to the short-term unification in the early years of the Western Jin Dynasty, Chinese society suffered from wars and social turmoil. The development of productive forces encountered serious obstacles. At the same time, due to the implementation of the "thin burial" system, there are very few sacrificed jades, which are not as prosperous as the development of jade wares in the Han Dynasty. The jade wares unearthed at this time are like simplified Han Dynasty jade wares, During the Wei, Jin, Northern and Southern Dynasties period, it is traditionally considered a low point for jade carving and jade artifacts. Excavated jade artifacts were scarce, exhibiting a relatively uniform style, decoration, and form. There were few innovations in terms of designs, and overall, the craftsmanship of jade carving did not see significant advancements(Xiao, H. H., 2022). It was also the period when Buddhism was promoted and localized in China. Buddhist modeling also had a direct impact on jade carvings, that is, jade was used to make Buddha statues. During this period, the connotation of jade became richer. On one hand, many beautiful terms related to jade appeared in the ancient texts of the Wei and Jin periods, reflecting people's comprehensive demand for natural beauty, humanistic beauty, external beauty, and formal beauty during this period. On the other hand, due to the precious and rare properties of jade, "jade" became synonymous with "precious" and the aristocratic class. "Jade" was often used by people to symbolize the luxurious and decadent lifestyle of the aristocratic class(Xu, Y. H., 2019).

In 581 AD, Yang Jian, Emperor Wen of the Sui Dynasty, established the Sui Dynasty, which ended the long-term split since the Western Jin Dynasty. However, like the Qin Dynasty, the Sui Dynasty only experienced two generations of emperors and was replaced by the Tang Dynasty in 63 years. Therefore, the jade unearthed in the Sui Dynasty is not many, there are white jade cups, jade hairpins, and jade rabbits unearthed from the tomb of Li Jingxun in the Sui Dynasty. The Tang Dynasty was another era in Chinese history in which the country was rich and the people were strong, and the politics, culture and economy were prosperous. It lasted for 289 years (618-907 A.D.). It brought innovations in the shape of jade wares, jade wares from the Western Regions flowed into Chang'an, and religious jade wares gradually emerged. Before the Tang Dynasty, jade ornaments were also quite exquisite and delicate, but they often carried a strong sense of spirituality and ceremonial solemnity. However, during the Tang Dynasty, these characteristics were gradually shed, and there was a shift towards emphasizing decorative appreciation and practicality (Zhao, Y. P., 2021). The functions of jade changed. Generally, decorative jade and practical wares were mostly used. Its stylistic features paved the way for "secularization" and led the development of future generations (Hua, L. J., 2013). The jade flying sky reflecting Buddhist culture were also a major feature at that time. In the Tang Dynasty, jade belts were also used to distinguish the ranks of officials. "Yan Fanlu" has a record of the grades of jade belts: "The five grades and above in the Tang Dynasty are all gold belts, and the third grade is also a gold jade belt." The surface of the jade belt is decorated with relief patterns, flowers and plants. The most characteristic of the Tang Dynasty is the Huren pattern, that is, the decorations showing men from the Western Regions. The characters are completely different from the Han people in the Tang Dynasty. Round eyes, high nose, with or without beards, wearing narrow-sleeved tight-fitting tunics, pointed boots, and cloud belts on the shoulders; all the characters in the decorations have movements, mostly playing music, presenting treasures, dancing, etc. .

The demise of every great dynasty and the establishment of a new dynasty will experience wars and splits. In the late Tang Empire, the feudal vassals were separated, and the state power could not control the whole country. This resulted in the "Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms" period in the late Tang Dynasty. From 907 to 960 AD, this Decades of successive wars have caused serious damage to productivity, and the development of the jade industry was far less than that of the Tang Dynasty. Until 960 AD, Song Gaozong Zhao Kuangyin pacified the Central Plains, basically unified the country, established the Song Dynasty, and social production was restored. The previous generation has both inheritance and innovation. Jade wares in the Song Dynasty had the characteristics of secularization. The themes were more life-oriented, and the shapes were fresh and natural, simple and simple. Jade wares were no longer exclusive to the nobles, but became secular and commercialized. They were called a gadget in the hands of the common people. It is closely related to the extremely developed handicraft industry in the Song Dynasty. In addition to the royal "jade courtyard" and official jade workshops dedicated to the court, there are many folk workshops in many metropolises. Jewelry shops are often combined with jade workshops. Form a commercial body of "store in front and work in back". Antiques were popular in the Song Dynasty, and Song people liked to imitate ancient jade (copper) ware, but the ancient jade imitated by Song people is not the same as "fake" in our understanding, but an innovation based on the shape and shape of ancient jade ware. In terms of both the design and subject matter selection, the imitation antique jade artifacts of the Song Dynasty were influenced by the retro trend, exhibiting the ingenuity of antiquity while also showing a certain clumsiness in their execution, capable of emulating the style of ancient times while embodying various contemporary secular ideas. In terms of craftsmanship, artisans of the Song Dynasty inherited the essence of previous techniques such as line engraving and round carving, innovating upon them by extensively employing hollowing techniques. This resulted in artifacts that were exquisitely carved, lifelike, and uniquely characteristic of the times(Guo. B., 2021). Jade

craftsmen in the Song Dynasty also created the craft of "five or six layers of flowers", that is, there are five or six layers of flower ornaments on a jade carving.

The Yuan Dynasty was ruled by the Mongols, which had distinct national characteristics. However, because the Mongolian rulers had long accepted the jade culture of the Central Plains, they loved and admired jade very much. The Mongols once expeditioned to Europe, West Asia and India, and brought back A large number of craftsmen and gold, silver and precious stones were brought in, which to a certain extent promoted the exchange of Chinese and Western culture and arts and crafts, especially the progress of gem metal inlay technology. In terms of jade carving, Chunshan jade and Qiushui jade in Yuan Dynasty can be regarded as representative works of this era. "Chunshui jade" refers to the jade with the pattern of falcon (haidongqing) catching goose (swan). "Autumn Mountain Jade" refers to jade articles with the theme of tiger and deer in the mountains. The former coincides with the scene of the Liao Emperor traveling to "Spring Nabo" and "Duck River Luo" for hunting activities recorded in the Liao history, and the latter is consistent with the "Autumn Nabo" recorded in the Liao history. Bowl” activities are consistent. According to the "Golden History", the costumes with the patterns of falcons and swans are called "the decorations of spring water", and the costumes with the patterns of tigers, deer, mountains and forests are called "the decorations of autumn mountains".Therefore, this kind of jade is named "Chunshui Jade" and "Autumn Mountain Jade". The jade artworks of “Chunshui” and “Qiushan” reflect the distinctive lifestyle and national character of the Khitan and Jurchen ethnic minorities, serving as artistic representations of their cultural spirit(Qing, X. J., 2021). The works of this kind of content are full of simple mountains and forests and strong northern sentiments. They are jade works with the characteristics of grassland nomads. Although the content is generally the same, the specific form of each piece is never repeated. The artistic realm of lingering spirit fully embodies the jade craftsman's rich life experience and excellent observation ability. Its representatives are the sapphire hollow-out falcon and swan and the sapphire tiger, deer, eagle and magpie double-sided carvings, which are now in the Palace Museum in Beijing. Chunshan

Qiushui jade occupies a place in Chinese jade culture with its exquisite workmanship and vigorous vitality.

The arts and crafts of the Ming and Qing dynasties reached unprecedented heights in techniques. The intricate patterns and exquisite workmanship are breathtaking. People along the Silk Road prospered, Ming Dynasty stone sculptures were shipped to Southeast Asian countries, and many places in Thailand still retain Chinese stone statues from the Ming and Qing Dynasties. The level of jade carving technology in Ming and Qing Dynasties developed rapidly, and the biggest feature was the extensive use of high-end gemstones. Jadeite gradually entered people's field of vision, and developed into one of people's favorite jades in the Qing Dynasty. Although the jade wares of the Ming and Qing Dynasties have developed compared with the previous ones in craftsmanship, decoration, and materials, they have deviated from the artistic track of the Song and Yuan Dynasties with both spirit and shape. From the perspective of artistry, Ming and Qing jade wares have moved from the peak to the bottom .

In the early Ming Dynasty, jade wares pursued fine workmanship, especially court jade wares. The white jade sunflower cup unearthed in this period and the white jade engraved chilong pattern belt ring in the old collection of the Qing Palace were outstanding jade carving crafts in this period. The jade wares at this time were exquisite in workmanship, The complexity and simplification are appropriate, the primary and secondary are distinct, quite ingenious, and still have the legacy of the Song and Yuan Dynasties. In the mid-Ming Dynasty, jade carvings moved towards the road of imitating archaism, which was decorative, crafted, and ornamental. A large number of exquisite antique jades reflected the aesthetic orientation of the rulers at that time. In the late Ming Dynasty, with the emergence of capitalism, the jade industry was further commercialized. In the wave of commercialization, it was inevitable that some jade merchants made rough products or deceived collectors with false ones in pursuit of high returns. There are jade shops in every city, and two major jade centers, Beijing and Suzhou, have been formed. Skilled craftsmen gather together, and the exquisite

craftsmanship is fascinating. Lu Zigang, a master of jade carving in the Ming Dynasty, is a model of it. The status of craftsmen in ancient China was low. Once a craftsman is registered, it means that he has no chance of official career. He is a craftsman for generations, and he is not allowed to leave his name on his works. The few names left, such as the names left on the terracotta warriors and horses of Qin Shihuang and the wall bricks of the Ming Dynasty, are also allowed. It is regarded as a "life and death contract" signed by the craftsmen to ensure the quality of the project. And Lu Zigang is one of the few jade carving craftsmen who can successfully counterattack. He was a famous jade carving craftsman in Suzhou during the Wanli period of the Ming Dynasty. Its inscription is "Zigang", "Zigang" or "Zigangzhi", which is extremely rare in the history of Chinese jade. Lu Zigang was good at the design of "poetry, calligraphy, painting and seal" into jade and the technique of plane reduction. Generally speaking, it shows that the modern jade wares pursue complicated and detailed craftsmanship. On the surface, they appear to be more refined and complex, but in fact they have begun to go downhill on the road of art.

The jade wares of the Qing Dynasty followed the development trend of the Ming Dynasty. Although they were once hindered due to political and military reasons in the early Qing Dynasty, the jade wares of the Qing Dynasty reached the peak in the history of Chinese jade wares in terms of both quality and quantity. In the Qing Dynasty, jade resources were abundant, and many new materials were added on the basis of the original jade raw materials, but the most important ones were Hetian jade from Xinjiang and jadeite from Myanmar. Compared with the application history of Hetian jade for thousands of years, Burmese jadeite is a very young jade species, but it quickly occupied the jade carving market in just a few hundred years. Even ordinary people love jade very much, and the Empress Dowager Cixi in the late Qing Dynasty was one of them. Her love for jade can be described as "obsessed". Until today, Hetian jade and jadeite are equally divided in China, and the situation of "south jadeite and north Hetian" is the same. In terms of craftsmanship, the processing level of jade wares in the Qing Dynasty also reached the highest level in history. Especially during the period

from Qianlong to Jiaqing in the Qing Dynasty, the source of jade raw materials was rich, the economy was developed, and the jade industry was unprecedentedly prosperous. Many large jade wares were carved and made, which are called monuments in the history of jade wares. Jade carving, a great pioneering work in the history of Chinese arts and crafts, is rare in the treasure house of Chinese jade wares for its large materials, long transportation, long time, high cost, exquisite carving, huge shape and grand spirit. It is an incomparable art treasure and national treasure that cannot be copied at first sight. At the same time, the craftsmanship of Yushanzi, antique jade, display jade, and jade pendants in the Qing Dynasty are all exquisite, and many shapes and techniques have been used to this day.

2.3 Research status of Western Han Dynasty jade arts

The jade carvings of the Western Han Dynasty, as an integral part of ancient Chinese jade art, have attracted the attention and study of numerous scholars. Research on Western Han jade carvings not only contributes to a deeper understanding of Han Dynasty society, aesthetic preferences, and religious thought, but also reveals the unique charm of Western Han jade carvings in terms of techniques, motifs, and uses. Scholars have studied the jade articles of the Western Han Dynasty from different angles.

2.3.1 Overview research of Western Han Dynasty jade arts

Scholars have made a comprehensive and comprehensive review of the han Dynasty jade from a macro perspective, Mr. Gu Fang's "The Complete Collection of Jades Unearthed in China" (Gu, F., 2005) classifies jade artifacts nationwide by region, covering archaeological discoveries of jade artifacts from the Neolithic period to the Qing Dynasty. It presents an overall picture of the development of ancient Chinese jade artifacts, with detailed descriptions of jade artifacts unearthed from tombs such as those in Guishan Han Tomb, Xiaoguishan Han Tomb, and Shizishan Han Tomb in Xuzhou, Jiangsu Province, focusing on the shapes, sizes, and motifs of these artifacts.

Mr. Yang Boda's "Comprehensive Collection of Chinese Jade Artifacts" (Yang, B.D., 2005) categorizes excavated and handed-down jade artifacts in China

according to the dynastic succession. It includes a large number of images of jade artifacts from the Western Han period, providing abundant visual material for subsequent research.

The "Comprehensive Collection of Chinese Jade Artifacts," edited by Mr. Lu Zhaoyin (Lu, Z. Y., 1996), meticulously documents exquisite jade artifacts from the early, middle, and late Western Han periods to the Eastern Han period. In addition to describing the artistic value of the jade artifacts themselves, attention is also paid to their significance in archaeology and jade quality research. Mr. Lu emphasizes that although Han Dynasty jade artifacts developed on the basis of pre-Qin jade artifacts, they formed unique motifs and artistic styles in the mid-Western Han period, while Eastern Han jade artifacts largely continued the artistic style of the Western Han period. Mr. Lu also focuses on the morphological and decorative evolution of yue-shaped pendants during the Western Han period, including transitional yue-shaped jade pendants, standardized yue-shaped jade pendants, yue and gui combined jade artifacts, and yue and bi combined jade artifacts. He believes that yue-shaped jade pendants from the early Western Han period to the Eastern Han period underwent a process of gradual development and regular change.

Xia Nai systematically introduced the origins, jade processing techniques, names, forms, motifs, and uses of Han Dynasty jade artifacts in his work "Jade Artifacts of the Han Dynasty: Continuity and Change in Traditional Han Dynasty Jade Artifacts" (Xia, N., 1983), emphasizing the important position of Han Dynasty jade artifacts in the history of Chinese jade. The motifs and styles of Han Dynasty jade carvings are one of the focal points of research.

With the deepening and refinement of the research, many scholars' research has become more specific and targeted.

2.3.2 Research on the shape and structure of Western Han jade arts

The master's thesis "A Brief Research on the Jade Bi of Qin and Han Dynasties" (Wu, T., 2015) and published paper "An Analysis of the Morphological Classification of Han Dynasty Jade Bi" (Wu, T., 2021) by Wu Tong, Shi Rongzhuan's

research paper "A Chronological Study of Bi-Disc-Shaped Jade Pendants in the Western and Eastern Han Dynasties" (Shi, R. C., 2009), Zou Jing and Yi Ruixian's research paper "Research on the Decoration and Aesthetics of Jade Huang in the Han Dynasty: Taking the Unearthed Tombs of Princes and Marquises as an Example" (Zou, J. & Yi, R. X., 2023), Zhang Nannan's master's thesis "A Research on the Characteristics and Cultural Significance of Jade Belt Hook in Han Dynasty" (Zhang, N. N., 2018) and Leng Jing's Master's Thesis "The Preliminary Research of Dragon-Shaped Jade Xiin Zhou to the Western Han Dynasty" (Leng, J., 2024) primarily focus on a specific type of jade artifact unearthed from tombs. By combining archaeological materials and literary sources, they investigate various aspects of Western Han jade artifacts, including their overview, periodization, regional distribution, evolutionary patterns, and cultural implications.

2.3.3 Research on the Craftsmanship and Ornamentation of Han Dynasty Jade Arts

Zhang Rongyu's article titled "Evolution of Decorative Motifs on Ancient Jade of the Han Dynasty and Its Influence" (Zhang, R. Y., 2003), Chen Laigui's master's thesis "Research on the Construction of JadeCraft Map in Han Dynasty-Example from Jade-ware in Xuzhou Museum" (Chen, L. G., n.d.), Peng Juan's paper "Research on the Ornamentation of Han Dynasty Jade Artifacts" (Peng, J., 2017), Chen Yinyin's discussion "On the Carving Techniques and Stylistic Ornamentation of Han Dynasty Jade Artifacts" (Chen, Y. Y., 2018), and the paper by Sun Zifeng and Xia You, "A Discussion on Han Jade Carving Techniques Based on Excavated Jade Artifacts from Han Dynasty Princely Tombs" (Sun, Z. F. & Xia, Y., 2020) provide a comprehensive analysis from a macro perspective on the main features of Han dynasty jade artifacts in terms of carving techniques and stylistic ornamentation.

The research by Li Wenjun and Li Guoxin, "A Brief Analysis of Artistic Representations of Cicada-Shaped Jade in the Han Dynasty" (Li, W. J. & Li, G. X., 2016), Zhang Juntao's master's thesis, "An Exploration of Chi in Han Dynasty Jade Artifacts" (Zhang, J. T., 2019), Zhou Yiqian's master's thesis, "The Interpretation of Beast-Shaped Dragon Pattern in the Han Dynasty Jade Ware" (Zhou, Y. Q., 2016), Wu Geng's

research paper, " Study of the 'Jade Dancers' Pendant Set of Chu State in the Western Han Dynasty"(Wu, G., 2020), Lian Chunhai's research paper, "Study on the Excavated Jade 'Dancing Figure' Ornaments from the Tomb of Marquis of Haihun" (Lian, C. H., 2023), and Zhu Naicheng's "Research on Han Dynasty Jade Cicadas"(Zhu, N. C., 2019), all delve into the study of Han dynasty jade artifacts from the perspective of a particular ornamentation.

2.3.4 Research on the Ideology of Jade Usage in the Han Dynasty

Shi Rongchuan has conducted in-depth research on Han Dynasty jade artifacts from various perspectives, publishing multiple academic papers. " A Study on the Tomb System of Princes and Kings of Changsha Kingdom in the Western Han Dynasty" (Chen, J. & Shi, R. C., 2021) explores the tomb system of Han Dynasty princes in the Changsha Kingdom. Through the analysis of jade artifacts unearthed from tombs, it reveals the significance of jade artifacts in burial rituals at that time. The article points out that the jade system in the Changsha region incorporates characteristics of the Han Dynasty and Chu culture, forming a distinctive style of jade carving.

The doctoral dissertation " A Study on the Chronological Classification of Jade Artifacts from the Three Dynasties to the Western and Eastern Han Dynasties and the System of Jade Utilization" (Shi, R. C., 2005) systematically studies jade artifacts from the Three Dynasties to the Two Han Dynasties, including their excavation, periodization study, and utilization system. Through archaeological materials and historical literature, the author deeply analyzes the status and role of jade artifacts in ancient society, providing detailed data for understanding ancient jade carving culture.

Yuan Shengwen conducted a study on the burial jade system in the tombs of Western Han vassal kings (Yuan, S., 2012), believing that the people of the Western Han Dynasty held a high reverence for jade artifacts, considering them as symbols of social status, reflecting a clear hierarchical concept.

The master's thesis by Fang Liangzhu, "Studies on the Rituals of Jade Articles Which Were Excavated from Haihun Marquis Liuhe's Tomb"(Fang, L. Z, 2020), and the academic paper by Liu Daping et al., "A Discussion on the Types of Jade

Burials and the Reasons for Their Popularity in the Han Dynasty"(Liu, D. P. et al., 2023), all explore the jade burial system and its origins in the Han Dynasty.

2.3.5 Research on the Artistic Value of Jade Artifacts in the Han Dynasty

" Examining the Han Dynasty Jade Artistic Style through Jade Artifacts Unearthed from Princely Tombs " (Shi, R. C., 2004) analyzes the artistic style of Han Dynasty jade carving based on jade artifacts unearthed from the tombs of Han Dynasty vassal kings. The author summarizes the characteristics and development trends of Han Dynasty jade carving through the study of jade carving forms, decorative motifs, and techniques.

Cao Ping's paper "A Study on the Aesthetic Forms and Styles of Jade Artifacts in the Han Dynasty"(Cao, P., 2021), Ma Ying's doctoral dissertation "A Study on the Aesthetic Forms and Styles of Han Dynasty Jade Artifacts" (Ma, Y. & Zhu, J. X., 2018), Liu Wenming's paper "The Spiritual Charms and Features of Han Dynasty Jade Artifacts"(Liu, W. M., 2016), and other studies analyze the spiritual charms, aesthetic forms, and artistic styles of Han dynasty jade artifacts to explore the aesthetic cultural spirit and artistic value of Han dynasty jade artifacts.

However, research in this area extends far beyond these studies. Many papers cover a variety of topics, and scholars often start from specific features such as the shape or pattern of Han dynasty jade artifacts to explore their cultural and artistic value.

In summary, Han Dynasty jade carving played an important role in Han Dynasty society, aesthetic concepts, and religious thought. Scholars have enriched our understanding of Han Dynasty jade carving by exploring its origins, development, decorative motifs, religious significance, Ideology of Jade Usage, and artistic styles, injecting new vitality into the study of Han Dynasty jade carving.

At the same time, the author also sorted out the burials with modified specifications in the early Han Dynasty (*Table 1*).

2.4 Current situation of contemporary Chinese jade carvings

2.4.1 Status Quo of Chinese Jade Carving Market

Nowadays, there are many schools of jade carving, which are basically divided by region. Jade culture is deeply rooted in the hearts of the Chinese people. From the ancient imperial use to the common people today, the shape of jade has undergone tremendous changes. The jade carving art developed so far is different from the traditional carving in the past. After the development of society, a large number of jade carvers in the contemporary context have been produced. They have reinterpreted the artistic language of contemporary jade carving through their own aesthetic standards and creative methods. Through the works carved out of jade, I can find my own way of speaking, break away from the traditional thinking constraints represented by Guanyin and Buddha, and have my own sculpture language. In today's state of economic downturn, there are many jade carvers who graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts. After receiving systematic art teaching training, these jade carvers have created many new forms of sculptures. Contemporary jade carving is moving towards a new creative direction. The combination with many materials makes this material burst into various creative forms today, which are inspired by ancient times but not inherited from ancient times. Jade carving in the contemporary context not only inherits traditional culture but also has its own contemporary language. It embodies the spirit and aesthetic orientation of the times, and then keeps pace with the times and gradually becomes a style.

Simultaneously, with the contemporary art's reexamination and innovation of traditional culture, scholars have also authored numerous academic papers to explore the new development opportunities and challenges facing Chinese jade carving art.

In the article "Starting from Contemporary Art Influences: Exploring the Contemporaneity of Chinese Jade Carvings" (Xu, C. S., 2022), the scholar discusses the contemporary nature of Chinese jade carving from three aspects: the cultural genes of contemporary jade carving, its connotations, and the influence of contemporary art.

They propose ideas for creating contemporary Chinese jade carving that better reflects the characteristics of the times and embodies contemporaneity and reflexivity.

"Inheritance of Traditional Connotations and Contemporary Values of Jade Carving Art" (Liu, J. G., 2020) emphasizes the significant position of jade culture in the history of Chinese civilization, as well as the special role of jade carving art in religion, culture, and politics. The author elaborates on the traditional connotations of jade carving art and explores its value and significance in contemporary society.

"Research on the Contemporary Value of Chinese Jade Culture" (Lin, X. Q., 2018) reviews the origin and connotations of Chinese jade culture, focusing on its value to contemporary society. Their research provides an important reference for understanding the significance of jade culture in contemporary times.

"Research on the Contemporary Nature of Jade Carving Art Creation" (Wu, D. M., 2017) addresses the current challenges facing jade carving art. Starting from artists' perceptions of contemporary social life, the paper analyzes the problems in contemporary jade carving creation and proposes incorporating contemporary art concepts and new materials into jade carving art creation, guiding the development of contemporary jade carving art.

"Investigation of Conceptual Conveyance of Jade Medium in Contemporary Jade Carving Works" (Weng, Z. W., 2018) explores the ways of conveying concepts in jade carving works from the unique perspective of jade. By analyzing the use of jade materials, the paper discusses how jade serves as a medium for conveying ideas in contemporary art creation, providing a new perspective for understanding the creative characteristics of contemporary jade carving art.

"The New Concepts and Directions of Contemporary Jade Carving Art" (Zhang, C. S., 2021) points out that the jade carving industry is undergoing a fresh transformation, where traditional craftsmanship is gradually merging with modern values. Consequently, artists are faced with the important task of imbuing their works with contemporary significance.

"Creative Method of Contemporary Jade Carving Art" (Jin, Y. et al., 2016) systematically summarizes four creative methods: building upon the era, innovating on a trajectory, pursuing artistry, and embracing culture as the soul. These methods provide jade carving artists with expansive creative space, enabling them to better express the aesthetic demands and cultural values of contemporary society.

"The Application of the Design of Jade Dragon in the pre-Qin period of Chu in the Modern Fashion Design" (Wang, Z., 2016) explores innovative application methods of Chu region jade dragon art in contemporary fashion design, injecting new fashionable elements into traditional jade carving art.

"A Brief Analysis of the Artistic Expression of Ancient Jade Culture in Contemporary Jade Carving" (Zhao, J. & Zhang, C. F., 2019) delves into the artistic expression of ancient jade culture in contemporary jade carving, proposing that by understanding and innovating upon traditional culture, combined with modern aesthetic demands, contemporary jade carving art can offer greater artistic possibilities.

"Value of Contemporary Jade Carving" (Liu, J. G., 2020) discusses the value of jade carving art as a traditional Chinese craft and its importance in contemporary creative design, starting from the perspective of value elements and the creators.

"How to Promote Traditional Chinese Jade Culture in the Contemporary Publishing Environment" (Liang, Y., 2021) explores the promotion of traditional Chinese jade culture in the contemporary publishing environment, highlighting the importance of integrating traditional jade culture with modern technology and fashion.

These documents represent only a fraction of research in this area. Scholars have explored the application and design research of jade carving in contemporary times from various perspectives, providing rich theoretical foundations and practical experiences for the application and design of contemporary jade carving. However, challenges still exist in the creation and design aspects of jade carving art, requiring further in-depth research and exploration by more scholars and artists to propel the innovation and development of jade carving art in contemporary times.

Today, the cultural connotation of jade is not only recognized by the Chinese nation, but also gradually spread to the world. In 2008, the medals of the Beijing Olympic Games were made of jade and gold, showing China's unique "gold inlaid jade" craftsmanship to the world. This outstanding craftsmanship perfectly combines the splendid Chinese culture with the Olympic Games, creating a classic, making the ancient and mysterious Chinese culture shine on the international stage. The executive committee of the International Olympic Committee praised in the confirmation letter: "Beijing Olympic medals are regarded as works of art, and their nobility shows the close combination of Chinese traditional culture and Olympic spirit." As an award of the Olympic movement, jade culture has once again become a bridge connecting China and the world, with strong Chinese symbolic elements, incorporates profound Chinese traditional jade culture. Jade culture, as an ancient and profound national culture, is associated with the Olympic Games and has become one of the symbols of Chinese civilization. Just like her sacred and mysterious background, it has attracted the attention of the whole world and aroused the reverie of the Chinese people.

More and more international designers and fashionistas are turning their attention to Chinese jade carvings. Windy Yue, currently one of the most eye-catching Chinese jewelry designers in the international jewelry market, uses jade and other jade to design a series of jewelry with oriental mystery and luxury, which is deeply loved by the European jewelry and fashion circles. The famous singer Rihanna is very fond of jade carvings and jadeites. She has worn jadeites in fashion activities many times. She combines different shades of jade carvings with metal jewelry to create a hip-hop style with oriental charm.



Figure 1 Antique jade carving(Yang, X. X., 2023)

Source: Yang Xiangxiang. (2023) Emerald, Gold, Silver.

<https://news.jades.cn/article-14158.html>



Figure 2 Carved Jade and Tsavorite Earrings

Source: Windy Yue. Jade, Metal,

Memstone.<https://marissacollections.com/products/carved-jade-and-tsavorite-earrings?variant=41658795458712>



Figure 3 Carved Jade Earrings (McFarlane Fine Jewellery, 2021)

Source: McFarlane Fine Jewellery. (2021). White jade, Platinum, Diamond.

<https://mcfarlanefinejewellery.com/blogs/the-lovelist/carved-jade-earrings>

2.4.2 Current Research Status on the Contemporary Application of Elements from Western Han Dynasty Jade Arts

In recent years, an increasing number of scholars have turned their attention to traditional artistic elements and incorporated them into contemporary design creations. Han dynasty jade artifacts, as an important component of excellent traditional elements, have also garnered growing attention, with a majority of theoretical research focusing on master's theses. The scope of design and application is wide.

2.4.2.1 Theoretical Research

Huang Tingting's master's thesis, " Applied Research on Cultural and Creative Product Design Coming from the Plastic Arts of Ancient Jade in the Nanyue King's Tomb"(Huang, T. T., 2021), explores the application of artistic styles of ancient jade artifacts from the Nanyue King's Tomb in cultural and creative product design, elucidating design methods and conducting design experiments. Wang Wei's master's thesis, " The Research and Application of Guangzhou Nanyue King Jade Decorative Art Characteristic"(Wang, W., 2018) analyzes and extracts decorative patterns from jade

artifacts found in the Tomb of the Nanyue King in Guangzhou, and explores their application in design.

Peng Juan's master's thesis, "Study on the Decorative Characteristics and Design Application of Semi-circular Jade Ornament in Han Dynasty-Taking the Xuzhou Museum Collection of Semi-circular Jade Ornament as an Example"(Peng, J., 2018), focuses on the investigation of Han dynasty jade bi disks in the collection of the Xuzhou Museum, conducting an in-depth examination of their decorative features and providing a brief analysis of their modern design applications. Jia Rujian's master's thesis, "The Application of Jade Huang in Contemporary Jewelry"(Jia, R. J., 2019) explores the historical development of jade bi disks and, drawing on contemporary Western and Eastern jewelry design inlay techniques and contemporary aesthetic preferences, offers a superficial analysis of the methods, value, and significance of using jade bi disks in contemporary jewelry. Although not exclusively discussing Western Han dynasty jade bi disks, they are included within the scope of the thesis as an important form of Western Han jade artifacts.

Zhu Beibei's master's thesis, "A Study on the Ornamental Patterns of Han Dynasty Jade Artifacts and Their Design Applications: A Case Study of the Collection in Xuzhou Museum," examines the visual language of ornamental patterns in Han dynasty jade artifacts, seeking points of integration with cultural and creative design, and conducting an analysis of modern recycled patterns.

Wei Jiaqi's master's thesis, "Innovative Design Research on Decorative Patterns of Artifacts Excavated from the Tomb of Haihunhou in the Western Han Dynasty"(Wei, J. Q., 2023) analyzes and studies the decorative patterns of artifacts excavated from the Tomb of Marquis of Haihun of the Western Han Dynasty, and carries out innovative design experiments. The discussion also encompasses the significant role of Western Han jade artifacts as part of the excavated artifacts from the Tomb of Marquis of Haihun.

Ding Yaling's master's thesis, "The Application of Han Dynasty Patterns in Modern Decorative Design"(Ding, Y. L., 2013) explores the aesthetic value, application methods, and impact of Han dynasty patterns in modern decorative art and design, with a focus on the decorative patterns of Han dynasty jade artifacts included within the scope of the study.

Li Fang's master's thesis, "A Study on the Decorative Patterns of Phoenixes in Han Dynasty Jade Artifacts and Their Applications in Modern Design" (Ma, H. J. & Yu, S. P., 2024), focuses on the artistic style and characteristics of phoenix patterns in Han dynasty jade artifacts, as well as their applications in modern design.

Ma Hongjin and Yu Shipeng's paper "A Study and Application of Visual Characteristics of Ornamental Patterns in Han Dynasty Jade Artifacts"(Hu, J. H. et al., 2020) primarily focuses on the research of ornamental patterns in Han dynasty jade artifacts. They analyze the visual characteristics of Han dynasty jade artifacts and explore the application of these ornamentation patterns in modern jewelry and clothing design.

Hu Jiahui et al.'s publication "The Influence of Han Dynasty Decorative Art on Contemporary Graphic Design in China"(Hu, J. H. et al., 2020) and the study "Research on the Fusion Application of Han Dynasty Decorative Patterns and Modern Decorative Art"(Ding, S. Y. & Li, C. X., 2022) by scholars like Ding Siyao do not explicitly discuss the contemporary application of elements from Han dynasty jade artifacts. However, the interaction and mutual influence among decorative patterns from various materials and artifacts in the Han dynasty provide reference and basis for the contemporary application of elements from Han dynasty jade artifacts.

Wang Zhiqing's master's thesis " Research on the Design of Composite Jade Vessels in Western Han Dynasty "(Wang, Z. Q., 2023) explores the design methods and artistic styles of composite jade artifacts in the Western Han Dynasty. It delves into the design concepts and cultural connotations inherent in these artifacts, analyzing innovative approaches for the contemporary application of composite jade artifacts in modern design.

The analysis and research on the contemporary application and design of decorative patterns in Han dynasty jade artifacts have been conducted using various methods and approaches. However, most of these studies primarily focus on Han dynasty jade artifacts themselves, with relatively brief analyses of contemporary applications and designs. The depth and novelty of these analyses are also somewhat lacking.

Overall, due to the prevalent practice of lavish burials during the Western Han period, there is a large quantity of high-quality Western Han jade artifacts in museum collections, providing scholars with ample research samples. Consequently, the research on Western Han jade artifacts is relatively extensive and diverse. However, there is still room for further exploration and discussion on how to ingeniously utilize elements from Western Han jade artifacts in contemporary artistic design, fostering both inheritance and innovation.

2.4.2.2 Application of traditional elements in contemporary art

There are many examples of the integration of Western Han Dynasty jade elements in contemporary art design, the following are some specific examples:

1) Jewelry Design

Designers can add common phoenix and dragon patterns on jades of the Western Han Dynasty to necklaces or bracelets, reproduce the gorgeous patterns of ancient jades through exquisite carving techniques, and create unique jewelry works.

2) Home decoration

Carve patterns in the style of Western Han Dynasty jade on the surface of the coffee table, or apply the color and texture of Western Han Dynasty jade to the design of furniture, creating a fusion atmosphere of classical and modern.

3) Sculpture art

Artists can create modern versions of Western Han Dynasty jade, for example, reinterpreting human figures from ancient jade and carving them into three-dimensional sculptures, breathing new life into ancient shapes.

4) Painting creation

Artists can create paintings with a contemporary aesthetic inspired by patterns and decorations found in Western Han Dynasty jade. For example, elements such as mythical beasts and flowers, which are common in jade wares of the Western Han Dynasty, were added to the paintings to create a unique picture.

5) Art installations

Designers can create a large-scale art installation that combines elements of Western Han Dynasty jade with modern materials to create an amazing spatial experience. This installation can be displayed in museums, art exhibitions or public spaces.

6) Fashion Design

Fashion designers can incorporate decorative elements of Western Han Dynasty jades into clothing designs, such as adding patterns of ancient jades to the belt, neckline or cuffs of dresses to give clothing more sense of history.

7) Ceramic art

Artists can translate Western Han Dynasty jade patterns into decorations on ceramic surfaces, creating textured ceramic pieces. This fusion can present a dialogue between ancient and modern in ceramic art.

These examples show how Western Han Dynasty jade elements can be integrated into contemporary art design in different fields to create works with depth and unique charm. This cross-age integration can not only endow the work with unique historical and cultural connotations, but also bring a brand-new visual and emotional experience to the audience.

2.4.3 Views of contemporary young people on jade articles Trends

- Millennial is gradually becoming the main force of social consumption

In modern society, millennial usually enjoys better conditions in terms of family environment. For example, they tend to grow up in relatively affluent family backgrounds, which provide them with some financial support and purchasing power. In addition, these Young people also have strong ability to earn money, such as earning

income through part-time jobs, entrepreneurship or other means, so that they have the ability to make a certain investment in consumption.

On the whole, millennial has shown strong consumption ability and desire in jade consumption. Their family environment is superior and their financial capacity is strong. At the same time, they also show a strong interest in jade products with trendy designs. These factors make them a new force in the jewelry and jade market, injecting vigor and vitality into this field.

- Designers are younger and their design concepts are closer to the trend

In recent years, more and more young jade carvers have emerged, entered the stage of the times, and become the backbone of the group of jade carvers. Although their skills may not have reached the consummate level, their imagination often emerges in the creation, showing distinctive ideas. These young jade carvers are not afraid of the shackles of tradition, they are willing to break through the routine, boldly innovate, and have the courage to show their unique style. This kind of courage and creativity naturally win the favor of young people.

For example, the "National Jade-Mech 2.0 Series" created by young jade carving artist Lu Weiping combines traditional jade carving techniques with modern technology to create a unique jade carving work. In this work, he skillfully integrated digital elements to form unique shapes and decorations, which resonated with the audience. This innovative attempt not only brought a new look to the art of jade carving, but also made more young people interested in jade carving.

In creation, young jade carvers often dare to subvert traditional ideas, dare to break through the limitations of skills, and dare to try new materials and forms. For example, a young jade carver tried to combine metal and jade to create unique jewelry works. This novel attempt not only brings a new way of expression to jade carvings, but also makes jade carvings more fashionable and modern.

The creations of these young jade carvers have inspired young people's creative thinking and let them see the infinite possibilities of jade carving art. Their works are full of unique aesthetic concepts and personalities of young people, and have

attracted the attention and love of a large number of young people. This creative style, which combines innovation and tradition, is just a wave of creation created by young jade carvers in the field of jade carving.

In short, with the emergence of more and more young jade carvers, the art of jade carving is full of vitality. Although their skills may not be fully mature, they dare to challenge tradition and boldly innovate, making jade carving art more diverse and dynamic. This young creative force not only promotes the development of jade carving art, but also inspires more young people's enthusiasm for jade carving.

- The cultural value contained in the product itself is continuously amplified

For millennial, buying jewelry and wearing it is not just to meet the basic dressing needs, but more because they have a deep understanding of the stories behind the jewelry and the cultural value it represents. For example, not long ago, the high-profile water ripple bullet became a hit, not just because of its design, but more because of people's love for Wu Jing's movies, and even a deep patriotic feeling. This craze has led to a boom in the sales of bullet pendants carved in various regions, which is why young people are keen to pursue jewelry and jade after they are endowed with cultural value.

When a celebrity wears a special pendant, young people will have a strong resonance and follow him to buy the same jewelry. This phenomenon is obviously different from the consumption behavior of the post-70s and post-80s generation. In fact, young people born in the 90s pay more attention to perceiving the unique cultural connotation from jewelry and listening to the stories behind it. Therefore, their choice of jewelry is no longer just for external decoration, but also for the transmission of emotion and value.

On the whole, millennial's consumption attitude towards jewelry shows their deeper cultural pursuit and emotional expression. Jewelry is no longer a simple ornament, but a cultural symbol, representing their values and emotional resonance. Therefore, millennial pays more attention to resonating with the cultural connotation

behind them when purchasing and wearing jewelry, which makes them greatly different from their previous consumption concepts.

-Purchasing channels are diversified, and the Internet makes consumption more convenient for young people

In the past, when buying jewelry and jade jewelry, it was often necessary to go to a physical store to select and try them on in person, which was a rather cumbersome process. However, with the rise of e-commerce and micro-commerce, online shopping has become more and more convenient. Especially for modern young people, they spend more and more time on the Internet every day, so it becomes more convenient and timely to obtain information about jade jewelry. When they see the style they like on the Internet, the price is right and it looks good, they often can't wait to place an order to buy it. What's more convenient is that once the order is placed, the logistics system usually only takes about 2 days to deliver the goods to the doorstep. This efficient delivery has also become one of the incentives for young people to love to wear jewelry.

The convenience of this shopping method provides young people with greater choice and purchasing opportunities. They can easily browse jewelry products in a variety of styles, materials and prices without having to travel between different brick-and-mortar stores. Reviews and evaluations on the Internet also provide them with a reference to the actual shopping experience, making purchasing decisions more informed. Moreover, online shopping has also brought more convenience and comfort to young people. They can buy their favorite jewelry at home or anywhere without going out, thus increasing their frequency and interest in wearing jewelry.

To sum up, the rise of e-commerce and micro-commerce has brought a new convenience experience for young people to buy and wear jewelry and jade. The fast online shopping process, rich choices, real-time information acquisition and efficient distribution system all make young people more willing to wear jewelry in their daily life, and it has become one of their favorite consumption methods.

- Craft upgrade, mosaic craft has become a new fashion

Today, young girls are showing great interest in all kinds of jade, especially those with unique crafted shapes. Whether setting these gemstones into exquisite stud earrings and rings, or fashioning them into stylish bracelets, their combination can make a unique statement. Among the many types of jewelry, colorful jewelry and jade such as turquoise, yellow amber, and green agate are becoming the focus of young people's love.

This trend reflects the continuous improvement of young people's aesthetic interest and taste in jewelry, and also reflects their recognition of the country's traditional culture. Upgrading of traditional craftsmanship has allowed jade and gemstones to be more ingeniously embedded into jewelry designs, creating more refined and unique accessories. Embedding jade into stud earrings and rings not only increases the visual appeal of the jewelry, but also allows the wearer to more comfortably showcase their fashion sense.

Specific jewelry jade stones, such as turquoise, yellow amber and green agate, resonate strongly among young people because of their rich colors and unique textures. What makes these stones unique is that they are more than just decorations, they are a way of expressing personality and attitude. When young people choose jewelry, they pay more and more attention to finding gemstones that match their own style, and turquoise, yellow amber and green agate can satisfy their pursuit of personalized dress.

In short, the upgrading of technology has made the inlay technology of jade and gemstones more exquisite, which has also become an important reason why young people like it. Unique craftsmanship and colorful gems and jade make earrings, rings and bracelets an excellent choice to show individuality and fashion taste, while the favor of gemstones such as turquoise, yellow amber and green agate further promotes the development of this trend.

- With the rise of CNC computer engraving, finished jade products flow into the ordinary people's market

In recent years, the rise of computer numerical control engraving technology has enabled not only personalized and customized designs, but also mass production. The emergence of this technology has had a positive impact in many ways: on the one hand, the machine carving technology has reduced production costs; You can buy your favorite jewelry. This allows young people to have more choices when purchasing jade jewelry.

The introduction of computer numerical control engraving technology has brought a technological innovation to the jade jewelry industry. This technology can not only be customized according to individual design requirements, but also can be mass-produced in a short time. The double benefit of this technology enables the production cost to be reduced and the production efficiency to be greatly improved at the same time. As a result, the price of jade jewelry on the market has gradually become more popular, and more people have the opportunity to buy high-quality jade jewelry, which has also promoted young people's interest in and desire to buy such jewelry.

Looking forward to the future, jade jewelry products that combine traditional craftsmanship with innovative technology will surely become a fashion trend favored by young people. These jewelry, which combines ancient culture and modern design, not only contains the charm of history, but also has innovative fashion elements, so it is easier to resonate with young people. With the continuous advancement of technology, more products integrating tradition and innovation will continue to emerge in the jade jewelry industry to meet the needs of consumers of different ages and further promote the development of this industry.

2.5 Analysis of the Jewelry Market in Thailand

2.5.1 Chanthaburi jewelry market in Thailand

Thailand is a world-renowned jewelry trading center. It is the world's main cutting and processing center, distribution center and import and export trade center. It has a huge jewelry market. In 2022, Thailand's jewelry export industry will exceed 15

billion US dollars. The main exported jewelry includes For gold, gold jewelry, diamonds, silver jewelry, and jade, the main export markets (excluding gold exports) are the United States, India, Hong Kong, Germany, the United Kingdom, Singapore, Switzerland, Belgium, the United Arab Emirates, and Japan. also. In 2022, the number of entrepreneurs in Thailand's jewelry industry will exceed 12,892, and jewelry has made a non-negligible contribution to Thailand's economic development.

Thailand also has the world-renowned "World Gem Factory", which is Chanthaburi, which sits on Gem Mountain. From the 15th century to the present, Chanthaburi is famous for its rich rubies and sapphires. There is Thailand's largest gem trading market and a huge gem processing industry. Almost all gem cutting and polishing processes are carried out in Chanthaburi. It is a gold rush for global gem merchants.

On August 19, 2023, the author went to Chanthaburi for research. The jewelry market in Chanthaburi is not big, and it is distributed in several small streets. The jewelers here are mainly Chinese, Indians and Pakistanis. In China, the jewelry market is full of beautiful things. Jewelers will take out the jewelry from their warehouses and put them on the stalls. For example, the jewelry market in Ruili, Yunnan (Figure 4) has gathered tens of thousands of jewelry stalls and countless jewelry. Consumers can walk and browse and choose their favorite jewelry. The jewelry market in Chanthaburi is different. Except for the jewelry shops on the street, we can only see a few stalls in the market (Figure 5). Most of the jewelry is carried by jewelers instead of buyers. We You need to find a booth to sit down and write down your needs, and the jewelers will hand over the gemstones in their hands for us to choose.



Figure 4 Jewelry Market in China

Source: Mao Xiaoyan. (2023)



Figure 5 Chanthaburi Jewelry Market in Thailand

Source: Mao Xiaoyan. (2023)

A friend who was traveling with me wanted to buy a green tourmaline. With the help of the local Chinese, we found a place to sit down. At this time, five or six jewelers surrounded us and showed us his gemstones, but due to their The price was a bit high, and there was no transaction in the end, but it was also a very rare and precious experience for us (*Figure 6*).

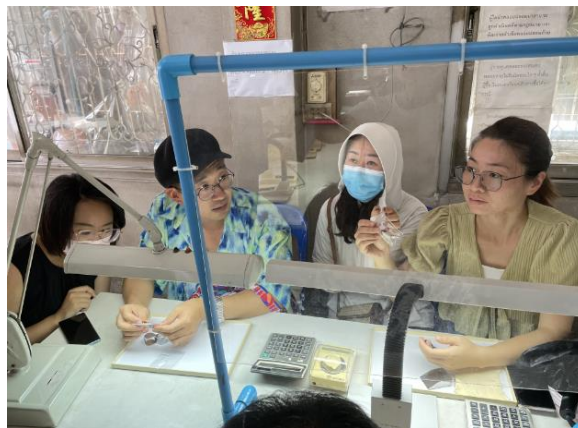


Figure 6 Seeing Jewelry at Chanthaburi Jewelry Market

Source: Mao Xiaoyan. (2023)

In addition to the jewelry market, jewelry shops and jewelry stalls are all over the streets and alleys of Chanthaburi, whether it is cut bare stones, unprocessed rough stones or inlaid jewelry (*Figure 7-9*). The metamorphosis process from humble rough stones to gorgeous jewelry makes people marvel at the exquisite skills of jewelry craftsmen and the ingenious design of jewelry designers. The jewels here are mainly colored gemstones such as rubies, sapphires, and tourmalines. The processing methods are mainly cutting, and there are very few carved styles. Only a few shops have gem-carved Buddha pieces (*Figure 10*), which may be to meet the needs of Chinese and Chinese buyers. At the same time, we also saw the Thailand Liaison Office of China's Guangdong Jade and Jewelry Trading Center(*Figure 11*), which made us feel very cordial in a foreign country.



Figure 7 Rough Stone

Source: Mao Xiaoyan. (2023)



Figure 8 Jewelry

Source: Mao Xiaoyan. (2023)



Figure 9 Jewelry

Source: Mao Xiaoyan. (2023)



Figure 10 Buddha carvings

Source: Mao Xiaoyan. (2023)



Figure 11 Visiting Chanthaburi

Source: Mao Xiaoyan. (2023)

At the same time, through the on-the-spot investigation of major shopping malls in Bangkok, Thailand and Gems Exhibition International, the largest jewelry store in Thailand, there are a lot of metal jewelry and colored gemstone stores in Thailand, with various grades, prices, and styles, but there are very few jade stores and commodities. , there are only a few jewelry stores opened by Chinese. Jade is sold together with jewelry made of other materials, and these jades are mostly low-end jadeite, agate and other low-end products. This trend shows that in Thailand, people are more inclined to choose Precious metal jewelry and colored stones, not jade.

2.5.2 Analysis of the Differences in Jade and Jewelry Design Between China and Thailand

Significant disparities exist in the styles and cultural backgrounds of jade and jewelry design between China and Thailand. China boasts a profound and ancient jade culture, emphasizing the application of traditional motifs and symbols that embody auspicious meanings such as dragons, phoenixes, and bats. In China, jade carving emphasizes the inheritance of traditional culture, characterized by exquisite craftsmanship and grandeur.

In contrast, Thai jewelry design is heavily influenced by Buddhist culture. Thai jade and jewelry often incorporate Buddhist elements like images of Buddha and lotus flowers, reflecting a focus on religious beliefs and spiritual aspirations. Design-wise, there is an emphasis on the use of vibrant colors and fluid lines, showcasing the tropical flair distinctive to Thailand. Thai jade and jewelry tend to prioritize a lighter and more lively appearance, reflecting a unique tropical charm.

Regarding material usage, Chinese jade carvings predominantly utilize hard jade stones like Hetian jade and jadeite, which hold a long history and profound cultural significance in China. Conversely, Thai designs lean towards the use of colored gemstones such as sapphires and rubies, presenting a diverse array of artistic effects.

In summary, the differences in jade and jewelry design between China and Thailand are evident in their styles, cultural backgrounds, and material usage. China's jade culture emphasizes the application of traditional motifs and symbols, focusing on the pursuit of auspicious meanings while showcasing a dedication to traditional cultural inheritance with exquisite craftsmanship. Conversely, Thai jewelry design is influenced by Buddhist culture, often integrating Buddhist elements, prioritizing the use of color and fluid lines, and embodying a unique tropical charm. In terms of material usage, Chinese jade carvings predominantly utilize hard jade stones, whereas Thai designs lean towards the use of colored gemstones, resulting in a diverse range of artistic effects. These disparities reflect the unique characteristics of each country's design philosophy, cultural traditions, and aesthetic preferences.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research method

This research can comprehensively use the following research methods to deeply explore the application and design of decorative styles of Western Han jade arts in contemporary art creation:

Literature Analysis

Case study Jade method

Expert interview method

3.2 Respondent list

Li Chunke

The 5th Chinese Arts and Crafts Master, Beijing Special Arts and Crafts Master; Representative inheritor of ivory carving, a national intangible cultural heritage project

Wang Jingming

Master of Chinese arts and crafts, inheritor of Fujian Province's intangible cultural heritage "Hui'an Stone Sculpture".

Wang Chaoyang

Famous contemporary jade carving master, national senior craftsman, good at applying traditional Chinese elements to jade carving.

Xu Yanping

Innovative master of jade carving, master of jade carving in Yunnan Province, founder of Jade Sculpture Dust Jade Laboratory, his works focus on the research of contemporary art and the expression of the diversity of jade art.

Lu Weiping

Contemporary artist, PhD candidate at the Jewelry School of China University of Geosciences (Wuhan).

Xie Zhaohua

Director of China Light Industry Jewelry Center, Director of Development Cooperation Department, Senior Supervisor, Senior Referee, Senior Technician, grasp the market trends of jade carving.

3.3 Design of interview process

Designing an effective interview process is critical to gaining in-depth information and meaningful insights. The following is the interview process design:

1. Respondent confirmation and contact
2. Make an interview plan
3. Design interview questions
4. Summarize the Discussion
5. Ask for Opinion
6. Content analysis
7. Comparison and integration

CHAPTER 4

ANALYZE

4.1 Analysis of Decorative Styles in Western Han Jade Carvings

During the Western Han period, characterized by political consolidation and economic prosperity in Chinese history, the heightened economic activity facilitated a rapid development in jade craftsmanship. Zhang Qian's diplomatic missions to the Western Regions, which led to the establishment of the Silk Road and the opening of the Hexi Corridor, facilitated the inflow of valuable jade resources into the heartland of China. Through analysis of extant archaeological evidence, it has been determined that jade materials predominantly originated from regions such as Xinjiang Hetian, Gansu, and Lantian in Shaanxi. Among these, Hetian white jade and green jade were particularly favored by the aristocracy of the Han Dynasty, as evidenced by the abundance of unearthed jade artifacts. These imported jade resources not only enriched the diversity of jade artifact types and styles during the Han Dynasty but also fostered cultural exchanges and integration with other civilizations. The inherent scarcity and difficulty in processing jade rendered jade artifacts potent symbols of wealth and status, serving as conspicuous markers through which the ruling elite could showcase their affluence and social standing.

The power demonstrated by Han Dynasty jade artifacts aptly embodies the majesty of imperial authority and the authority of rulers. As noted by expert Li Chunkai, Western Han jade carvings exhibit a potent force in terms of dynamism and form that aligns with the era's context. Through field investigations at representative Western Han tomb museums such as the Xuhou Museum, Nanchang Relic Museum for Haihun Principality of Han Dynasty, and Nanyue King Museum, 120 representative Western Han jade artifacts were collected. These artifacts primarily include “玉璧” (jade bi), “玉环” (jade rings), “玉璜” (jade huang), “玉珩” (jade heng), Jade accessories, jade belt hooks, jade pillows, jade sword decorations, jade cups, jade

dancers, etc. Their diverse shapes and purposes cover various aspects of daily life, religious rituals, and funerary practices.

The jade processing techniques of the Western Han primarily employed methods such as openwork carving, relief carving, round carving, and intaglio engraving, further developing unique crafts such as gilding and silvering. Common patterns such as dragon motifs and phoenix motifs symbolize imperial authority and the mandate of heaven, showcasing the majesty and power of rulers. The portrayal of formidable power and the concise yet profound decorative carvings reflect the aesthetic pursuits and cultural tastes of the elite class in society at that time.

Li Chunke summarized two characteristics of decorative styles in Western Han jade arts. Firstly, they exhibit a powerful expression of force. Western Han jade carvings demonstrate strong dynamism and power in terms of movement and form, closely intertwined with the era of Western Han's strong national power. Secondly, they feature concise yet profound carving decorations. Li Chunkai exemplified this with the "Han Eight Knives," highlighting the simplicity as a primary characteristic of Western Han jade carvings. Through a few knife strokes, profound forms can be depicted, reflecting the high aesthetic pursuit of the elite class in society at that time.

Wang Chaoyang believes that the characteristics of decorative styles in Western Han jade arts manifest in the high level of aesthetics, exquisite craftsmanship, and unique artistic concepts. Firstly, he asserts that the aesthetic characteristics of Han Dynasty jade artifacts lie in their high aesthetic level. Through the analysis of a chi dragon motif jade bi, Wang Chaoyang emphasizes the unique aesthetic insights of the Han Dynasty people. This jade artifact, employing multidimensional techniques such as the combination of square and circle, dots and lines, and density variations, presents stunning aesthetic effects. The vivid and multi-layered depiction of the chi dragon on the jade bi not only reflects the jade carvers' meticulous attention to detail but also highlights their exceptional aesthetic concepts.

Furthermore, Western Han jade arts demonstrate exquisite craftsmanship in their form, particularly evident in the application of carving techniques. Through the analysis of a jade pendant with dragon and phoenix motifs, it can be observed how Western Han jade carvers captured the entire form of the chi dragon with meticulous yet powerful lines, resulting in a highly dynamic artistic effect. The pendant not only showcases the artist's exceptional skill in depicting details but also demonstrates the masterful application of carving techniques in the overall form, highlighting the excellence of Han Dynasty jade artifacts in sculptural form.

Xu Yanping argues that the distinctive aesthetic appeal of Western Han jade arts lies primarily in their unique sculptural beauty. Using the example of a chi tiger motif, he analyzes the uniqueness of Han Dynasty jade arts, noting their sense of volume and powerful momentum akin to sculpture. He believes that the chi tiger motif's form embodies a contemporary aesthetic of strength and dynamic lines, integrating with modern art and becoming a significant subject of interest. In discussing artifacts unearthed from the tomb of the Nanyue King, Xu Yanping emphasizes the wide variety and superior quality of Han Dynasty jade artifacts, considered top-tier artworks. He mentions that some jade items were magnified in production, such as enlarging jade dancers into sculptures and designing translucent jade pendants with relief dragon and phoenix motifs as symbols of the Nanyue King's tomb, highlighting the unique aesthetic and artistic design of Han Dynasty jade artifacts. Therefore, Xu Yanping considers Han Dynasty jade artifacts, with their distinctive sculptural beauty and artistic value, as noteworthy subjects in art research.

In summary, experts unanimously agree that the decorative styles of Western Han jade arts possess notable characteristics, including powerful expression of force and concise yet profound carving decorations. Western Han jade carvings exhibit strong dynamism and power in terms of movement and form, aligning with the era's context, while simplicity is a predominant feature, allowing for profound sculptural depictions with just a few strokes. The viewpoints of artists Li Chunkai, Wang Chaoyang, and Xu Yanping collectively emphasize the high aesthetic level, exquisite craftsmanship,

and unique artistic concepts of Western Han jade artifacts. Specifically, the high aesthetic level is reflected in the application of multidimensional techniques, craftsmanship is demonstrated in the meticulous yet powerful use of lines, and the artistic freedom and unique sculptural beauty imbue Han Dynasty jade arts with distinctive personality in art. These characteristics have made Western Han jade artifacts a focal point of ancient art research.

The artistic achievements of Western Han jade artifacts are inseparable from the mature design methods of the Western Han period. Design methodology is a systematic, organized, and purposeful process of creative problem-solving and innovation. It provides designers, creative individuals, and problem solvers with a series of steps, principles, and tools to guide them in generating ideas, rational thinking, and ultimately finding solutions when faced with complex problems. As part of the sculptural arts, the design of Han Dynasty jade artifacts consists of three basic elements: composition, craftsmanship, and ornamentation, with composition organizing and directing the form and ornamentation. Composition organizes and arranges the images to be represented within a certain space. The composition of Han Dynasty jade artifacts demonstrates a tendency towards innovation. Han Dynasty jade artisans flexibly adopted various organizational methods, breaking away from the symmetrical and balanced norms pursued in the previous dynasties. While maintaining relative balance, they achieved overall equilibrium by employing variation and interplay, skillfully using techniques of incomplete symmetry, breaking away from rigid and monotonous layouts, and making the jade artifacts more vivid and lively. The principle of asymmetric variation in balance pursued by Han Dynasty jade artifacts demonstrates unique imagination and flexible aesthetic tastes. In this process, the principles of formal aesthetics in design art and design studies are applied to interpret and analyze the aesthetic pursuits of Han Dynasty jade artifact compositions. In ancient China, craftsmen in the field of arts and crafts were traditionally trained through apprenticeship systems. Masters passed down their skills and experiences accumulated through long-term practice. This process also integrated the will and aesthetics of rulers. With the support of rulers, Chinese arts and

crafts often reflected the highest levels of technology and artistry of the time to a certain extent.

4.1.1 Analysis of Decorative Patterns on Western Han Jade Artifacts

The development of decorative styles on Han Dynasty jade arts reflects the social culture, customs, and ideological concepts of the time. Emerging from the turmoil of the late Qin Dynasty, the Han Dynasty established a unified national pattern, and the integration of various ethnicities brought about the renewal of aesthetic concepts, with jade ornamentation reflecting the ideological connotations of the era. In terms of materials, forms, and ideologies, Han Dynasty jade ornamentation achieved many successes, laying a solid foundation for the development of jade artifacts in China since the Han Dynasty.

Jade ornamentation can be divided into independent patterns and decorative patterns. Independent patterns have identifiable and distinct images that can form ornamentation independently, while decorative patterns are not independent forms of ornamentation but rather decorative techniques designed to enrich the shape of jade artifacts, making them more exquisite or mysterious. These patterns often appeared at the inception of jade artifacts and frequently lack fixed images. During the Shang and Western Zhou periods, jade carving techniques had not yet reached a sufficiently high level to support the creation of intricate ornamentation. Thus, ornamentation during this period mainly featured straight lines or long arcs. However, with the appearance of iron tools during the Spring and Autumn period and the Warring States period, jade carving techniques saw unprecedented improvement, allowing jade craftsmen to carve various ornamentations more freely. Consequently, there was a significant change in the patterns of jade artifacts. With continuous improvement in tools, during the Han Dynasty, greater progress was made in the craft of jade artifact production. This technological advancement not only manifested in unique forms but also in the carving of ornamentation.

Decorative patterns on jade artifacts widely utilize line engraving techniques and are distributed across multiple parts of the objects. Some of these patterns aim to highlight specific parts of the object, achieved through form imitation, while others serve merely as embellishments and decorations. Therefore, they can be categorized into primary decorative patterns and auxiliary decorative patterns. Primary decorative patterns are typically the main decorative elements of the object, closely related to the overall form of the object, with their line characteristics often varying with changes in the object's shape. These are particularly common in Western Han flat animal-shaped jade artifacts, where various angular patterns are a prominent feature. Another type of primary decorative pattern has less relation to the object's form and is formed only on the surface of the object through regular layouts, such as cloud patterns, grain patterns, and reed patterns. These patterns evolved from abstract dragon patterns in the Spring and Autumn period and do not inherently carry specific symbolic meanings, being prevalent from the Warring States period to the Han Dynasty. Auxiliary decorative patterns, on the other hand, are designed to make the object's decoration or form more vivid and lifelike. They often appear outside of primary decorative patterns, at edges, or interspersed among them, serving to complement and embellish. Since decorative patterns mostly lack fixed images and cannot be distinguished and named based on shapes, they are classified based on carving techniques into line engraving and relief carving categories.

4.1.1.1 Natural patterns

Natural patterns refer to patterns derived from elements found in nature, such as grain patterns, cloud patterns, reed patterns, and milk-dot patterns. These patterns themselves do not carry significant meanings but are products of ancient people's reverence for nature. They are often arranged on the surface of jade artifacts in a systematic and regular manner, forming decorative patterns with a structured layout. These patterns are primarily used to enhance the beauty of the object's form and decoration, serving as embellishments along the edges or in vacant spaces of the main decorative patterns. They embody the beauty of symmetry, rhythm, harmony, and unity.

The grain pattern (Figure 12), resembling the sprouting state of grains, symbolizes the ancient people's hopeful anticipation for a bountiful harvest. It first appeared in jade artifacts during the Spring and Autumn period and evolved into tadpole-like patterns during the Warring States period, which were widely adopted on jade artifacts. During the Han Dynasty, it continued to evolve into various forms. The grain pattern features relatively simple shapes, typically presented in arranged combinations. In terms of artistic technique, it maintains both symbolic and realistic styles. The grains are carved to appear plump like pearls, neatly arranged, often utilizing shallow relief carving techniques combined with incised lines to depict either positive or negative relief.

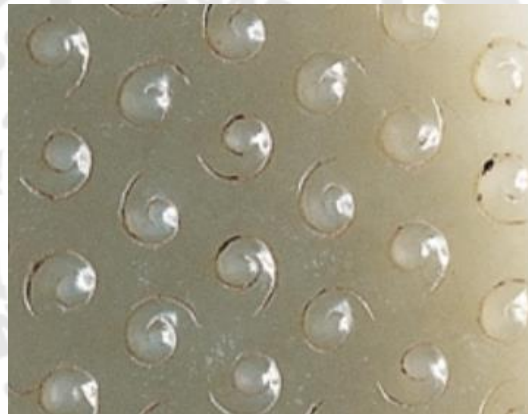


Figure 12 The grain pattern on Western Han jade pendant

Source: Xuzhou Museum.

https://www.xzmuseum.com/collection_list.aspx?category_id=499

The "pu" pattern (Figure 13) named for its resemblance to woven rush matting, is formed by the intertwining of three parallel lines in different directions. By utilizing shallow and wide horizontal or diagonal lines, the surface of the jade artifact is delineated into hexagonal patterns resembling honeycomb arrangements, sometimes even carved with valley patterns delineated by incised lines. During the Han Dynasty, the "pu" pattern was highly popular. The use of the "pu" pattern on Han Dynasty jade artifacts was similar to that of the Warring States period. Whether on "guwen" discs or

"puwen" discs, they were uniformly and orderly arranged, imparting a sense of stability to the jade discs.

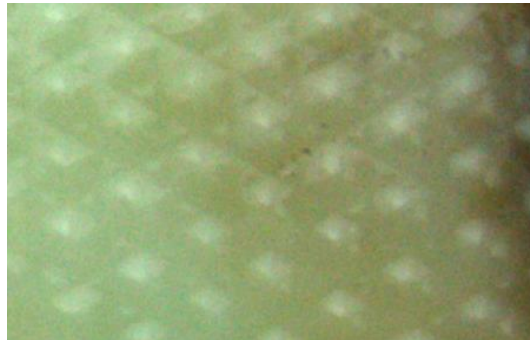


Figure 13 The "pu" pattern on Western Han jade

Source: Xuzhou Museum.

https://www.xzmuseum.com/collection_list.aspx?category_id=499

The cloud pattern (Figure 14), a decorative motif characterized by inward-curving tendencies resembling clouds, takes on shapes akin to clouds, which are inherently unpredictable and varied, lacking fixed forms. As an element of jade ornamentation, the cloud pattern has had a profound influence on subsequent generations, being widely adopted and maintaining its popularity over an extended period. During the Han Dynasty, jade designers seized upon the flowing nature of clouds, delineating flowing cloud patterns with fluid and concise lines. These patterns can be arranged in two main ways: regular and irregular arrangements. They can serve not only as standalone decorations but also as auxiliary elements, and even be interconnected through various combinations to create a diverse range of cloud patterns, such as continuous cloud patterns, double-headed cloud patterns, T-shaped cloud pattern, ruyi cloud patterns and double incised line-linked cloud patterns.



Figure 14 Cloud patterns on Western Han relief-carved dragon and phoenix jade halberd

Source: Xuzhou Museum.

https://www.xzmuseum.com/collection_list.aspx?category_id=499

The milk-dot pattern (Figure 15), characterized by regularly arranged circular motifs protruding from the surface of artifacts, was employed as a decorative motif on bronze artifacts as early as the Shang Dynasty. However, it was not until the Han Dynasty that it began to be used in jade carving, which was made possible by advancements in jade carving tools and mature carving techniques. The creation of the milk-dot pattern, which requires carving full, balanced, clear, and extremely smooth circular motifs, reflects the high requirements of craftsmanship, showcasing the superb jade carving skills of the Han Dynasty. The milk-dot pattern emerged later than the grain and rush patterns, possibly evolving from them, and was widely used on the surfaces of jade artifacts such as jade discs

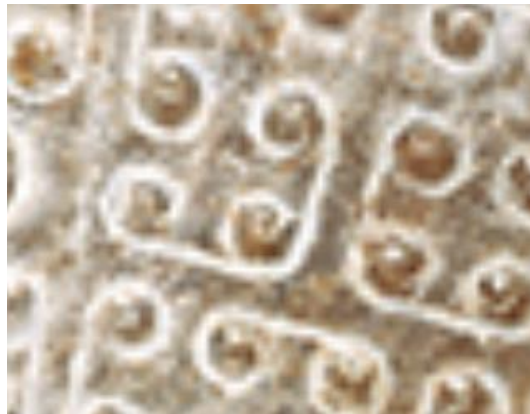


Figure 15 The milk-dot pattern on Western Han jade

Source: Xuzhou Museum.

https://www.xzmuseum.com/collection_list.aspx?category_id=499

These natural patterns, formed through repetition, interlacing, and overlapping, create decorative motifs, combining various precise lines and other animal patterns to give jade artifacts a unique aesthetic and decorative effect.

4.1.1.2 Animal Patterns

Animals have always been the most commonly used motifs in jade artifacts. Animal patterns can be divided into two types: one represents real animals such as tigers, birds, pigs, and cicadas, often appearing in a round-carved form; the other depicts imaginary creatures known as mythical beasts, including dragons, phoenixes, and chilongs, commonly carved as decorative motifs on jade artifacts or depicted using hollowing techniques. This section mainly refers to the latter type of animal patterns.

Dragon pattern: The dragon has been revered as a symbol in Chinese culture since ancient times, with Chinese people referring to themselves as "descendants of the dragon." In ancient China, dragon patterns, along with phoenix patterns, were monopolized by the ruling class and considered symbols of the imperial family. The records of the "Lvshi Chunqiu" mention Duke Wen of Jin being "compared to a dragon," while later Emperor Qin Shi Huang was referred to as the "Ancestral Dragon".

As history progressed, by the time of the Han Dynasty, the dragon had become a symbol of emperors, representing the privilege of the imperial family. The emperor was revered as the "the True Dragon Emperor" The stylistic features of Han Dynasty jade carvings depicting dragons are quite distinctive. Dragon patterns tend to be winding and meandering, with horse-like heads and four limbs, accentuated brow ridges presenting a vigorous and lively form. Furthermore, on Han Dynasty dragon pendants, the dragon horns are positioned behind cloud pattern ears, resembling deer antlers, some even curving or bifurcating before curving again, exhibiting decorative features. Additionally, the eyes of the dragon pattern adopt almond-shaped eyes, elongating at the corners, making the eyes more striking. Finally, during the Han Dynasty, dragon patterns began to feature flying wings, with short incised lines along the dragon's leg shank edges, these subtle and delicate incised lines, appearing broken yet continuous, fully showcasing the exquisite craftsmanship of the Han Dynasty's "thread and hair carving" technique. For example, jade pendant of s-shaped dragon form from the Western Han Dynasty (Figure 16), presents an independent dragon form, with the body coiled in an S-shape, hence referred to as the "S-shaped dragon." The dragon opens its mouth revealing its teeth, with round eyes, its mane curling to both sides, a circle of twisted silk lines carved around the neck, bent forelimbs, sharp and claw-like toes. The dragon's tail is upturned, with the entire body surface decorated with continuous spiral patterns. The design emphasizes external force and dynamic beauty, exuding a domineering aura of swallowing mountains and rivers, representing a hallmark of Han Dynasty jade carving style. "The depiction of dragon patterns on objects carried on the person is further symbolized as a representation of power and status. The emergence of dragon patterns combined with other decorative motifs is a major feature of Han Dynasty jade carving." (Liu Hengjuan, 2022). Additionally, Han Dynasty jade dragon patterns are exquisitely crafted, often using fine incised lines, intricate yet flowing, highlighting the free-spirited and romantic ambiance of Han Dynasty jade artifacts.



Figure 16 Jade Pendant of S-Shaped Dragon Form from the Western Han Dynasty

Source: Xuzhou Museum.

https://www.xzmuseum.com/collection_list.aspx?category_id=499

The Chi Dragon Pattern (Figure 17): or Chi, is a type of dragon imagined by people, resembling a tiger, hence also known as the Chi Tiger. The development of Chi Dragon patterns reached its peak during the Han Dynasty, making it one of the most common themes in Han jade carvings and an expression of divine thought. Han-era Chi-patterned jade artifacts outnumbered dragon-patterned ones in quantity and displayed a rich variety in types. Common variations include the maternal and paternal Chi, tiger-shaped Chi, unicorn Chi, winged Chi, and multi-headed Chi. The head of the Chi is usually rectangular or elliptical, while the ears are relatively short, exhibiting diverse morphological changes. Chi's eyes come in various forms such as round eyes, teardrop eyes, ring eyes, or horizontally incised eyes. The tail is usually long and tiger-shaped, hence the name Chi Tiger. In terms of morphology, Han Chi Dragons are three-dimensional or semi-three-dimensional, conveying a strong sense of volume and power. As Xu Yanping said, "The sculptural volume of the Chi Tiger is powerful, its image conforms to contemporary aesthetics, with dynamic lines and a sense of power," while Wang Chaoyang believes that the Chi Dragon pattern demonstrates the relaxed

and unrestrained artistic atmosphere of Western Han jade artifacts. Through the analysis of the case of Chi Dragon patterned jade bi, he revealed the free and unrestrained artistic atmosphere presented therein. The design of the Chi Dragon patterned jade bi, with the Chi Dragon's body flipping over, demonstrates a state of free and unrestrained aesthetics, forming a clear contrast with other ancient cultures. This sense of relaxation and unrestraint permeates various aspects of Han jade artifacts, making them more distinctive in terms of artistry.



Figure 17 The Chi Pattern

Source: Nanchang relic museum for Haihun Principality of Han Dynasty.

<http://www.hhhmuseum.cn/html/list3relic.html?parentID=b320ac1b-29c8-4c68-a11f-dcffe58a0ad1&id=9f910332-2853-4aff-9f87-04741fe4b513>

The Phoenix Pattern: The history of phoenix pattern decoration is ancient, as archaeological evidence indicates that phoenix motifs date back to the Neolithic period. The image of the phoenix originated from the fusion of various bird totems, reflecting ancient people's observations of and reverence for nature, as well as their pursuit of mystical forces. In his "Shuowen Jiezi," Xu Shen, a scholar from the Han Dynasty, described the phoenix as follows: "The phoenix resembles a swan in front and a linnet behind, with a snake's neck and a fish's tail, stork-like cheek pouches, dragon-

like markings on its back, a swallow's chin, and chicken-like pecking, displaying all five colors." The Han Chinese's worship of the phoenix is closely related to Chu culture, where the phoenix is seen as guiding humans towards paradise. In ancient China, the dragon and phoenix were symbols of imperial status, auspiciousness, and peace. Han people also believed that dragons and phoenixes could carry the souls of the deceased to heaven. According to the renowned Chinese-American scholar, anthropologist, and archaeologist, Zhang Guangzhi, "Since the soul separates from the body after death, with the spirit ascending to heaven and the body returning to the earth, ancient burial customs inevitably served dual purposes and character, facilitating the soul's ascent to the celestial realm with the help of dragons and phoenixes while ensuring the well-being of the body in underground chambers." Consequently, phoenix-patterned jade artifacts, or jade artifacts featuring both phoenix and dragon motifs, were unearthed in large quantities from the tombs of Han Dynasty princes, such as the dragon-phoenix-chi patterned jade plaque (Figure 18). The plaque features a dragon motif carved in relief on the left, a chi motif carved in relief on the right, and a phoenix motif carved in relief on the top, with the phoenix depicted looking back, leaf-shaped ears, spiraling branches, teardrop eyes, and open beaks. Fine short lines and curves are used to depict body details with incised lines. During the Western Han period, phoenix motifs were often combined with dragon motifs, with carving techniques predominantly utilizing openwork and relief, and fine details depicted with incised lines. Phoenixes are typically depicted in flight, with smooth and flowing incised lines, exaggerated curves, and a strong sense of dynamism, reflecting the aesthetic pursuit and artistic skill level of the Han Dynasty.



Figure 18 Dragon-Phoenix-Chi Patterned Jade Plaque

Source: Nanchang relic museum for Haihun Principality of Han Dynasty.

<http://www.hhhmuseum.cn/html/list3relic.html?parentID=b320ac1b-29c8-4c68-a11f-dcffe58a0ad1&id=9f910332-2853-4aff-9f87-04741fe4b513>

4.1.1.3 Human Figure Pattern

The most distinctive feature among the human figure patterns in Han dynasty jade carvings is the "jade dancing figure"(Figure 19). As described in the "Biographies of Officials" in the Book of Later Han: "There were palace attendants and maidservants, as well as songstresses and dancers, to entertain and fill the room with joy." This illustrates the luxurious scenes of singing and dancing personnel often found in the households of emperors and nobles. The carving of jade dancing figures presents elegant postures, providing a lifelike portrayal of the singing and dancing scenes at banquets and celebrations among the upper class of society at that time. These jade dancing figures typically have slender figures and graceful movements, wearing long skirts and flowing sleeves, showcasing graceful dance poses as if they were ethereal. In terms of style, the sleeves of Han dynasty jade dancing figures are often depicted as raised above the head, whereas those of Warring States jade dancing figures are depicted as drooping at the ends. In terms of function, compared to the Warring States jade dancing figures which served as intermediaries between heaven and earth, Han

dynasty jade dancing figures may have evolved to serve the purpose of aiding ascension to immortality. Therefore, most of them are crudely made, and there are significant differences in dance poses. Essentially, they are jade figurines primarily used for warding off evil spirits. Their carving forms are mainly in relief, with fewer examples of circular carving. Some pieces employ concise carving techniques to vividly capture the essence, while others focus on details. The images of jade dancing figures are predominantly female, and given that they are mostly unearthed from the tombs of female aristocrats of the Han dynasty, it can be inferred that jade dancing figure ornaments were intended as accessories for women (Wang Yixi, 2019). As the most important component of the jade pendant sets in Western Han dynasty, jade dancing figures symbolize not only the noble status of the aristocrats in the Han dynasty but also serve as guides leading the tomb owners to the realm of immortality, possessing special significance for the era.



Figure 19 Jade Dancing Pattern

Source: Nanyue King Museum.

<https://www.nywmuseum.org.cn/Collection/List/zyzb>

In summary, the decorative style of jade artifacts in the Western Han Dynasty further evolved on the basis of inheriting traditions from the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period. The transition from abstraction to more lifelike figurative ornamentation occurred gradually. For instance, prior to the Han Dynasty, the cloud patterns on jade objects displayed numerous geometric and abstract lines, often featuring inward-curving hooks at both ends, known as "hook cloud patterns". However, during the Han Dynasty, cloud patterns exhibited fuller and more intricate lines, portraying the movement of clouds vividly and exuding a richer sense of vitality. Additionally, the grain pattern, a decorative motif from the Han Dynasty, derived inspiration from seeds in the fields, symbolizing people's aspirations for a bountiful harvest and a better life. With the advancement of jade carving techniques, some patterns gradually evolved into the imagery of auspicious symbols.

4.1.2 Analysis of Composition in Western Han Jade Artifacts

The term "composition" originates from the West and encompasses techniques and terminology commonly used in visual arts. Artists employ composition to organically combine elements, creating visually appealing, balanced, and captivating images or design layouts. Composition involves more than haphazardly placing elements on a canvas; rather, it entails consciously applying a series of principles and techniques to achieve engaging visual effects. In traditional Chinese art, the concept is referred to differently, with Xie He's "engaging" emphasizing the importance of positioning. According to Xie He, composition serves as the overarching framework for artistic creation, requiring thoughtful consideration during the creative process. The composition of Western Han jade artifacts varies widely, but there are some commonalities, including S-shaped composition, balanced composition, and tilted composition.

4.1.2.1 The S-shaped Composition

The S-shaped composition provides a smooth and dynamic visual experience, characterized by strong visual tension, making it the most common and representative composition style in the early Han Dynasty jade artifacts. The most

typical example is the S-shaped dragon-shaped jade pendant (Figure 20), also known as the "S-shaped dragon". The pendant features a single-body dragon with a body coiled in an S-shape. The dragon's mouth reveals teeth, its eyes are round and open, its mane curls to both sides, and its neck is engraved with a circle of twisted silk lines. The forelimbs are bent, with sharp claw-like toes, and the tail curls upwards flatly, adorned with continuous swirling patterns. The large arc of the abdomen and the small arc of the head form an S-shape full of dynamic energy, giving an impression of readiness to leap and soar into the clouds at any moment. Flat jade artifacts with S-shaped compositions also include Han Dynasty jade dancing figures. The three-dimensional mythical creatures in round and high relief carvings are also representative examples of S-shaped compositions, each majestic creature with its head held high, showcasing the grandeur of the Han Dynasty.



Figure 20 the S-shaped dragon-shaped jade pendant

Source: Xuzhou Museum.

https://www.xzmuseum.com/collection_list.aspx?category_id=499

4.1.2.1 The Balanced Composition

One of the most commonly used composition techniques in balanced art creation, providing viewers with a sense of equilibrium, stability, and

aesthetic pleasure, is symmetrical composition. The renowned masterpiece "The Last Supper" employs a left-right balanced composition. Symmetry is the simplest form of balance, with jade artifacts such as Yu Huang, Yu Cong, and Yu Bi utilizing symmetrical composition, resulting in nearly identical mirrored forms on the left and right sides (Figure 21).



Figure 21 Translucent Carved Double Dragon Jade Pendant

Source: Xuzhou Museum.

https://www.xzmuseum.com/collection_list.aspx?category_id=499

By the Han Dynasty, jade crafting broke away from this traditional symmetry, opting for an asymmetrical composition approach. For instance, compositions with shifted centers of gravity, where craftsmen use lines and dynamic adjustments to counterbalance the perceived imbalance caused by the center of gravity shift, achieve visual equilibrium. The Han Dynasty jue-shaped pendants often adopt this composition technique, as seen in the heart-shaped jade pendant with an openwork relief of a chi tiger (Figure 22). While the overall composition of the pendant is symmetrical, there are variations in its internal forms. The upper part features a dragon-like creature, with a phoenix carved on the left side and another dragon-like creature on the right. The dragon's head is raised towards the upper left, echoing the phoenix,

creating a balanced composition. At the lower right of the pendant, a distorted chi dragon is carved. Overall, the piece is rich in variety and whimsical charm, yet maintains symmetry. This approach, which introduces localized asymmetry within an overall symmetrical composition, creates a dynamic and balanced visual effect, known as balanced composition.



Figure 22 Translucent Carved Chi-Tiger Pattern Heart-Shaped Jade Pendant

Source: Xuzhou Museum.

https://www.xzmuseum.com/collection_list.aspx?category_id=499

"If you want to incorporate a directional tension into a certain style, the most effective means is to give it a deliberate tilt." (Arnheim, 1969) In such a state, viewers experience a psychological drive to return to a stable position while observing, leading to a certain tendency in their visual activity. For instance, in Vincent van Gogh's "Starry Night," the winding vortex-like short lines in the sky contrast with the straight lines of the ground and buildings, enhancing the expressiveness of the painting through exaggeration and contrast, while also reflecting the inner turmoil of the painter. Over 2000 years ago, artisans in the Han Dynasty were already familiar with this principle of composition and adeptly used it in the design of jade artifacts. The Han Dynasty jade

"yu yi" (玉觿) is a typical example. The "yu yi" was a tool used for untying knots, often with a thick head and a slender tail. Compared to the more regular shapes of the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, Han Dynasty "yu yi" no longer pursued absolute curvature in its design. Instead, tilted styles became more diverse, adding to their interest and appeal. As shown in Figure 23 is the "Translucent Carved Walking Dragon Jade Huixi" (Figure 23), with the jade dragon depicted in a walking posture, intricately carved in three dimensions. The dragon turns its head back with eyes wide open, front limbs lifted, tail curled upwards in an S-shape, and all four limbs resembling curled feathers, presenting a dynamic and agile dragon in motion.



Figure 23 The Translucent Carved Walking Dragon Jade Huixi.

Source: Xuzhou Museum.

https://www.xzmuseum.com/collection_list.aspx?category_id=499

4.1.3 Analysis of Han Dynasty Jade Crafting Techniques

Before the Han Dynasty, jade artifacts were mostly presented in flat carvings, which involved shallow relief carvings on flat jade pieces. However, during the Han Dynasty, the techniques of jade crafting diversified significantly. High relief, translucent carving, and round carving works notably increased, presenting a richer layering effect. Among them, finely carved pieces were also prevalent. Incised lines

were a common technique widely used in flat and round carvings, typically employed to depict ornamentation on artifacts as well as details of figures and animals. Translucent carving was common in flat-carved jade artifacts, utilized to outline the contours of the main subject. High relief carving was mainly found in jade sword ornaments, while round carving often depicted human and animal figures. The decorative craftsmanship of Han Dynasty jade artifacts underwent significant changes. Before the Han Dynasty, jade ornamentation was primarily achieved by grinding jade sand into shallow reliefs. However, during the Han Dynasty, a technique known as hollowing became widely applied, enabling jade crafting to reach unprecedented levels of sophistication. This technique included hollowing, piercing, and inlaying, adding new dimensions to jade artifacts and elevating them to new heights in terms of both form and craftsmanship.

4.1.3.1 The Innovation of Relief Carving Techniques

Relief carving is a form of sculpture or decorative art that involves projecting images or patterns from a flat background to create a three-dimensional effect. This technique can be applied to various materials such as stone, wood, metal, ceramics, etc. Relief carving finds widespread application in architecture, monuments, sculptures, artworks, decorations, as well as artistic and cultural traditions. It has been utilized across diverse cultures and historical periods, ranging from ancient civilizations like ancient Egypt and ancient Greece, to medieval European church architecture, and extending to various cultures in Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Relief carving is commonly employed to depict themes such as religion, history, mythology, heroic deeds, as well as to embellish architectural structures, sculptures, vessels, and artworks. In China, relief carving is also the most commonly used sculptural method in Han Dynasty jade artifacts, including techniques like ground relief carving, shallow relief carving, high relief carving, and the combination of multiple relief carving methods.

Ground relief carving: also known as openwork relief carving, is a carving technique that involves raising patterns or figures from a base while intentionally hollowing out the surrounding background to accentuate the carved objects. In ground relief carving, the carved objects are typically three-dimensional, while the base remains

flat. The widespread use of ground relief carving has promoted the sense of depth and artistic expressiveness in jade artifacts. This technique ingeniously shapes the intricate three-dimensional images with recesses and protrusions, enhancing the visual depth through skillful manipulation of concave and convex elements. Additionally, the application of perspective, illusion, and chiaroscuro techniques provides possibilities for creating more diverse spatial effects. During the Han Dynasty, this technique was extensively applied to motifs such as spirals, cloud patterns, and reed patterns on jade bi discs, jade cong tubes, and other objects. It was also utilized in flat relief carvings of jade ornaments, enriching the artistic charm of depictions of figures and animal contours.

Low relief: characterized by minimal protrusion of the sculpted elements and shallow depth, features smooth transitions between the image and the background. Although it may not possess the pronounced three-dimensionality of high relief, low relief can still exhibit exquisite effects through clever design and intricate detailing. The Liangzhu culture, dating back over 4000 years, adeptly employed relief carving on jade cong tubes. By the Spring and Autumn period, relief carving techniques had become highly sophisticated. An exemplary artifact is the late Spring and Autumn period jade plaque with animal face motifs housed in the Henan Provincial Museum. Within its densely carved swirling cloud patterns lie multiple hidden jade dragons, earning it the title of the premier jade plaque ornament of the Spring and Autumn period in China. The shallow relief carving technique developed even more exquisitely during the Han Dynasty, as seen in the dragon-shaped jade ornament depicted in Figure 24. The entire surface of the dragon features shallow relief carvings of coiling dragon patterns and dragon heads, exhibiting clear layers and diverse variations. During the Han Dynasty, relief carvings were often used as decorations for accessories and the surfaces of round carvings, displaying varied forms and smooth lines.



Figure 24 the Dragon-Shaped Jade

Source: Nanchang relic museum for Haihun Principality of Han Dynasty.

<http://www.hhhmuseum.cn/html/list3relic.html?parentID=b320ac1b-29c8-4c68-a11f-dcffe58a0ad1&id=9f910332-2853-4aff-9f87-04741fe4b513>

High relief: characterized by a significant protrusion of the sculpture from the background with a substantial depth, creates a strong three-dimensional effect where the image appears distant from the background. This type of relief carving often demands more materials and intricate techniques to create as it requires the incorporation of numerous details and textures in the raised portions of the image. During the Han Dynasty, the artistry reached its pinnacle, showcasing the unique and expressive Chi Dragon and Chi Tiger motifs in high relief. Before the Warring States period, three-dimensional high relief techniques were rare. However, during the Han Dynasty, this technique became widely employed. The evolution from flat surfaces to semi-three-dimensional and then to fully three-dimensional forms not only enriched artistic expression but also was particularly suitable for depicting elongated objects and various bodily movements such as bending, twisting, and leaping. In Han Dynasty high relief works, dragon and tiger motifs were prevalent, with the Chi Tiger being a typical example. For instance, in Figure 25's jade sword hilt, three Chi dragons in high relief

adorn the front side, with the central large Chi dragon depicted in an S-shaped crawling posture, its head lifted high for a pronounced three-dimensional effect. At one end, a smaller Chi dragon faces the large one, its body coiled in a C-shaped crawl, adorned with scales carved in relief, and its tail embellished with densely clustered short incised lines. At the other end, another smaller Chi dragon bites onto the tail of the large one, its body also coiled in a C-shaped crawl, with a short tail and its body adorned with parallel short incised lines along the spine and legs. The transition from two-dimensional to three-dimensional forms injected a deeper sense of dimensionality into jade carving works, enhancing their allure and distinctly reflecting the characteristics of the era.



Figure 25 jade sword hilt

Source: Nanchang relic museum for Haihun Principality of Han Dynasty.

<http://www.hhhmuseum.cn/html/list3relic.html?parentID=b320ac1b-29c8-4c68-a11f-dcffe58a0ad1&id=9f910332-2853-4aff-9f87-04741fe4b513>

Openwork carving, also known as translucent carving, is a technique that further develops from shallow or deep relief carving. It involves hollowing out certain areas to highlight the contours of the image, adding layers to the artwork, and creating intricate and transparent artistic effects. However, openwork carving is challenging due to its complexity, requiring drilling and meticulous polishing, with the polishing process being particularly time-consuming and labor-intensive. During the Han Dynasty, openwork techniques were widely employed, elevating the aesthetic forms of jade artifacts to unparalleled perfection. While openwork carving saw rapid development

during the Spring and Autumn period and the Warring States period, it reached remarkable progress during the Han Dynasty, presenting a combination of various techniques such as relief carving, round carving, and piercing.

The development of translucent carving during the Han Dynasty highlights the creativity and craftsmanship of ancient Chinese jade artisans. Translucent carvings not only involve surface engraving but also utilize spatial manipulation to elevate the art of carving to new heights. In these works, jade craftsmen must consider not only the surface details but also how to seamlessly integrate the carving's theme with the background space, achieving a more vivid and realistic effect. By combining openwork carving with relief, round carving, and even hollowing techniques, these artworks display multi-layered three-dimensional effects, imbuing them with depth and complexity.

The application of this technique injected more creativity and expressiveness into Han Dynasty jade artifacts, enriching the artistic forms and providing viewers with a more nuanced visual experience. Moreover, Han Dynasty openwork carvings blur the lines between hollowing and ornamentation, where hollowed-out lines serve both as contours and decorative elements. This characteristic sets them apart from the openwork carvings of the Warring States period and serves as a significant basis for dating jade artifacts. For instance, the jade ornament depicted in Figure 26, unearthed from the Nanyue King Tomb, showcases exquisite design. The dynamic phoenix motif carved using openwork techniques in the upper right corner, combined with various relief and openwork carving techniques, creates a richly layered and versatile composition.

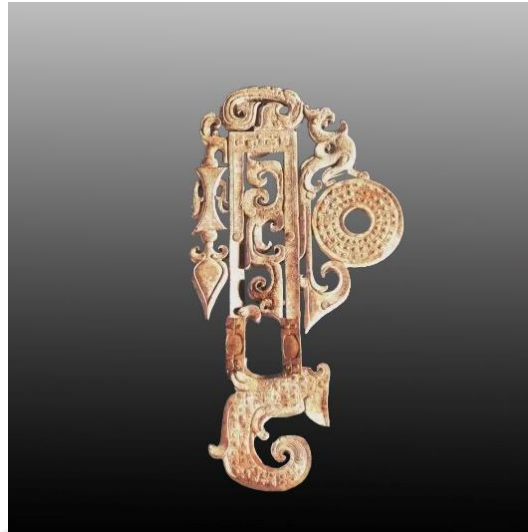


Figure 26 Jade Ornament of Nanyue King Tomb

Source: Nanyue King Museum.

<https://www.nywmuseum.org.cn/Collection/List/zyzb>

During the Western Han period, the use of lines in jade relief carving reached a pinnacle. The delicate "filamentous carving" technique, renowned for its intricate craftsmanship, produced a series of artworks characterized by a harmonious density and robustness, leaving observers in awe. "Filamentous carving" is considered the most distinctive carving technique in Western Han jade relief craftsmanship, distinguished by five characteristics: thinness, softness, elongation, lightness, and strength. This technique is commonly found on small-scale objects, featuring smooth and rounded lines, delicate and slender forms, interwoven lines that appear elusive yet present, akin to filaments, balancing strength with softness. Unfortunately, this technique gradually faded away after the Han Dynasty.

Through close observation and in-depth research at the Xuzhou Museum, the carving craftsmanship of "filamentous carving" can be discerned. Under magnification, irregular grooves with serrated or fuzzy edges, varying depths, and irregularities are visible. This is attributed to the craftsmen of the time using hard and sharp tools made of diamond, crystal, or flint, repeatedly grinding and carving with

moistened powdered jade sand. However, modern reproductions lack the charm of ancient craftsmanship, with deliberately unnatural lines appearing uniform in width and depth under magnification, thus losing the original allure.

Thus, the widespread application of jade relief carving techniques during the Han Dynasty reached a pinnacle in the aesthetic form of jade artifacts. From the production process of jade relief carving works, we can see the profound understanding and exquisite application of carving techniques by ancient jade craftsmen, as well as their relentless pursuit of artistic innovation. The inheritance and development of these techniques endowed Han Dynasty jade artifacts with unique artistic value and historical significance.

4.1.3.2 The Pursuit of Three-Dimensionality

The pursuit of three-dimensionality in Han dynasty jade artifacts is evident from the changes in relief artistry, as seen in the aforementioned techniques of high relief and translucent carving. Besides these, the widespread use of round carving techniques also adds a lively charm to the aesthetic appeal of Han dynasty jade artifacts. In the Han dynasty, round carving and high relief were the most prominent forms in the presentation of decorative art pieces, showcasing the exquisite jade carving skills and lively aesthetic tastes of the era. Round carving works in Han dynasty jade artifacts were often crafted from high-quality jade materials with excellent texture and exquisite craftsmanship, presenting elegant designs. These pieces depicted a wide range of subjects through realistic portrayal techniques, including scenes of daily life and various animals. Particularly common were depictions of animals and mythical beasts, such as oxen, sheep, birds, tortoises, bears, and protective deities, each exhibiting distinct features. These round carving works also combined relief and incised carving techniques seamlessly, serving as exemplary models of comprehensive artistic expression.

It's worth mentioning that the pursuit of three-dimensionality in Han dynasty jade carving is not merely a simple transition from two-dimensional to three-dimensional, but rather a multi-perspective approach. In modern painting, perspective

often employs a single viewpoint, observing and depicting objects from a singular angle. However, in Han dynasty jade design, the choice of viewpoint depends on the diverse artistic representations and sculptural needs. For the depiction of an animal, different viewpoints are often used for its head, neck, chest, abdomen, and limbs, aiming to maximize the portrayal of the object's dynamism and vitality. This characteristic is particularly prominent in jade carvings of chimeric creatures like the "Yu Chi Hu" (Jade Tiger). This multi-perspective technique bears resemblance to Cubism and the strobe effect. Yet, over 2,000 years ago in the Han dynasty, Chinese craftsmen adeptly employed this multi-angle approach, leaving behind many jade artifacts imbued with strong torsional tension and dynamism.

In the realm of three-dimensional jade carving, the "Han Ba Dao" technique stands out as a unique craft of Han dynasty jade artifacts. With its distinctive cutting method, "Han Ba Dao" (汉八刀) employs concise straight lines to abstractly represent the morphological characteristics. The broad shadow lines delineate the form, creating clear and powerful lines as if cut by a knife—smooth and sleek. However, in reality, this effect is achieved through repeated carving and grinding to form the effect of broad-bladed axes, showcasing precision and discipline. The name "Han Ba Dao" carries two layers of meaning: first, it describes the concise and powerful knife work, akin to eight knives achieving one masterpiece; second, it refers to the symmetry, where the carved lines on both sides form the shape resembling the Chinese character "八" (ba), depicting an upward and downward stroke. This carving technique is commonly found on objects such as jade pigs, figures of elders, and jade cicadas.

It is no exaggeration to say that continuous innovation and advancement in jade carving techniques drove the formation of the distinctive aesthetic characteristics and artistic styles of Han Dynasty jade artifacts. From initial constraints to later freeform creations, the evolution of jade carving provided a broader scope for artifact production, transitioning jade objects from simple patterns to intricate three-dimensional sculptures, showcasing the unique artistic allure of the Han Dynasty.

4.2 "Research on the Cultural Value of Decorative Styles in Western Han Dynasty Jade Artifacts"

The Decorative Styles of Jade Artifacts in the Western Han Dynasty, as an important carrier of cultural heritage, deeply reflect the cultural characteristics and values of the society at that time. Firstly, jade artifacts played a significant role in politics and rituals during the Western Han Dynasty. As symbols of power, the decorative styles of jade artifacts often embody the majesty of imperial authority and the social hierarchy. The use of jade bi, jade cong, and other ceremonial objects not only demonstrated reverence for heaven and earth but also upheld the order of state governance. Jade artifacts served as symbols of identity and status. The decorative styles and material choices of jade artifacts often reflected the social status and wealth of the wearer. This function of identity marking made jade artifacts important mediators in social interactions and also symbols of political authority.

"Furthermore, the religious beliefs and mythological legends of the Western Han period had a profound influence on the decorative styles of jade artifacts. The frequent appearance of mythical creatures such as chilong and phoenix on jade artifacts not only serves aesthetic purposes but also reflects worship and belief in mythological legends. These motifs reflect people's awe and prayers towards supernatural powers, while also expressing concepts of life and death.

Moreover, the decorative styles of jade artifacts in the Western Han period also embody profound philosophical ideas. The cosmological views of yin and yang and the Five Elements are reflected in the decorative motifs of jade artifacts, such as cloud and thunder patterns, water wave patterns, etc. These motifs not only serve decorative purposes but also contain an understanding of natural laws and cosmic order. The manifestation of these philosophical ideas not only enriches the cultural connotations of jade artifacts but also reflects people's understanding and exploration of the world at that time."

4.2.1 The Social Significance of Western Han Jade Artifacts

The presence of jade artifacts during the Western Han period was not solely attributed to their material value and exquisite craftsmanship, but more so to the

profound cultural significance and social value they embodied. During the Western Han period, jade artifacts, as a distinctive commodity, held multiple reasons and meanings for their existence.

Firstly, jade artifacts symbolized social status during the Western Han period. In the society of that time, jade artifacts were exclusive possessions of nobility and royalty, accessible only to them. Thus, the possession and use of jade artifacts not only represented material enjoyment but also served as symbols of social status and identity. By wearing or using jade artifacts, individuals could showcase their wealth and status, thereby gaining respect and recognition from others.

Secondly, jade artifacts served as carriers of cultural heritage during the Western Han period. Jade held a unique position in traditional Chinese culture, symbolizing auspiciousness, purity, and nobility. Jade artifacts of the Western Han period not only inherited the traditions of previous generations but also absorbed new cultural elements, forming unique decorative styles. These decorative styles and patterns not only reflected the aesthetic concepts and cultural values of the time but also passed down the cultural traditions and spiritual pursuits of the Chinese nation.

Additionally, jade artifacts in the Western Han period also had practical functions. Apart from serving as symbols of social status and carriers of cultural heritage, jade artifacts were also used in rituals and ceremonies. For example, the use of jade bi and jade cong ritual vessels not only demonstrated reverence for heaven and earth but also upheld the order of national governance. At the same time, jade artifacts were used in daily life, such as jade cups and jade plates, adding elegance and taste to people's lives.

In conclusion, the existence of jade artifacts during the Western Han period was multifaceted. They served as symbols of social status, carriers of cultural heritage, and practical items. Through the study and understanding of Western Han jade artifacts, we can better comprehend the social culture and aesthetic concepts of the time, as well as provide inspiration and reference for contemporary arts and crafts."

4.2.1.2 The Ideological Inheritance of Jade Artifacts in the Western Han Dynasty

The jade artifacts of the Western Han Dynasty reflect both Confucian and Daoist ideologies. Confucianism emphasizes the virtues of the gentleman and the symbolism of status, as Confucius mentioned the wearing of jade in the "Book of Rites" to regulate the behavior of gentlemen. During the Han Dynasty, Confucianism was highly respected, thus the Confucian idea of gentlemen valuing jade was promoted, and jade artifacts became symbols of status and moral conduct. Both men and women of the upper class used jade artifacts to display their social status, and jade ornaments adorned their clothing. The decorative styles of jade artifacts in the Western Han Dynasty not only showcased the artistry of craftsmanship but also deeply reflected the social culture, aesthetic concepts, and spiritual pursuits of the time. The ideological inheritance of these artifacts not only continued and developed the culture of previous generations but also integrated the unique characteristics and cultural innovations of the Western Han period.

To some extent, the jade artifacts of the Western Han period were a product of the perfect combination of art and politics. The form and significance of Han Dynasty jade artifacts were deeply influenced by the political and cultural pattern of Confucianism. The use of jade in rituals, funerals, and daily life was a typical representation. The promotion of Confucianism encouraged the widespread wearing of jade artifacts, while rulers used jade artifacts for political propaganda, resulting in a perfect combination of the artistic beauty of jade artifacts and their politicization. During this period, jade artifacts were characterized by vigorous and powerful carving techniques, demonstrating exquisite craftsmanship and artistic beauty. Over time, jade artifacts gradually became integrated into daily life as part of everyday decoration. Due to its profound cultural connotations, Western Han jade artifacts were not only expressions of material culture but also crystallizations of ancient civilization and wisdom, reflecting various aspects of the society's ideological use of jade (Li Chunke, personal communication, November 27, 2023).

The Ceremonial Use of Jade

Known as the ritual jade system, is one of the significant carriers of jade culture, particularly in sacrificial rites and court ceremonies. Compared to the complexity of the ritual jade system in the pre-Qin period, the Han Dynasty simplified certain aspects while inheriting others. Particularly in sacrificial activities, the importance of jade artifacts was prominently demonstrated. In the Han Dynasty, the ceremonial use of jade primarily featured jade bi discs and jade gui tablets as the main ritual objects. These jade artifacts were widely utilized not only in imperial ceremonies like worshipping the heavens and rivers but also played significant roles in local noble families' rituals. For instance, historical records indicate that jade bi discs discovered in places like Huayin may have been used in the foundation-laying ceremonies of temples, showcasing the indispensable role of jade artifacts in sacrificial activities.

Regarding diplomatic missions, jade bi discs served as crucial auspicious gifts. Western Han emperors often used jade bi discs to recruit talents, reward contributions, demonstrating the majesty and dignity of imperial authority. The presentation of jade bi discs as gifts not only showed respect and hospitality to the recipients but also highlighted the dignity and generosity of the donors. Furthermore, the utility of jade artifacts extended beyond sacrificial rites and diplomatic missions to include other ceremonies and etiquette activities. For example, the excavation of jade cong tubes and jade weapons in a few princely tombs suggests their use as ceremonial implements to signify noble status and ceremonial significance.

The Concept of Jade in Funeral Practices

The concept of jade use in funerary practices reflects the fusion of Daoist philosophy and Confucian tradition during the Western Han period. Xu Yanping suggests that during the Western Han period, jade artifacts were not merely decorative items but became indispensable elements in the pursuit of immortality by royalty and nobility. The longing for eternal life among royalty and nobility led them to perceive jade artifacts as bridges capable of transcending life and death, connecting them to the divine world. This perspective influenced the unique artistic style of Han Dynasty jade

artifacts, combining realism with exaggeration to create a series of romantic and fantastical masterpieces. Jade carvings of mythical beasts became representative works during this period, characterized by a free and unrestrained style that unified human, animal, and divine elements, such as variously depicted jade dragons and jade phoenixes, imbued with romanticism. These mythical beasts transcended earthly forms, expressing a longing and imagination for the divine and celestial realms through exaggerated artistic techniques, aligning with Daoist emphasis on conformity with nature and transcending the mundane.

For example, the design and production of funeral items such as jade garments and jade pillows not only considered the protection of the deceased's body and respect for life but also reflected reverence for the afterlife and understanding of the cycle of life. Upon the death of noblewomen, the jade ornaments they wore during their lifetime would be placed in their tombs. Jade dancer figurines, possibly associated with Taoist beliefs of ascension to immortality, were imbued with religious significance, symbolizing guides to the celestial realm. This design concept reflects Daoist views on life and death. Simultaneously, Confucian principles of lavish funerals are also manifested in the use of jade for funerary purposes, as preparing jade artifacts for the deceased expresses reverence for ancestors and the continuation of family traditions. This ideology embodies Confucian emphasis on family ethics and ancestral worship traditions.

The Concept of Jade in Daily Life

In daily life, the use of jade artifacts during the Western Han period reflects the influence of Confucianism. Wang Chaoyang suggests that the popularity of ornamental jade artifacts was driven by Confucian teachings, aiming to ward off evil and cultivate the moral image of a gentleman through their adornment. Jade was imbued with ethical and cultural significance, garnering wide acceptance among rulers and the populace alike. Furthermore, jade artifacts of the Western Han period were closely linked to traditional Chinese auspicious culture. They carried auspicious connotations, continuing the ancient practice of seeking blessings and avoiding misfortune from the

natural and human worlds. Jade was considered an auspicious object, with inscriptions or patterns expressing aspirations for happiness, beauty, and peace. Ornamental jade objects like “刚卯” (Gangmao), “严卯” (Yanluan), and “玉翁仲” (Yuwengzhong) were primarily designed to attract good fortune, avert disasters, and ensure safety, reflecting people's aspirations for a better life and their desire for blessings.

Confucian culture emphasizes moral standards and ritual systems, principles that were embodied in the design and production of jade artifacts. For instance, the aesthetic of jade artifacts pursued a sense of balance and harmony, reflecting Confucian life philosophy. Additionally, the Confucian doctrine of the "Doctrine of the Mean" was manifested in the design of everyday jade objects. The natural texture and color of jade, as well as its imitation and abstraction of natural forms, showcased an appreciation for natural beauty and respect for natural laws. Furthermore, Confucian ritualistic thoughts were reflected in the use of jade in daily life. Different jade artifacts were required for various ceremonial occasions, such as banquets and court meetings, demonstrating Confucian hierarchical views and ritual order.

In summary, during the Han Dynasty, jade artifacts carried profound symbolic meanings and cultural connotations, demonstrating multi-dimensional influences. Firstly, Han Dynasty jade artifacts were the perfect fusion of art and politics, with ritual jade, ornamental jade, and funerary jade being representative of this period. Their vigorous carving techniques showcased exquisite craftsmanship and artistic beauty. Secondly, the promotion of Confucianism facilitated the widespread wearing of jade artifacts. Wearing jade was believed to ward off evil and cultivate the moral image of a gentleman, uniquely embodying moral and cultural concepts. Additionally, Han Dynasty jade artifacts were closely connected to traditional Chinese auspicious culture, embodying aspirations for a better life through auspicious symbolism. Lastly, jade held a special status among royal and noble families, being considered an indispensable element in the pursuit of immortality. Through unique artistic techniques, romantic and fantastical jade carvings expressed aspirations for the divine and celestial realms.

Overall, Han Dynasty jade artifacts, with their profound cultural significance and multi-layered symbolic meanings, stand as valuable artistic treasures within the legacy of ancient civilizations.

4.2.2 The Aesthetic Expression of Decorative Styling in Han Dynasty Jade

Artifacts

"In Han Dynasty art, movement, strength, and momentum are its essence"(Li, Z., 2017). The Han Dynasty, as a period full of vitality and passion in Chinese history, thrived during the vigorous development of feudal society in China, establishing a centralized authoritarian state. The Han Empire stood out with its vigorous vitality and broad global vision, facing the ever-changing international situation. Especially in the Western Han period, society was filled with ambition, and people demonstrated a spirit of positive initiative, resilience, and inclusiveness. The expansion of the Western Han was not limited to geographical territory but also extended to the vast realm of ideas. Its brilliance was not only reflected in political governance and military achievements but also in its rich cultural and intellectual world. The aesthetic concept of the Western Han was nurtured in this era of freedom and vitality, enriching the ideological and spiritual culture of the Han Dynasty. Therefore, the aesthetic ideology of Western Han jade artifacts embodies an understanding of all things in nature, blending the grandeur of mountains, rivers, and seas, reflecting a vibrant and progressive era atmosphere, while also displaying a bold and majestic temperament and style. Social, political, economic patterns, cultural heritage, spiritual atmosphere, and social psychology, among other factors, play a crucial and decisive role in shaping the aesthetic concepts of the Han Dynasty.

The aesthetic outlook of Western Han jade artifacts exhibits distinct new qualities. Building upon and absorbing the freedom, romantic novelty of the Chu State, and the simplicity, liveliness, and realistic orientation of the Central Plains jade artifacts, Western Han jade artifacts have crafted a uniquely styled, majestic, and romantic aesthetic. In harmony with the vibrant and progressive spirit of the time, Western Han jade artifacts seek to showcase a sense of vitality and tension, reflecting a resolute, majestic, and actively enterprising "grand beauty" atmosphere while also integrating

romantic exaggeration and free-spirited aesthetic interests. It is worth emphasizing that the innovation in the aesthetic form of Western Han jade artifacts is a remarkable feature, demonstrating the unique aspects of aesthetic consciousness in the Han Dynasty and achieving a high artistic realm in design, composition, style, and ornamentation. Furthermore, the aesthetic of Western Han jade artifacts is closely integrated with daily life, cleverly intertwining aesthetics with life and blending into a rich atmosphere of daily life. This aesthetic consciousness perfectly reflects the spirit of the Han Dynasty, its rich cultural and ideological landscape, social cognition, and the emotional hues of individual lives.

Since the Han Dynasty, there has been a significant shift in the aesthetic perspective of jade artifacts. Jade artifacts gradually moved away from mystique, no longer pursuing the solemnity of the Shang and Zhou periods or continuing the mysterious elements of prehistoric jade artifacts. Instead, Han Dynasty jade artifacts began to emphasize rationality, combining freehand brushwork with realism, and paying more attention to integration with daily life, thus creating a new style. For example, the jade horn-shaped cup unearthed from the tomb of the Southern Yue King in Guangzhou used Xinjiang Hetian white jade, with the body of the cup carved with the unique Han Dynasty motif of the Kui dragon, displaying smooth lines and exquisite craftsmanship. This piece combines mythological elements with practicality, demonstrating both romantic and realistic characteristics, reflecting the unique aesthetic ideology of Han Dynasty jade artifacts. This transformation holds significant value in the study of Han Dynasty jade artifacts.

The essence of form endows powerful emotions of aesthetic perception upon those who can perceive its meaning. Han Dynasty jade workers' familiarity with forms cultivated a high degree of aesthetic consciousness, even unconsciously depositing deep-seated aesthetic cognition. They naturally integrated principles of beauty, composition, form, and ornamentation into their works, creating a unique aesthetic of Han Dynasty jade artifacts for future generations. Aesthete George Santayana divides beauty into three layers: material beauty, formal beauty, and

expressive beauty, emphasizing the relationship between aesthetic form and constitutive elements. Han Dynasty jade artifacts, due to their rich formal connotations, are regarded as artistic images. The unique aesthetic of Han Dynasty jade artifacts is manifested in their incomparably exquisite forms, and studying these forms helps to understand the aesthetic taste and concepts of the Han Dynasty.

German philosopher Leibniz once said, "There are no two identical leaves in the world," and jade is no exception. Due to its unique color, texture, and structure, each piece of jade is unique. Different sizes, shapes, patterns, and colors determine the suitable themes and styles for jade design. "Matching the material with the craftsmanship" is a traditional Chinese principle of creation, which is particularly prominent in jade carving. The Han Dynasty, as the most innovative and creative dynasty in Chinese history, had a grand and ambitious artistic style. Building upon the Confucian thought of the Spring and Autumn period and the humanistic cultural thought of focusing on humanity, Han Dynasty jade artifacts merged the romantic and unrestrained art of the Chu region with the simple and lively aesthetic orientation of the Central Plains, developing into a new style characterized by grandeur and romance. This style pursues exaggeration and agility in design. At the same time, since the beginning of the Han Dynasty, jade artifacts have shed the veil of divinity, departing from the "mysterious, bizarre, and fantastical content and forms rich in religious colors" of the pre-Han period, and instead embracing a "new style" that starts from rationality, faces life, and emphasizes the integration of freehand brushwork and realism. The formation of this "new style" is inseparable from the collective unconscious design principles of the craftsmen of the Han Dynasty.

4.2.2.1 Matching the Material with the Craftsmanship

In the realm of jade craftsmanship, the principle of "matching the material with the craftsmanship" stands as paramount. This principle dictates that the design of any jade artifact must be intricately intertwined with the inherent qualities of the jade itself. Departing from this principle results in a significant diminishment of both the aesthetic and artistic value of the final piece. For every jade artisan, the initial step in

passing on their skills to apprentices is the practice of "assessing the jade." This involves evaluating the quality of jade based on factors such as its origin, surface oxidation layer, morphology, and inherent characteristics. "Origin" refers to the jade's source, as certain origins are associated with consistent performance and quality, such as Hetian jade renowned for its superior quality. "Surface oxidation layer" reflects the passage of time, with experienced artisans discerning the origin and quality of jade based on this layer. Generally, jade with a patina indicates river-worn seed material, while freshly mined mountain material lacks this layer. "Morphology" encompasses size, shape, and form, with different morphologies suited to different artistic themes. Exceptional-quality jade is rare and requires maximizing its utility while preserving its volume, thus designing artifacts that align with its morphology. Finally, "characteristics" pertain to qualities like color, texture, purity, and fissure patterns, which collectively determine the overall quality of the jade. These four aspects—origin, surface oxidation layer, morphology, and characteristics—are interdependent and inseparable, forming the cornerstone of jade assessment and design.

4.2.2.2 Emphasizing the Grand While Attending to The Minute

During the Han Dynasty, jade artisans placed great emphasis on capturing the overall spirit of their creations, focusing on conveying the inner essence of their subjects. They excelled in capturing the most vital and characteristic moments of figures or animals, using concise and vigorous lines to sculpt their subjects. The emphasis was on showcasing the most representative expressions and charm of figures and animals, often overlooking detailed depictions—a principle colloquially known as "grabbing the essence and neglecting the details." This characteristic is evident across various forms of art during the Han Dynasty: portrait stones typically appeared in the form of silhouette-carved lines, eschewing detailed facial features, yet clearly delineating the hierarchy and individuality of each figure, conveying their identity and spiritual temperament at a glance. Similarly, stone sculptures of the Han Dynasty often portrayed figures in exaggerated dynamic poses, standing majestic between heaven and earth. Han Dynasty artisans directed their focus towards capturing the spiritual

aspect of their subjects, embodying the traditional Chinese design principle of "expressing form through spirit."

4.2.2.2 Embracing Imaginative Ideas

During the Han Dynasty, jade artifacts exhibited greater richness in terms of both form and patterns compared to previous eras. Han Dynasty jade artisans were adept at employing versatile and mutually inspirational creative techniques in designing jade objects. Influenced by beliefs in immortals and mythical creatures, auspicious creatures such as dragons and phoenixes became highly popular motifs in jade artifacts. In Chinese mythology, these creatures were capable of flying through the clouds. Therefore, dragon and phoenix motifs often appeared alongside cloud patterns. Interestingly, Han Dynasty artisans frequently intertwined the auspicious qualities associated with dragons' hair and the long tails of phoenixes, creating highly romantic and imaginative designs.

The ingenuity of Han Dynasty jade artifacts was also evident in their shapes and intricate carvings. Skilled artisans mastered various carving techniques, including hollowing, carving in the round, relief carving, and intaglio carving, to create jade objects with intricate yet clearly delineated decorative patterns, showcasing a sense of artistic beauty that was both elaborate and well-structured.

4.2.3 The Artistic Value of Decorative Styles in Han Dynasty Jade Artifacts

The artistic value of Han Dynasty jade artifacts is not only reflected in their exquisite craftsmanship and unique designs, but also in their profound cultural and aesthetic concepts, as well as their profound influence and insights into contemporary art.

Firstly, the decorative styles of Han Dynasty jade artifacts embody exquisite craftsmanship and unique design. The manufacturing techniques of Han Dynasty jade artifacts are highly sophisticated, including techniques such as carving and relief, which bring the decorative motifs to life with a sense of three-dimensionality and dynamic beauty. These artifacts use simple and flowing lines to depict vivid animal figures and mysterious symbols, conveying both dynamism and mystique. Moreover, the

decorative motifs on jade artifacts also reflect the aesthetic concepts and cultural traditions of the time, providing important material evidence for understanding the social landscape and cultural characteristics of the Han Dynasty. The emphasis on symmetry, proportion, and detail in the decorative styles of Han Dynasty jade artifacts demonstrates the ancient craftsmen's precise grasp and pursuit of aesthetics. For instance, the dragon and phoenix motifs on jade artifacts not only appear lifelike in form but also convey the spirit and grandeur of these mythical creatures through meticulous carving and depiction. The application of these craftsmanship techniques and aesthetic principles endows the decorative styles of Han Dynasty jade artifacts with high artistic value and visual appeal, making them masterpieces and exemplars of ancient art.

Furthermore, the decorative styles of Han Dynasty jade artifacts reflect the characteristics of the social culture and aesthetic concepts of that time. In Han society, jade artifacts, as precious luxury items, were used in important occasions such as sacrifices and court ceremonies, carrying symbols of nobility and sanctity. Therefore, the decorative styles of Han Dynasty jade artifacts often exude a sense of grandeur and solemnity, with motifs often featuring auspicious patterns such as dragons, phoenixes, and mythical beasts, reflecting the people's aspirations and pursuits for auspiciousness and harmony. For example, the commonly seen dragon and phoenix motifs on jade artifacts not only showcase the beauty and delicacy of the artifacts but also symbolize the power and rule of emperors, highlighting the hierarchical system and feudal culture of Han society. These decorative styles reflect the social culture and aesthetic concepts of the time, expressing people's reverence and prayers to the deities, while also embodying the social status and wealth of the ruling class.

Additionally, the decorative styles of Han Dynasty jade artifacts have had a profound influence on subsequent art. Many art scholars believe that the stylistic elements and motifs of Han Dynasty jade artifacts have been continuously referenced in later artistic works and integrated into modern art creation. For instance, the dragon and phoenix motifs commonly seen on Han Dynasty jade artifacts are reflected in various forms of traditional Chinese art such as painting, sculpture, and crafts, becoming

important components of traditional Chinese art. Moreover, the decorative styles of Han Dynasty jade artifacts have also influenced Western art. For example, in 19th-century European art, the decorative styles of Han Dynasty jade artifacts had a profound impact on the works of artists, promoting the exchange and development of art. Therefore, the decorative styles of Han Dynasty jade artifacts not only have profound historical origins but also provide important insights and influences on subsequent art, enriching the diversity and uniqueness of world art.

Lastly, the decorative styles of Han Dynasty jade artifacts provide important references and inspirations for contemporary art creators. Through in-depth research and reference to Han Dynasty jade artifacts, contemporary artists can draw on the aesthetic essence and artistic concepts, creating artworks that conform to modern aesthetic trends and characteristics. For example, many contemporary artists have created artworks with unique styles and contemporary features by borrowing from the motifs, styles, and craftsmanship techniques of Han Dynasty jade artifacts, injecting new vitality and creativity into the development of contemporary art. Therefore, the decorative styles of Han Dynasty jade artifacts not only have historical significance and aesthetic value but also have a positive impact and driving force on the development of contemporary art.

4.3 Current Status and Challenges of Contemporary Jade Sculpture Art

4.3.1 Contemporary Jade Market Status

In contemporary life, the utilization of jade has significantly transcended traditional realms of decoration and ceremonial practices, manifesting increasingly diverse applications and forms, thereby showcasing newfound vitality and dynamism. Its principal classifications can be broadly categorized into two main types: jade ornaments and jade ornaments.

Jade ornaments, primarily crafted from jade stone through exquisite craftsmanship, encompass various forms such as necklaces, bracelets, earrings, and rings. Functioning as wearable artworks, jade ornaments epitomize a perfect fusion of fashion and tradition, owing to their distinctive allure and profound cultural connotations.

Not only do they embellish attire and enhance overall demeanor, but they also embody people's aspirations for a better life and reverence for traditional culture. Moreover, jade exerts a positive influence in providing psychological solace. For the Chinese populace, jade transcends mere ornamentation, serving as a spiritual pillar capable of soothing the soul and instilling hope, thereby offering a unique avenue for contemporary individuals to seek inner tranquility amidst the rapid pace of modern life.

In recent years, the jade ornament market has continued to thrive. According to the "2023 China Jewelry Industry Development Report" released by Gems & Jewelry Trade Association of China, the market scale of China's jewelry and jade jewelry industry was approximately 820 billion yuan in 2023, representing a year-on-year growth of 14%. Among this, jade products accounted for 150 billion yuan, making up 18%. Sales of pendant and bracelet products represent over half of the total, indicating sustained consumer demand for jade ornaments.

The significant market demand has spurred the development of a vast trading market. Ruili City in Yunnan Province is renowned as the "first stop of Sino-Burmese jadeite origin". Approximately 90% of the world's raw jadeite originates from Myanmar, with over 90% of this share entering China through Ruili due to its exceptional geographical advantage. This has resulted in the emergence of a massive jade trading market. With the rise of e-commerce, 90% of Ruili's jadeite is sold through online channels. According to statistics, Ruili's live streaming sales reached 7.498 billion yuan in 2023.

Such a burgeoning jewelry and jadeite live streaming industry has also attracted a large number of talents. Currently, Ruili boasts 150 jade carvers and designers, over 50,000 jewelry and jadeite live streaming practitioners, 225 quality inspection personnel, and 2,749 certified anchors.

In the field of fashion design, some designers ingeniously incorporate jade into jewelry design, creating unique styles. This practice of combining traditional jade ornaments with modern fashion elements not only continues the traditional beauty of jade but also imbues it with new fashionable connotations, becoming an important

way for contemporary individuals to showcase their taste. Drawing inspiration from international trends, designers blend Eastern aesthetic elements to create works that are both fashionable and culturally rich. For example, geometric-shaped jade rings crafted using modern cutting techniques, or jade earrings that reinterpret traditional patterns in abstract ways, vividly demonstrate the fashionization of jade ornaments. However, it is worth noting that the current application status of jade ornaments still faces issues such as relatively limited craftsmanship types.

Jade ornaments, on the other hand, serve as significant elements of home decoration, imparting a touch of extraordinary brilliance to modern living spaces with their serene and elegant demeanor. Often placed in study rooms, living rooms, bedrooms, and other areas, they not only beautify the space but also embody auspicious wishes for peace, prosperity, and good fortune. With a wide variety of themes such as landscapes, flowers and birds, figures, and auspicious animals, each jade ornament encapsulates the ingenuity of craftsmen and their pursuit of beauty. They offer not only visual enjoyment but also spiritual solace, providing people with a sense of tranquility and relaxation amidst the hustle and bustle of urban life.

Compared to jade jewelry, jade ornaments exhibit a more three-dimensional quality, with their sculptural language being favored by artists in the field of artistic creation. In recent years, the exchange between art academies and the jade carving industry has intensified, with some academies establishing jade carving studios or related courses. Simultaneously, some designers and artists have integrated jade artifacts with modern art, giving rise to a series of innovative works that combine traditional craftsmanship with modern aesthetics. When creating jade ornaments, artists no longer confine themselves to traditional themes and expressive techniques but incorporate more personal emotions and artistic considerations into their works. They apply modern artistic concepts to explore new forms of jade material expression, producing works that possess both artistic value and contemporary characteristics. Examples include abstract jade sculptures infused with contemporary art styles or jade

ornaments reinterpreting traditional stories in modern artistic language, exemplifying the artistic transformation of jade ornaments.

Various levels of museums and art galleries have also held jade exhibitions, attracting a large number of visitors. The "Jade·Encounter" series of exhibitions curated by Associate Professor Qian Liang from the Central Academy of Fine Arts injected new vitality and exploration into contemporary jade media art in China. Focusing on exploring the diverse expressions and potentials of jade in contemporary art, the exhibitions presented a splendid dialogue spanning tradition and modernity.

In the "Jade•Encounter Future—Invitational Exhibition of Chinese Contemporary Academy Jade Carving" held at the Suzhou Art Museum of Suzhou University of Science and Technology in 2017, artists created contemporary art works using jade as a medium. These works integrate tradition and modernity, Eastern and Western elements, craftsmanship and artistry, enhancing the quality, inheriting the culture, enriching the language, and expanding the boundaries of jade. The "Jade•Encounter Evolution—Exhibition of Chinese Contemporary Jade Media Art" in 2022 showcased over 70 works by nearly 50 artists, representing a series of exhibitions that have a significant and prominent impact on jade media art creation, further promoting the transformation of jade carving into contemporary art. These exhibitions not only provide a platform for showcasing artists' creative achievements but also promote innovation and development in jade carving art, injecting new momentum into the Chinese art scene.

4.3.2 Contemporary Jade Consumption Trends

The report "Young People Emerge as the Main Force in Jewelry Purchases" from the "China Consumer News" pointed out that "During the 2024 Spring Festival, the turnover of jewelry and jewelry increased by more than 120% year-on-year. Consumers born in the 1990s and 2000s accounted for nearly 60% of the consumption, becoming the main force in jewelry and jewelry consumption" (Li, Y. J., 2024). This indicates that in contemporary society, young people have become a new force in jewelry consumption. According to the definition of the World Health Organization,

young people are aged between 10 and 24. However, in this article, young people refer to the younger generation relative to middle-aged and elderly people with more traditional cognition and aesthetics, mainly including those born in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s who have independent economic capabilities. This group of people generally have received good education, and their awareness and acceptance of new things are relatively high. Whether it is for chasing trends or for the "awakening of cultural heritage," jade has quietly entered the lives of young people. Young people believe that wearing jade is not only aesthetically pleasing but also demonstrates identity. Moreover, the auspicious and protective meanings associated with jade also attract young people. Unlike the older generation's preference for traditional themes and styles, young people have their own interpretations and aesthetic preferences when it comes to jade.

Firstly, contemporary young people prioritize the fusion of traditional elements with modern aesthetics. Against the backdrop of cultural confidence, the integration of cultural symbols with modern aesthetics has become a favored form among today's youth, who increasingly emphasize traditional elements. With the rise of "Guochao" (national trend), more and more jewelry designs and productions have incorporated elements of Chinese culture that young people adore, such as retro style, filigree, inlay, engraving, and blue glazing. According to a survey released by Ipsos on "2023 Jewelry Consumption Trends," which surveyed 5,000 adults aged 18-40, 91% of Chinese respondents preferred to purchase jewelry containing traditional Chinese elements, with approximately half of the respondents associating jewelry with elements of traditional Chinese culture with positive meanings and exquisite craftsmanship. This indicates that designs incorporating traditional Chinese elements have broad market prospects.

Secondly, contemporary young people have higher demands for the design and artistic sensibility of jade ornaments. Through observation and analysis of the market, it is evident that contemporary young collectors tend to favor creative, novel, and interesting designs, contrasting sharply with the older generation's emphasis on precious materials and dignified styles. As Xie Zhaohua stated: "The younger generation

of consumers prefer innovative designs rather than traditional large-scale jade sculptures." For instance, cartoon-style jade carvings have gained popularity in recent years, attracting the attention of the younger generation with their unique designs. Meanwhile, in the Sihui and Pingzhou markets, many contemporary artworks and carvings have achieved good sales performance. For example, Zhuangjia Jade successfully combined jade with ceramics, achieving significant results. This innovative combination not only attracts consumers but also faces high demand in the market. In contrast, large-scale handicrafts and traditional artworks are relatively less popular among young people, especially large-scale artworks carved by masters, despite their high prices ranging from hundreds of thousands to millions of yuan, their actual market sales performance is not satisfactory. These instances illustrate the market's strong demand for novel designs and innovative elements. Artists need to adapt to this trend by creating works that are more in line with the aesthetic preferences and consumption tendencies of the younger generation to ensure that jade carving remains vibrant and attractive in the contemporary art market.

In conclusion, with the rise of the "Guochao" trend and the emergence of the younger generation, the status of jade ornaments in contemporary society is gradually rising. As the new force in jewelry consumption, young people have higher expectations for designs that integrate traditional elements with modern aesthetics. Therefore, the jade industry should keep pace with the times, constantly innovate, and meet the consumption demands of young people to maintain market competitiveness and ensure sustained development.

4.3.3 The Value of Contemporary Jade Carving Art

Chinese jade culture possesses unique cultural value, forming a relatively independent aesthetic system. Over the past several thousand years, jade carving has been widely regarded as a handicraft characterized by precious materials and exquisite craftsmanship. Artisans creatively utilize jade materials to achieve the greatest artistic effect, beginning with the first step of the jade carving process: stone appreciation and jade reading. Artisans assess the natural texture, grain, shape of the jade material, and

even utilize some of its "flaws" for artistic processing. Subsequently, they ingeniously integrate these elements and use their superb carving skills to imbue the artwork with people's wishes for dispelling misfortune, praying for blessings, and wishing for auspiciousness and health. This endows the artwork with artistic value, making it cherished and passed down through generations. Thus, the value of jade ornaments is inseparable from elements such as materials, craftsmanship, and design.

In contemporary society, with the influence of Western artistic culture and changes in people's perceptions, the value of jade carving art has also changed, primarily reflected in economic value and artistic value.

1. The economic value of contemporary jade carving is primarily manifested in the material and craftsmanship, namely the value of materials and the value of craftsmanship.

In traditional jade carving craftsmanship, the selection of materials is an important process. Traditional jade carving masters typically design based on the physical characteristics of the jade material itself before proceeding with the design and production. There is an ancient Chinese saying: "Gold has a price, but jade is priceless." However, in the jade market, jade materials are categorized based on their composition, color, luster, transparency, and other characteristics, ranging from superior to inferior quality. The economic value of jade carving often depends to a greater extent on the value of the materials. For example, it's rare for the price of a piece of ordinary agate to exceed that of a piece of high-quality jadeite.

Craftsmanship, on the other hand, is the result of dedicated learning and rigorous training by jade carvers. In jade carving art, the relationship between craftsmanship and materials is inseparable. Confucius once said, "Jade is not useful until it is carved." Even the most exquisite jade needs to be carved to become a useful tool. How to deal with flaws or defects in jade materials and bring out the beauty inherent in them tests the experience and design thinking of jade carvers.

The unshakable status of craftsmanship and materials in traditional jade carving has undergone changes in contemporary jade carving art. In contrast to

traditional jade carving masters who prioritize "heavy work and heavy materials," many avant-garde artists tend to favor experimental jade carving. Unlike craft artworks, the value of art pieces is not determined by the value of materials. Therefore, in jade carving creation, artists are not obsessed with precious jade materials. Some even prefer the "waste materials" available in the market. There are several reasons for this phenomenon. Firstly, these materials are relatively inexpensive, greatly reducing the artists' trial-and-error costs, allowing them to explore and experiment freely. Secondly, these materials are more distinctive. Many low-priced jade stones may have mixed colors and rough textures, which actually provide artists with more creative space, facilitating the creation of unique artworks.

The emotional value of contemporary jade carving is primarily manifested in personal expression and the spirit of the times.

Through innovative use of jade carving, artists integrate their personal emotional experiences and the spirit of the times into their works. When selecting and processing jade materials, they imbue them with personal emotions and stories, resulting in each piece containing a unique emotional warmth. These emotions may be fervent longing for family, friendship, or love, or awe and reverence for nature, life, and the universe, infusing each piece with a unique emotional hue. This transmission of emotion transcends the material itself, not only attracting the audience's attention but also touching their hearts. Whether through the delicate textures of the works or their profound thematic implications, viewers are prompted to engage in deep reflection and emotional resonance with life and art. This interactive exchange of emotions makes jade carving works a emotional link connecting the past and the present, humans and nature.

Similarly, the spirit of the times is fully reflected in jade carving works. With the rapid development of society and the changing cultural concepts, contemporary jade carving artists have begun to focus on broader social issues such as environmental protection, cultural heritage, and social justice. Through their creations, they express these contemporary themes in the form of jade carvings, making their works a vehicle for reflecting the characteristics of the times and the voice of the people.

This expression of the times through jade not only enriches the connotation of jade carving art but also revitalizes this traditional art form in modern society.

Collectors, on the other hand, express their yearning for a better life and their love for art by collecting these artworks. They cherish these artworks not only for their unique aesthetic value but also for the cultural significance and emotional sustenance they carry. Through collecting jade carving works, collectors not only satisfy their pursuit of beauty but also achieve emotional resonance across time and space with the artists.

The artistic value of contemporary jade carving primarily manifests in its values of inheritance and innovation.

Contemporary jade carving art achieves a unique balance between inheritance and innovation. On one hand, artists delve deep into the ancient jade carving techniques, ensuring the essence of traditional craftsmanship is preserved. On the other hand, they boldly explore new design concepts and expressive techniques, presenting jade carving works with distinct contemporary features.

In terms of inheritance, contemporary jade carving artists conduct in-depth studies of ancient jade culture and meticulously replicate classical works. This not only preserves the essence of traditional craftsmanship but also infuses the works with new vitality. Through meticulous research of ancient jade artifacts, they revive lost techniques, ensuring the continuity of these precious cultural heritages. Simultaneously, they continuously explore and practice, integrating traditional craftsmanship with modern aesthetics, creating jade carving works that embody both traditional charm and modern aesthetic appeal. This respect for tradition and inheritance allows jade carving art to resonate across time and space with contemporary audiences. For instance, Lu Weiping's works such as "Mechanical Armor" demonstrate a contemporary transformation of traditional elements, integrating dragon motifs from Warring States jade artifacts into modern sculpture creation, presenting a unique and personalized artistic style. This creative process not only preserves the historical significance of traditional elements but also integrates contemporary aesthetics and artistic expression.

In terms of innovation, contemporary jade carving artists bravely break free from traditional constraints, integrating modern artistic concepts and techniques into jade carving creation. They no longer confine themselves to traditional themes and forms but instead broaden their artistic horizons, incorporating contemporary art elements such as abstraction and symbolism into their works. For example, artist Liang Kegang's jade carving work "Luxurious Captivity," in the form of handcuffs, symbolically showcases the value and material significance of jade while also implying psychological connotations, suggesting how the preciousness of jade can psychologically bind and influence individuals to achieve a perfect harmony of material and essence. This innovation not only enriches the expressive techniques of jade carving art but also imbues the works with a sense of contemporaneity and artistic value. Moreover, contemporary jade carving artists actively explore new materials and techniques, integrating techniques from other art forms with jade carving to create unprecedented artistic effects.



Figure 27 Jade handcuffs

Source: Liang Kegang's Portfolio

<https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E6%A2%81%E5%85%8B%E5%88%9A/17181896>

Overall, the value of contemporary jade carving art lies not only in its exquisite craftsmanship and profound cultural heritage but also in its perfect integration of tradition and innovation. This integration not only endows jade carving works with aesthetic value but also with collectible and investment value.

Chinese jade culture has a long history, carrying profound cultural heritage and ancient history. With the changes of the times and the development of society, contemporary jade carving art has shown unique charm in the balance between inheritance and innovation. The inheritance of traditional craftsmanship and the fusion with modern aesthetics breathe new life into jade carving works. Meanwhile, artists' attention to and expression of the spirit of the times make jade carving works a witness to the era and a voice for the people. Whether it's traditional classics or avant-garde experimental creations, they all demonstrate the rich connotation and diverse forms of Chinese jade carving art. Therefore, the value of contemporary jade carving art lies not only in its artistic quality and aesthetics but also in the cultural emotions and spirit of the times it carries, serving as an important link between the past and the present, tradition and modernity, and making significant contributions to the inheritance and development of Chinese culture.

4.3.4 Challenges Faced by the Contemporary Jade Carving Industry

However, compared to other artistic mediums, the art of jade carving is still in its early stages. Although there has been some development in recent years, overall there is still a lack of widespread recognition and in-depth exploration. The development of contemporary jade carving art faces many challenges:

Firstly, the contemporary jade carving industry faces challenges in terms of market and aesthetic preferences. On one hand, there is intense market competition, and the phenomenon of homogenized jade carving products is quite serious, leading consumers to feel confused and indecisive when making choices. The proliferation of homogenized products also limits the creative space for artists because they often need to find breakthroughs among numerous similar works, posing a challenge to both creative drive and artistic value. On the other hand, consumers' aesthetic demands are

becoming increasingly personalized. Modern individuals have higher expectations for the aesthetic standards and taste of jade carving works; they seek unique and personalized artistic pieces rather than traditional mass-produced products. This requires artists to continuously innovate during the creative process, enhancing the uniqueness and artistic value of their works to meet market demands.

Secondly, the contemporary jade carving industry faces challenges in terms of craftsmanship and innovation. With the gradual retirement of the older generation of jade carving artisans, traditional jade carving techniques face the risk of being lost. Younger generations of jade carvers often encounter difficulties and challenges in learning and inheriting traditional techniques because traditional skills require long-term learning and practice, and many techniques may no longer have people to pass them on. Therefore, effectively inheriting and promoting traditional techniques has become an urgent issue in the current jade carving industry. The continuous development of technology brings new tools and techniques to jade carving art while also squeezing the living space of traditional craftsmen. For example, CNC engraving machines and laser engraving technology provide jade carvers with more possibilities and creative space, but mastering new technologies can also lead to the elimination of traditional craftsmanship. Meanwhile, striking a balance between using these new tools and techniques while maintaining the essence and artistic value of traditional craftsmanship is a challenge. Artists need to find a balance between innovation and tradition, maintaining the traditional charm and cultural connotations of their works while also achieving more exquisite and complex carving effects through technological means.

Furthermore, contemporary jade carving art faces the dual challenges of plagiarism and internationalization. The creation of art is a long and arduous process, and every innovative jade carving work is accompanied by countless imitations. For example, in recent years, there has been a flood of "faceless Buddha" and "baby Buddha" replicas. This has to some extent dampened the enthusiasm of jade carvers for creation, leading them to engage in mechanized replication work instead. Moreover,

faced with international competition, artists need to constantly innovate and develop unique artistic styles and expressions to distinguish their works from others and attract a broader international audience. To better integrate into the international art market, artists need to enhance communication and understanding with other cultures and art forms, enriching their works with richer connotations and meanings and promoting exchange and sharing among different cultures.

In summary, contemporary jade carving art faces challenges in terms of market and aesthetic preferences, craftsmanship and innovation, as well as plagiarism and internationalization. Intense market competition and the serious homogenization of products require artists to continuously innovate and enhance the uniqueness and artistic value of their works. Traditional techniques face the risk of being lost, and the development of technology brings new challenges and opportunities, demanding that artists maintain the essence of traditional craftsmanship while utilizing new technologies for innovation. Additionally, the prevalence of plagiarism and the need to compete internationally require artists to continuously innovate to enhance the international influence of their works. Therefore, the art of jade carving faces multiple challenges such as protecting tradition, fostering innovation, preventing plagiarism, and expanding into international markets, requiring the joint efforts of the entire industry to find solutions and promote the sustainable and healthy development of jade carving art.

4.4 Analysis of the Design Strategies of Decorative Styles of Western Han Jade Artifacts in Contemporary Art

4.4.1 Analysis of Decorative Styles of Western Han Jade Artifacts from the Perspective of Modern Aesthetics

Under the interpretation of modern aesthetics, experts affirm the decorative styles of Western Han jade artifacts, noting their significant characteristics. Compared to decorative styles of jade artifacts from other periods, those from the Western Han dynasty exhibit distinct features. First and foremost is their powerful expression. Experts unanimously agree that Han dynasty jade carvings demonstrate a strong sense of dynamism and form in accordance with the era's context. Through vivid carving

techniques, Han dynasty jade artifacts vividly express a unique sense of power, injecting vitality into the artwork.

Simultaneously, Western Han jade decorations emphasize a concise yet profound carving style. The carving process not only demonstrates conciseness but also reveals profound forms with just a few cuts, showcasing unique cultural connotations on the surface. This concise yet profound style reflects the artist's precise grasp of form and connotation in carving.

Artists such as Li Chunke, Wang Chaoyang, and Xu Yanping emphasize the high aesthetic level, exquisite craftsmanship, and distinctive artistic concepts of Western Han jade artifacts. The aesthetic level is demonstrated through the flexible application of multidimensional techniques, while exquisite craftsmanship is evident in the meticulous and powerful use of lines. These artists not only elevate aesthetics to multiple levels but also express unique artistic concepts through meticulous craftsmanship, injecting broader artistic value into Han dynasty jade artifacts.

Unique artistic concepts and personalized forms are another significant feature of Han dynasty jade artifacts. Artists emphasize the relaxed and unique aesthetic sense of the artwork's form, making Han dynasty jade artifacts more individualistic in artistry. This personalized form makes each Han dynasty jade artifact unique, becoming precious works of ancient art.

As an outstanding representative of ancient Chinese art, the decorative styles of Western Han jade artifacts are valuable resources for exploring Han dynasty culture and aesthetic concepts. They not only reflect a high level of aesthetics at the time but also reveal profound cultural connotations behind them.

During the Han dynasty, jade artifacts were highly esteemed for their profound cultural connotations and multiple symbolic meanings, demonstrating a unique combination of art and politics. During this period, jade objects for rituals, decorations, and funerary purposes became representative of Han dynasty culture. Their vigorous and bold carving techniques showcased the exquisite level of carving technology and

the high artistic beauty of the time. These exquisite artworks not only pleased the aesthetic senses but also became symbols of political power.

Furthermore, the prevalence of Confucianism in Han society promoted the widespread wearing of jade ornaments. By wearing jade, people could ward off evil spirits and cultivate the image of a gentleman, aligning with Confucian emphasis on moral concepts. Therefore, jade ornaments received unique manifestations in moral and cultural concepts, becoming an effective medium for conveying moral messages.

Additionally, Han dynasty jade artifacts were closely linked to China's traditional culture of auspiciousness. Jade objects embody auspicious implications, reflecting people's pursuit of a better life. Their unique cultural connotations make jade artifacts ceremonial items, representing not only hopes for good luck and happiness but also aspirations for a better quality of life.

Lastly, jade artifacts held a special status among the nobility and aristocracy in the Han dynasty, being regarded as indispensable elements in the pursuit of immortality. Through unique artistic techniques, artists created romantic and dreamlike jade carvings, expressing yearning and imagination for divinity and paradise, conveying the nobility's pursuit of eternal life and immortality. During this period, the ceremonial use of jade artifacts gradually weakened, and jade objects such as jade bi became marketable commodities in the Han dynasty. They were often exchanged as gifts among royalty and nobility, becoming commercialized collectibles and assets.

In summary, Han dynasty jade artifacts, with their profound cultural connotations and multilayered symbolic meanings, became valuable artworks in ancient civilization heritage. Their influence on art, politics, morality, religion, and social interaction enriched Han culture and provided important references and insights for cultural inheritance in later generations.

The cultural connotations and symbolic meanings carried by jade artifacts profoundly influence people's demand for and preferences in jade carvings. The Han dynasty period demonstrated widespread appreciation and demand for this system, with the rich and diverse unearthed jade artifacts vividly showcasing high-

quality jade carving craftsmanship and aesthetics. Experts will delve deeper into the social, cultural, and religious influences of Han dynasty jade carvings, as well as the strong demand from the noble class, thereby presenting the unique position of Han dynasty jade carving art in ancient civilization.

The six types of ritual vessels made of jade in the "Book of Rites" (《周礼》) reflect the Confucian reverence for the heavens and the earth. This is not only a specific manifestation of ritual but also a tribute to the art of jade carving. Especially, typical elements like the "jade pig-dragon" showcase the ancient understanding and craftsmanship of jade materials. These elements are not only expressions of aesthetics but also insightful examples of the deep cultural connotations of jade carving works.

Han dynasty jade carving works played an outstanding role in carrying social, cultural, and religious meanings, reflecting people's continuous pursuit of beauty, delicacy, and mystery. The strong demand for decorative jade artifacts among the aristocracy is not only a symbol of social status but also plays an indispensable role in religious rituals and ceremonial activities. These jade carving works not only add an atmosphere of nobility to the aristocracy but also serve as inheritors of social culture.

Aesthetically, people have unique pursuits in the aspects of the styling, ornamentation, and craftsmanship of jade carvings. The broad expression of various themes reflects the society's high attention to and love for art as a whole. This indicates that jade carving art during the Han dynasty period was not merely a form of decoration but also a refined art form rich in cultural connotations and profound symbolism, adding brilliance to the valuable artworks of ancient civilization heritage.

4.4.2 Analysis of the Role of Modern Technology in the Contemporary Transformation of Decorative Styling in Western Han Jade Art

Contemporary art benefits from emerging technologies, especially digital modeling, which is an unavoidable factor in the process of artistic innovation. The widespread use of digital modeling technology greatly enhances production efficiency, enabling creators to express their ideas in a more flexible manner. The introduction of this technology injects new aesthetic possibilities into traditional craftsmanship and

drives innovation in artistic techniques, facilitating the fusion of art and technology. Despite the potential threat that digital modeling technology may pose to traditional craftsmanship, experts emphasize the opportunities it brings for innovation and efficiency improvement. In the integration of digital modeling and traditional craftsmanship, experts believe that future development trends should focus on balancing the two to ensure the preservation of the unique value of traditional craftsmanship.

Firstly, the introduction of new technologies like digital modeling is poised to transform the way artists create. This integration is seen as a positive trend in contemporary art development, offering artists richer modes of expression and creative tools. The advent of digital modeling technology provides traditional crafts like jade carving with new perspectives in contemporary culture, altering traditional modes of artistic creation and fostering technological innovation in art, thereby expanding the horizons of artistic creation. This transformation not only pertains to the mode of production but also prompts a reevaluation of artistic creation concepts, providing artists with broader creative space and modes of thinking. This trend, rooted in the organic fusion of technology and art, not only broadens the expression forms of traditional craftsmanship but also propels the continuous evolution of contemporary art.

Secondly, the application of new technologies such as digital modeling significantly enhances production efficiency. Through digital modeling, artists can swiftly and precisely construct complex shapes, saving considerable time compared to traditional craftsmanship and offering creators more flexible creative spaces. This efficiency improvement not only facilitates the convenient production of artworks but also allows artists to focus more on expressing their creativity and exploring aesthetics. Digital technology also simplifies the handling of regular and intricate shapes, opening new doors to aesthetic expression for artists. The diverse forms and styles presented by digital modeling inject modernity into traditional craftsmanship, endowing artworks with contemporary artistic characteristics.

Currently, digital modeling stands as a significant achievement of contemporary technology, offering new avenues for artistic expression in digital sculpture and yielding many successful cases. However, despite the new possibilities it brings to artistic creation, the impact of new technologies like digital modeling on traditional craftsmanship cannot be overlooked, as they inevitably pose a threat to some artisans. Future trends are expected to involve the integration of digital modeling with traditional craftsmanship, emphasizing the importance of basic craftsmanship training alongside learning new technologies as a fundamental and effective approach to nurturing artisans and preserving traditional craftsmanship.

4.4.3 Analysis of the Influence and Value of Western Han Jade Ornamental Styling on Contemporary Jade Carving

4.4.3.1 Fusion of Tradition and Modernity

The decorative styles of jade artifacts from the Western Han Dynasty, such as their exquisite patterns, unique compositions, and flowing shapes, are not only treasures of ancient craftsmanship but also significant symbols of Chinese civilization. These elements have left a profound imprint on the course of history, providing valuable inspiration for contemporary jade carving art. In the creative process, contemporary jade carving artists do not merely replicate the forms of Western Han jade artifacts; instead, they delve into the intrinsic qualities of these traditional elements, exploring their aesthetic principles and cultural connotations. By integrating these traditional elements with modern aesthetics, they breathe new life and contemporary relevance into their works through innovative designs and techniques. This fusion not only enriches the expressive forms of contemporary jade carving art but also revitalizes traditional art in modern society.

In the process of inheriting the decorative styles of Western Han jade artifacts, contemporary jade carving artists not only inherit the techniques of their predecessors but also continuously explore new techniques and materials to meet the aesthetic demands of modern society. They integrate traditional craftsmanship with modern technology, such as using advanced carving tools and techniques, to make their works more refined in detail and more vivid as a whole. This inheritance and

innovation in craftsmanship not only ensure the continuity of traditional art but also propel the development of contemporary jade carving art.

The application of the decorative styles of Western Han jade artifacts in contemporary jade carving is not only an artistic innovation but also a reflection of social values. With the improvement of people's living standards, there is an increasing demand for spiritual and cultural enrichment. The decorative styles of Western Han jade artifacts, as an elegant cultural symbol, satisfy people's aspirations for a better life. At the same time, contemporary jade carving artists convey respect for traditional culture and reflection on modern society through their works, making jade carving art not only a material enjoyment but also a spiritual sustenance.

In conclusion, the influence of the decorative styles of Western Han jade artifacts on contemporary jade carving is multifaceted. They not only provide rich source material for artistic creation but also pave new paths for the development of traditional art in modern society. Through a deep understanding and innovative application of these traditional elements, contemporary jade carving art can meet the aesthetic demands of modern people and play an important role in cultural inheritance.

4.3.3.2 Inheritance of Cultural Value

The jade artifacts of the Western Han Dynasty serve as significant symbols of Chinese civilization, imbued with rich historical information and cultural significance in their decorative motifs. These motifs not only reflect the aesthetic concepts, religious beliefs, and ceremonial systems of the contemporary society but also constitute a part of the cultural memory of the Chinese nation. Contemporary jade carving art, through the replication and reinterpretation of these motifs, effectively engages in the preservation and transmission of culture, thereby ensuring the continuation of these invaluable cultural heritage.

Against the backdrop of globalization, cultural identity has become a crucial source of national cohesion. The decorative motifs of Western Han jade artifacts, as representatives of Chinese traditional culture, contribute to the reinforcement of national cultural identity through their contemporary application. By integrating these

traditional elements into modern designs, contemporary jade carving art not only allows more people to understand and appreciate the charm of Chinese traditional culture but also instills in the populace a sense of pride and belonging to their native culture.

The decorative motifs of Western Han jade artifacts provide abundant innovative materials for contemporary jade carving art. Artists, building upon tradition, continuously explore new forms of expression and artistic languages by integrating modern aesthetics and techniques. This innovation is manifested not only in craftsmanship but also in the reinterpreting of traditional culture and imbuing it with new meanings. In this manner, the decorative motifs of Western Han jade artifacts become the cornerstone of cultural innovation, propelling the development of contemporary jade carving art.

In today's era of increasingly frequent cultural exchanges, the decorative motifs of Western Han jade artifacts, as symbols of Chinese culture, serve as bridges for cultural exchange. Contemporary jade carving art spreads the artistic charm of Western Han jade artifacts to various parts of the world through international exhibitions, cultural exchange activities, and other forms. Such cultural exchanges not only enhance international understanding and friendship but also promote mutual learning and integration among different cultures.

In the field of education, the decorative motifs of Western Han jade artifacts, as a part of traditional culture, are incorporated into the curriculum of art education and cultural education. Through studying and researching these traditional elements, students can better understand the historical context and values of Chinese culture, nurturing their cultural literacy and aesthetic abilities. Simultaneously, this education also helps to stimulate the interest and love of the younger generation in traditional culture, cultivating new forces for the inheritance of traditional culture.

In summary, the application of decorative motifs from Western Han jade artifacts in contemporary jade carving art is not only a continuation of traditional culture but also an elevation and innovation of cultural values. Through in-depth research and reasonable utilization of these traditional elements, contemporary jade carving art can

not only meet the aesthetic needs of modern people but also play an important role in cultural inheritance.

4.3.3.3 Innovation and Challenge Coexist

In the development of contemporary jade carving art, innovation is one of the challenges that artists must confront. With the rapid changes in society and the diversification of aesthetic concepts, traditional artistic forms need to continually adapt to new cultural contexts. Although the decorative motifs of Western Han jade artifacts are classical, merely imitating them may fail to capture the interest of modern audiences. Therefore, artists need to explore new expressive techniques and materials while preserving the essence of tradition, making their works more in line with modern aesthetics.

One major challenge in the process of innovation is how to maintain the core values of traditional art. Artists must ingeniously incorporate modern elements while respecting tradition. They must avoid diluting artistic value through excessive commercialization and prevent the loss of innovative vitality due to conservatism. Striking this balance tests the wisdom and creativity of artists.

Market demand directly influences the direction of innovation in contemporary jade carving art. As collectors and consumers increasingly refine their tastes, they demand higher artistic, original, and cultural content in artworks. Artists need to keenly observe market trends and create works that possess both artistic value and meet market demand.

The development of modern technology brings new possibilities for innovation in jade carving art. For example, computer-aided design (CAD) and 3D printing technology enable artists to conduct precise design and simulation before creation. However, integrating these advanced technologies with traditional craftsmanship to serve artistic creation rather than replacing manual skills poses a technological challenge for artists.

While pursuing innovation, artists also bear the responsibility of cultural heritage. They need to find contemporary value in traditional culture during innovation,

allowing jade carving art to continue its cultural leadership role in modern society. This not only tests the individual abilities of artists but also challenges the entire cultural industry.

In conclusion, the coexistence of innovation and challenge is an important feature of the development of contemporary jade carving art. In the pursuit of innovation, artists must not only confront technological and market challenges but also find a suitable balance between tradition and modernity while bearing the responsibility of cultural inheritance. Through continuous exploration and practice, contemporary jade carving art is expected to flourish with new vitality in innovation.



CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY & DISCUSSION

In the treasury of ancient Chinese art, the jade artifacts of the Western Han Dynasty stand out for their exquisite craftsmanship and profound cultural connotations. How to explore and utilize the artistic value of Western Han jade ornamentation in the context of modern society to promote the innovative development of contemporary art is not only a reevaluation of the value of Western Han jade ornamentation but also a profound reflection on the direction of contemporary art development. This paper delves into the artistic features of Western Han jade ornamentation and its innovative applications in contemporary art design, aiming to provide art practitioners with academic resources and references.

5.1 Conclusion

The structure of the article is divided into four aspects. Firstly, it starts with the stylistic characteristics of Western Han jade ornamentation, analyzing the patterns, shapes, and compositions of Western Han jade ornamentation. Secondly, this paper analyzes the cultural value of Western Han jade ornamentation, elaborating on cultural connotations, aesthetic expressions, and artistic value. The third part analyzes the current status and challenges of contemporary jade carving art from four aspects: the current market situation, consumer trends, artistic value, and challenges facing the jade carving industry, providing a basis for the following sections. The fourth part of the article analyzes the decorative styles of Western Han jade from a modern aesthetic perspective, examines the role of modern technology in the contemporary transformation of Western Han jade ornamentation, and discusses the influence and value of Western Han jade ornamentation on contemporary jade carving. Finally, it proposes application strategies for Western Han jade ornamentation in contemporary art.

When analyzing the stylistic characteristics of Western Han jade ornamentation, this paper conducts a detailed analysis from three dimensions: patterns, compositions, and shapes. In the analysis of patterns, the paper categorizes patterns into natural, animal, and human motifs, selecting representative patterns such as grain patterns, cloud patterns, dragon patterns, chi patterns, and dancing figures from Western Han jade for analysis. Through detailed descriptions of the patterns on Western Han jade, the paper reveals its unique aesthetic pursuits. Composition analysis demonstrates the clever spatial arrangements of Western Han jade. While compositions vary, common characteristics include S-shaped compositions, balanced compositions, and inclined compositions, each imparting unique artistic beauty and visual tension to the jade artifacts. Craftsmanship analysis further reveals the innovation and breakthroughs in the craftsmanship of Western Han jade, mainly manifested in the innovation of relief techniques and the pursuit of three-dimensionality. The carving techniques of Western Han jade inherit characteristics from previous periods, mainly focusing on relief carving. However, compared to the flattened characteristics of the pre-Qin period, Western Han jade explores three-dimensionality in relief carving, presenting a technique known as high relief carving. This evolution not only enriches artistic creation but is particularly suitable for depicting elongated objects and various postures, twists, and leaps, such as the depiction of chi tigers. "You Si Mao Diao" and "Han Ba Dao" are also typical representatives of Western Han craftsmanship innovation, considered the most characteristic carving techniques in Western Han jade relief carving craftsmanship.

When exploring the cultural value of Western Han jade ornamentation, this study examines it from three dimensions: cultural connotations, aesthetic expressions, and artistic value. Through an analysis of the social significance of Western Han jade artifacts and the ideological inheritance associated with them, the profound cultural connotations embedded in Western Han jade ornamentation are investigated. In Western Han society, jade artifacts not only symbolized social status and cultural heritage but also served practical functions, with unique ideologies underpinning these

functions, thus forming the distinctive ideology of jade usage in the Western Han era, highlighting its significant position in Chinese culture. The study of aesthetic expression demonstrates the unique charm of Western Han jade in artistic expression. By inheriting and incorporating the freedom and romance of the Chu state, as well as the simplicity and realism of Central Plains jade artifacts, Western Han jade crafts a distinct style of majestic and romantic aesthetics. During the Han Dynasty, jade artifacts began to emphasize rationality, integrating freehand brushwork with realism, and emphasizing integration with daily life, thereby creating a new artistic style. This formation of a "new style" owes to the collective unconscious design principles of Han craftsmen, primarily manifested in adapting techniques to materials, emphasizing both grandeur and detail, and fostering innovative ideas. Guided by this creative philosophy, Western Han jade exhibits a unique aesthetic expression of grandeur and romance. The artistic value of Western Han jade is not only evident in its exquisite craftsmanship and unique designs but also in its profound cultural and aesthetic concepts, and especially in its far-reaching influence on subsequent art. The stylistic elements and patterns of Han Dynasty jade artifacts have been continuously referenced by later artistic works and integrated into modern artistic creations.

In discussing the current status and challenges of contemporary jade carving art, an in-depth analysis is conducted on the current market situation, consumer trends, the value of jade carving art, and the challenges faced by the industry, revealing the dilemmas and opportunities between inheritance and innovation in contemporary jade carving art. In contemporary life, the application of jade artifacts has extended far beyond traditional decorative and ceremonial realms. This paper analyzes the current status of the contemporary jade carving market from the perspectives of jade ornaments and jade ornaments. For instance, the younger generation has become the main consumer of jade artifacts, making it crucial to analyze the aesthetic preferences of young people to explore contemporary jade carving consumer trends. The paper argues that the value of contemporary jade carving art depends on both its economic and artistic value. The value of contemporary jade carving art lies not only in its artistic

quality and aesthetic appeal but also in its cultural sentiment and zeitgeist, serving as an important link between the past and the present, tradition and modernity, and making significant contributions to the inheritance and development of Chinese culture. When analyzing the challenges faced by the contemporary jade carving industry, the paper identifies various challenges, including market competition and aesthetic challenges leading to consumer confusion due to product homogeneity and increased pressure from personalized demands. Moreover, the risk of traditional craftsmanship being lost, the application of new technologies requiring artists to balance innovation and tradition, the threat of plagiarism dampening creative enthusiasm, and international competition necessitating continuous innovation to enhance influence are all highlighted. In conclusion, the jade carving industry needs to address multiple challenges and work together to promote its healthy development. This section not only provides a comprehensive understanding of contemporary jade carving art but also lays the groundwork for subsequent chapters' research.

The final section of the paper delves into the strategies for the contemporary artistic application of Western Han jade ornamentation. Firstly, the article analyzes Western Han jade ornamentation from a modern aesthetic perspective, incorporating insights from expert interviews. Under modern aesthetics, the potent expression and concise yet profound carving style of Western Han jade ornamentation have garnered approval from experts. Artists emphasize the high aesthetic level, exquisite craftsmanship, distinctive artistic concepts, and personalized aesthetic appeal of Western Han jade ornamentation, providing important references and inspiration for cultural inheritance. Secondly, the role of modern technology in the contemporary transformation of Western Han jade ornamentation is explored, such as the application of digital technology in jade design. Furthermore, the impact and value of Western Han jade ornamentation on contemporary jade carving art are analyzed, emphasizing the importance of traditional elements in modern design. Lastly, strategies for the application of Western Han jade ornamentation in contemporary art are proposed,

aiming to guide artists and designers in better utilizing this unique artistic resource during the creative process.

In conclusion, through in-depth research and analysis of Western Han jade ornamentation, this paper reveals its immense potential and value in contemporary artistic design. It aids in a better understanding and appreciation of the artistic charm of Western Han jade artifacts while injecting new vitality into the innovative development of contemporary art.

5.2 Discussion

The Western Han jade artifacts, renowned for their exquisite craftsmanship and profound cultural connotations, hold a pivotal position in the development history of ancient Chinese jade artifacts. Serving as symbols of royal and aristocratic status, Western Han jade artifacts not only showcase exceptional levels of craftsmanship but also embody rich cultural significance and aesthetic pursuits. This paper comprehensively and deeply examines the artistic value of Western Han jade ornamentation and its potential applications in contemporary art design from a comprehensive perspective. Not only does it contribute to a better understanding of the artistic charm of Western Han jade artifacts, but it also provides new inspiration and perspectives for modern art design.

However, this study has several limitations. Firstly, it may have leaned too heavily towards theoretical research, overlooking the importance of practical implementation. When exploring the application of Western Han jade ornamentation in contemporary art design, more attention should be given to the feasibility and innovation of practical implementation. Secondly, interdisciplinary research could be further strengthened in this topic. For instance, combining the findings of archaeology, art history, aesthetics, and other disciplines could provide more comprehensive and in-depth theoretical support for the research.

5.3 Suggestion

Firstly, it is suggested that researchers conduct a more detailed classification and study of the decorative styles of Western Han jade artifacts. For example, further refinement of the classification criteria for patterns, shapes, and compositions could accurately reveal their artistic characteristics and aesthetic pursuits. Additionally, advanced technological methods such as 3D scanning and virtual reality technology can be utilized to digitally reconstruct and simulate Western Han jade artifacts, allowing the public to more intuitively experience their artistic charm.

Secondly, when studying the decorative styles of Western Han jade artifacts, it is recommended to not only focus on their status and influence in Chinese culture but also to broaden the research perspective to explore their exchanges and integration with other cultures. For instance, research on the mutual influence between Western Han jade artifacts and jade cultures in Central Asia, West Asia, and their dissemination and exchange along the Silk Road. Such research can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the cultural value and significance of Western Han jade artifacts.

Lastly, researchers are advised to closely monitor the innovation and challenges in contemporary jade carving art, analyzing the balance and development between heritage and innovation. Research can examine how contemporary jade carving artists draw inspiration from the decorative styles of Western Han jade artifacts, combining traditional elements with modern aesthetics to create works with contemporary characteristics. Furthermore, exploration of the challenges faced by the contemporary jade carving industry, such as market competition, aesthetic challenges, and issues related to the inheritance of traditional craftsmanship, can lead to the proposal of corresponding solutions and recommendations.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Part of the early Han tombs in the Western Han Dynasty

Table 1 Part of the early Han tombs in the Western Han Dynasty






No.	name	Excavation time	Tomb owner	location	Jade general situation	Decoration type	picture
1	The Han Tomb of Lion Mountain, Xuzhou	1984-1994	Liu Ying, King of Chu Yi \	Xuzhou Jiangsu	With jade coffin, jade nose, jade cicada, jade board, jade ge, jade chi dragon, jade huang, jade pillow, jade dress, jade dancer	Through carving, bas-relief, Han eight knives, pu pattern, dragon pattern, etc	
2	Xuzhou Beidong Mountain M1	1986	Liu Li or Liu Dao, King of Chu	Xuzhou Jiangsu	Sword head, jade, jade, jade cup, jade, jade, jade, jade, jade garment piece	Through the carving, Yin carved line	
3	No.2 Han Tomb in Guishan,	1981	Liu Zhu, King Xiang of Chu	Xuzhou Jiangsu	Yuhuan, jade (residual), jade, jade (residual)		

Table 1 (Continued)

No.	name	Excavation time	Tomb owner	location	Jade general situation	Decoration type	picture
5	Hebei Mancheng Han Tomb M2	1968	Empress Liu Sheng Dou	Hebei	Jade lacquer coffin, gold engraved jade clothes, jade copper pillow, jade wall, jade ring, heart-shaped jade, jade huang, jade hook, jade seal, jade nine plug, jade group, strip jade ornaments, crystal seal, agate beads	openwork carving	
6	Han Tomb of Mangdang Mountain,	1992	Empress Li and his concubines	Yongcheng City, Shanxi City,	Jade belt hook, jade wall, jade sword decoration, gold engraved jade clothes, jade nose		



	Yongcheng, Henan Province			Henan Province	cover, nine nose plug, jade ring, jade board, small jade decoration, etc		
7	Dayunshan Han Tomb	2009	Jiangdu King Liu Fei and later	Xuyi County, Jiangsu Province	Set jade coffin, gold engraved jade garment fragments, jade ge, jade, jade huang, jade beibelt, jade lacquer coffin (so far the most complete), jade garment, jade, jade, jade, jade belt hook, jade bighead, jade Han, etc		

Table 2 (Continued)

No.	Name	Excavation time	Tomb owner	Location	Jade general situation	Decoration type	picture
8	The Han Tomb of Haihunhou, Jiangxi Province	From 2010 to the present	Liu He, Marquis of Haihun	Nanchang City, Jiangxi Province	Jade, jade ring, jade hang, sole, jade hook, jade box, jade ear cup, jade dancer, dragon jade, phoenix jade ornaments, jade bear, jade beast, jade sword, jade sword, jade sword, jade sword head, jade brand, hoop jade ornaments, jade tube nearly 500 pieces		


9	The Han Tomb in Shuang Rushan, Changqing Province, Shandong Province	1995	Liu Hu or Liu Kuan	Changqing District, Jinan City, Shandong Province	Jade cover, jade pillow, jade (5), jade pig, jade jianlian, nine plug	
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Table 3 (Continued)

No.	name	Excavation time	Tomb owner	location	Jade general situation	Decoration type	picture
10	Tomb of King Nanyue , Guangzhou		Tomb of Lady Zhao Mei (Hu), King of Nanyue (122 BC)	Guangzhou , Guangdong Province	jade bi, Juan, jade ring, jade huang, jade ring, jade dancer, jade sword ornaments, Jade sword (all), sword head, Jian kun, jade pendant, jade seal, jade horn cup, jade cover cup, high foot jade cup, jade box, jade scale, etc	Light relief, grain, through carving	
11	Shandong Juye Hongtu mountain Han tomb	1971	Liu Bo, King of Ai (around 100 BC)	Heze City, Shandong Province	Jade bi (28), jade ring, jade belt hook, jade enthalpy, jade wei, jade plug, jade plaice, heart-shaped jade pendant, jade seal, jade horse, jade pig, jade GUI		

Appendix 2: Modern jade carvings based on traditional elements



Figure 28 Impression of the Buddha

Source: Wang Yibu. unknown size. Jade. modern.

<https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1605394633040728614&wfr=spider&for=pc>



Figure 29 Who is the Phantom

Source: Wang Yibu. size unknown. Jade, modern.

<https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1605394633040728614&wfr=spider&for=pc>



Figure 30 Cocoon 2

Source: Li Ming. Jade. Modern. https://www.sohu.com/a/202613706_221936

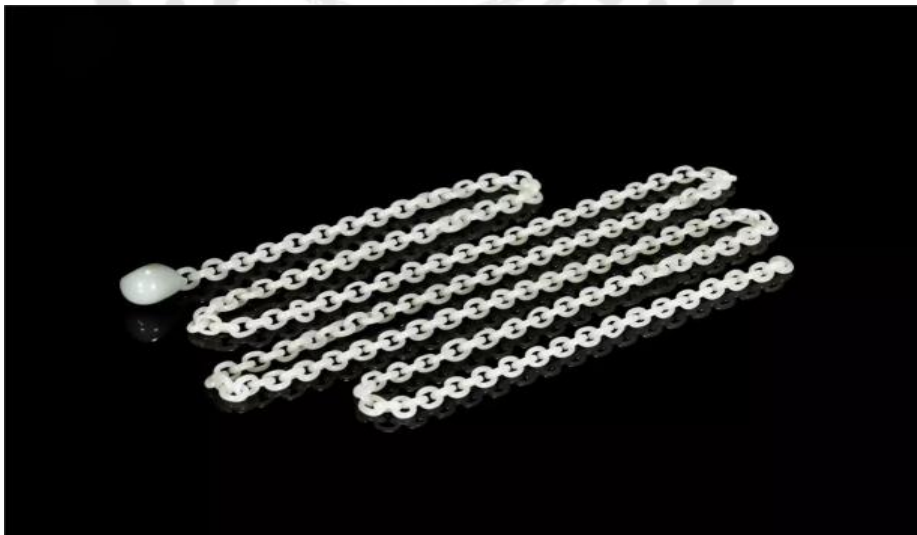


Figure 31 The shape of the civilization

Source: Qiu Qijing. Jade. Modern. https://www.sohu.com/a/202613706_221936



Figure 32 Co -governance

Source: Chen Jianguang. Jade, Metal.

https://www.sohu.com/a/460155397_100195769



Figure 33 Jade -Starry Sky

Source: Zhao Zhao. Jade, Glass.

https://www.sohu.com/a/460155397_100195769

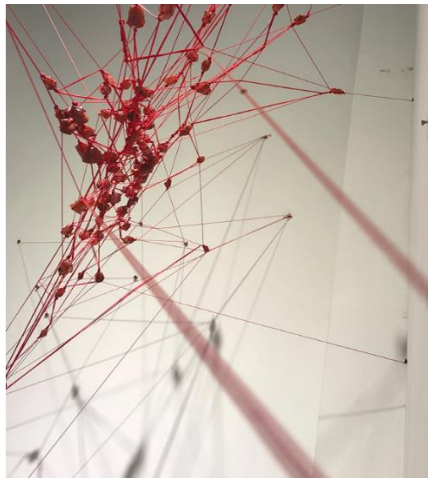


Figure 34 Bloom

Source: Zhi Juntao. Jade, Fabric.

<https://www.zcool.com.cn/work/ZNTIxmZe5NDg=.html>

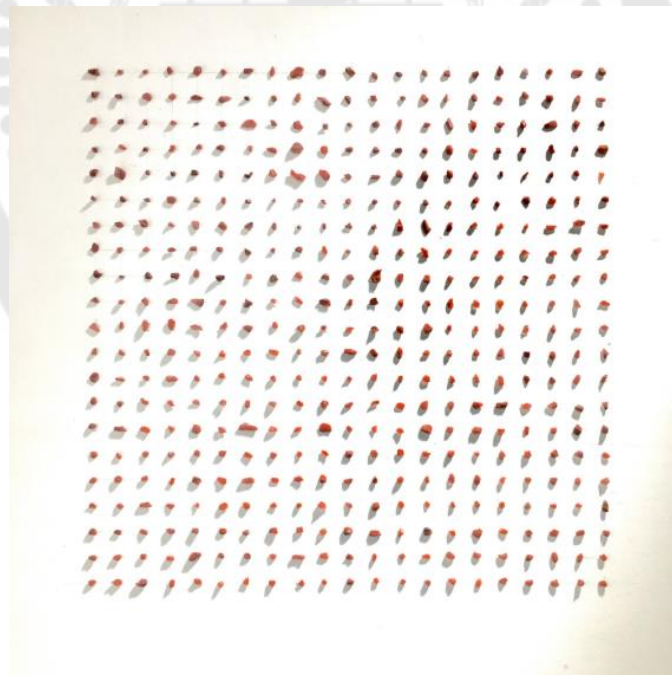


Figure 35 THE BODIES

Source: Zhi Juntao.(2020). South Red Agate.

<https://www.zcool.com.cn/work/ZNTIxmZe5NDg=.html>



Figure 36 National Fan Nail Brooch

Source: Lu Weiping. (2020) Jade, brass.

https://www.sohu.com/a/460155397_100195769

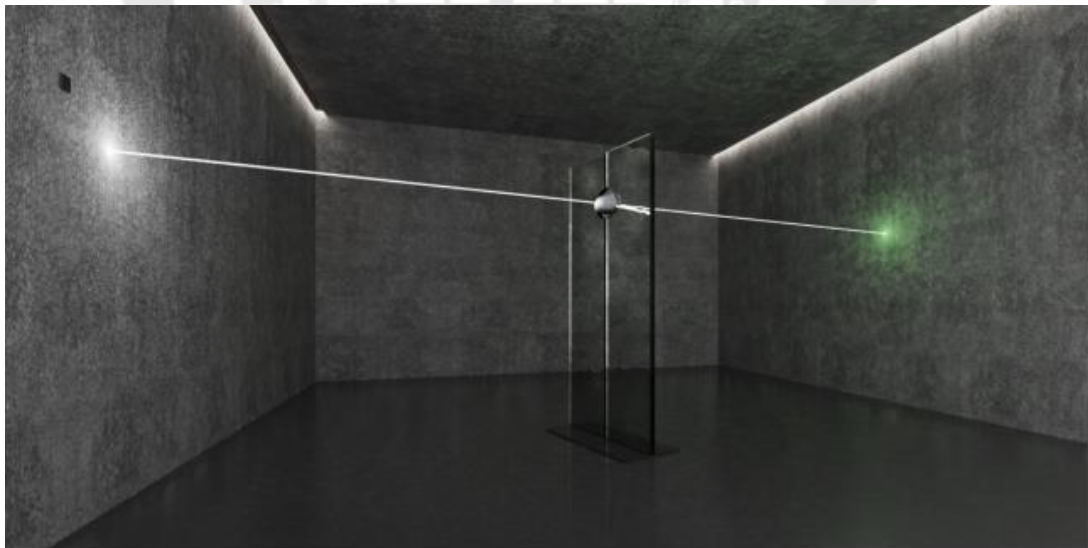


Figure 37 It is jade

Source: Liu Feng. (2020). Jade, Acrylic, laser.

https://www.sohu.com/a/460155397_100195769



Figure 38 Archaeological Memory

Source: Xu Yanping. (2019). Southern Red Fragments, Sand, Silver, Gold.

<https://news.artron.net/20231011/n1125636.html>



Figure 39 Jade* see 45000 turn plan

Source: Kang Yue. (2019). 30-20-4cm. jade.

https://www.sohu.com/a/659231517_100195769



Figure 40 Gold and Silver

Source: Yang Xiangxiang. Jade, Gold. <https://news.jades.cn/article-14158.html>

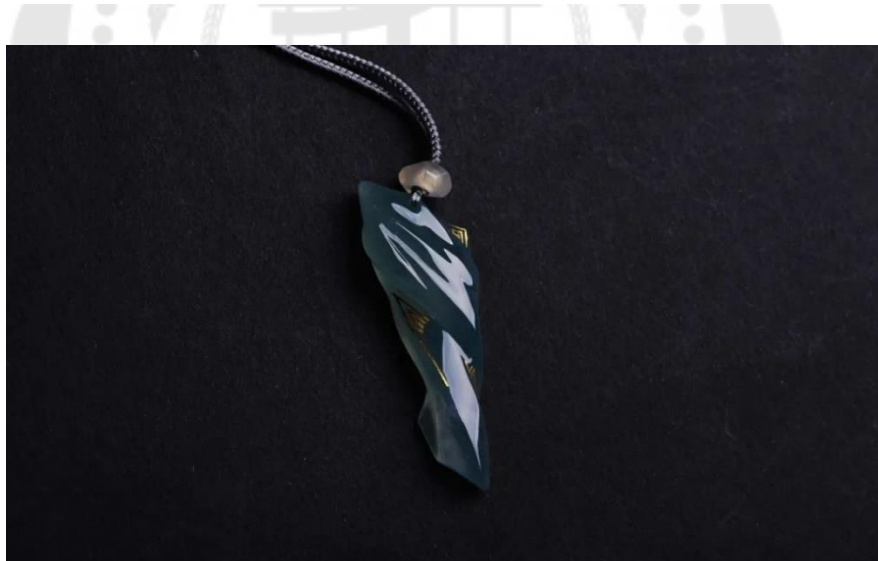


Figure 41 Folding

Source: Yang Xiangxiang. jade, 18k gold. <https://news.jades.cn/article-14158.html>

Appendix 3: Expert interview record

1.Introduction

In this profound interview, we had the privilege of listening to the insights of five jade carving artists and one industry expert. Their creative process extends beyond mere technical proficiency; it involves a profound exploration and rediscovery of traditional elements, thereby imbuing their works with unique cultural and aesthetic connotations. Along the path of creation, they demonstrate a solid foundation in research and employ a multidimensional analytical approach, contrasting sharply with the traditional method of solely seeking inspiration.

By delving into the cultural roots and conducting comprehensive studies of traditional themes, they endeavor to surpass surface-level aesthetics and convey the depth and essence of their works to the audience. This interview not only focuses on the individual artistic experiences of the artists but also encompasses the fusion of technology and tradition, as well as the impact of modern technologies such as new media and artificial intelligence on traditional crafts. From technological innovation to a reconsideration of traditional crafts, the artists deeply understand the complex balance between cultural heritage and innovation in their creative process.

This interview offers a comprehensive reflection on artistic creation, cultural heritage, and the integration of technology. It is hoped that through these in-depth discussions, readers can gain a better understanding of the artistic journey of these artists within the context of modern society, as well as the contemporary interpretation of traditional arts and crafts.

2. Interview Time and Location

The interviews were conducted between November and December 2023, coinciding with the National Vocational Skills Competition held in Tengchong in 2023. I had the privilege of interviewing numerous artists and Mr. Xie Zhaohua, the Director of the China Light Industry Jewelry Center. Additionally, visits to places like Ruili were

made to meet with artists, enabling a multi-dimensional exploration of the development of the handicraft industry.

3. Interview Objectives:

The objective of this interview was to gain a comprehensive understanding of jade carving artists' creative processes, their comprehension of Han dynasty jade elements, their reinterpretation of traditional elements, as well as their insights into the creative process under the influence of modern technology. Furthermore, insights from industry experts regarding jade carving creation were sought. Through dialogue, we aimed to uncover the motivations and methodologies behind the artists' creations, as well as their unique perspectives within the traditional jade carving domain.

Moreover, attention was directed towards the impact of technological innovation on traditional crafts, and the pioneering role of modern technologies such as new media and artificial intelligence in artistic creation. The aim of this interview was to delve into the artists' inner worlds, their creative impulses, and the balance they strike between tradition and modernity, technology and art. Through this process, we aimed to present readers with a richer, more profound contemporary art landscape, exploring the vitality and innovation of traditional arts and crafts in contemporary society.

4. Interview subject information







Name	Age	Usual place of residence	Interview time and place	Introduction	Photograph
Li Chunke	75	Beijing	2023.11.27 Tengchong, Yunnan	The fifth Chinese Arts and Crafts Master, Beijing Special Arts and Crafts Master; the representative inheritor of ivory carving of national intangible cultural heritage project	
Wang Jingming	57	Fujian	2023.11.27 Tengchong, Yunnan	Chinese master of arts and crafts, Fujian Province intangible cultural heritage "Huian stone carving" inheritor"	
Wang Chaoyang	53	Yunnan	2023.12.2 Ruili, Yunnan	Famous jade carving artist, national senior craftsman	
Xu Yanping	41	Yunnan	2023.12.2 Ruili, Yunnan	New generation of jade carving artists, good at jade carving innovation	
Lu Weiping	41	Yunan	2023.12.6 Tengchong, Yunnan	Contemporary artist, PhD student in the School of Jewelry, China University of Geosciences (Wuhan)	
Xie Zhaohua	46	Beijing	2023.11.27 Tengchong, Yunnan	Director of China Light Industry Jewelry Center, director of Development cooperation Department, senior supervisor, senior referee, senior technician, master the trend of jade carving market	

Table 4 Interview subject information

5. Interview Process:

5.1 Interview Record of Li Chunke

Interviewer: Li Chunke

Interview Date: November 27, 2023

Interview Location: Tengchong, Yunnan Province, China

Introduction to Li Chunke: Originally from Beijing, Li Chunke is a member of the China Arts and Crafts Association, the Fifth National Master of Arts and Crafts in China, and a distinguished master of arts and crafts in Beijing. He is recognized as a representative inheritor of ivory carving, a national-level intangible cultural heritage project. Additionally, he serves as the director of the Ivory Carving Professional Committee of the China Arts and Crafts Association and vice president of the Beijing Arts and Crafts Industry Association. Moreover, he is a master's supervisor at the China Academy of Art, Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology, and Beijing City University.

In early 2006, Li Chunke gained acclaim as a "Chinese Master of Arts and Crafts" for transplanting the painting "Han Xizai's Night Banquet" onto a 1.8-meter-long ivory. In 2013, he was honored with the "Xinchuan Award" at the Second National Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritors Conference. Li Chunke is renowned for his ivory carving skills, particularly in carving figures. He emphasizes capturing the essence of characters and strives for concise and fluid lines in his works. His pieces are devoid of elaborate decorations, emphasizing simplicity and highlighting the theme. This philosophy was cultivated during the "Han and Tang Dynasty Class," where traditional Chinese culture had a profound influence on Li Chunke. Through studying stone carvings, wood carvings, calligraphy, and painting, Li Chunke gradually developed his own path in ivory carving. He often emphasizes the importance of imbuing works with a certain "flavor," which he believes is rooted in culture. His greatest aspiration is to elevate ivory carving from a craft to an art form.



Figure 42 Li Chunke

Source: Dang Sijie. (2022). China Arts and Crafts Master Li Chunke interviewed: Delivation of dental carving skills innovation and development of dental carving art. Huanqiu Network-Cultural Tourism Channel.
<https://go.huanqiu.com/article/47ErGc6gx2v>



Figure 43 Mao Xiaoyan's group photo with experts

Course: Mao Xiaoyan. (2023). Yunnan, China.



Figure 44 Mao Xiaoyan and Li Chunke's group photo



Figure 45 Interview photos of Mao Xiaoyan and Li Chunke



Figure 46 Li Chunke's work photo 1

Source: Chen Mengyao.(2018). The inheritance of the "guarding" artist of the tooth carving. https://www.sohu.com/a/225125999_99989744



Figure 47 Li Chunke's work photo 2

Source: (2020). In 50 years, inherit the traditional Chinese pulse to make the beauty of tooth sculpture -Li Chunke, a postgraduate instructor. https://www.sohu.com/a/424415840_661656



Figure 48 Li Chunke's work "Crown Generation Biography"

Source: (2020). In 50 years, inherit the traditional Chinese pulse to make the beauty of tooth sculpture -Li Chunke, a postgraduate instructor.

https://www.sohu.com/a/424415840_661656



Figure 49 Li Chunke's work

Source: (2020). In 50 years, inherit the traditional Chinese pulse to make the beauty of tooth sculpture -Li Chunke, a postgraduate instructor.

https://www.sohu.com/a/424415840_661656

Interview Content:

Mao Xiaoyan: Hello, Master Li. I am currently writing my doctoral thesis titled "The Application and design of Decorative Styling of Western Han Dynasty Jade Art in Contemporary Art." I am aware of your esteemed status as a national-level master with over 60 years of experience in jade carving and ivory carving. I believe your insights will greatly benefit my thesis. I would like to conduct an interview with you to seek your guidance on some questions. Firstly, how do you perceive the decorative styling of Western Han Dynasty jade art?

Li Chunke: Western Han Dynasty jade carving is a manifestation of the strength of the Han Dynasty. The art of the Han Dynasty possessed immense power, and its carved decorations revolved around the reflections of life during that period, summarizing numerous patterns. Many contemporary artworks imitate the styling of the Han Dynasty, but they lack the original power of the Han Dynasty, which is the soul of Han Dynasty art. Contemporary art has diminished in this regard. As craftsmanship becomes more complex, the essence weakens. Conversely, simplicity is preferred. Han Dynasty jade carvings were very simple, often achieved with just a few cuts, yet they effectively showcased the styling. For example, the "Han Eight Cuts" technique was executed exceptionally well.

Mao Xiaoyan: How do you believe Han Dynasty jade carving, or traditional art in general, can be applied and innovated in contemporary art? How can its significance be integrated for innovation?

Li Chunke: That's an excellent question. The elements of jade art from the Han Dynasty have always been referenced, but sometimes without a deep understanding, they are merely used superficially. To truly understand them, one must trace them back to the Han Dynasty. Many styles and patterns, including motifs, bear the shadow of the Han Dynasty. We must delve into their intrinsic depths to avoid superficiality.

As for innovation, it poses a challenge. Innovation does not mean redesigning from scratch; it involves analyzing the outstanding works of ancient artists

and integrating them with the aesthetic sense of contemporary people into traditional crafts. This approach ensures that your work remains enduringly appealing. Why? Because at first glance, it appears traditional, but it incorporates the aesthetic sense of modern people, which is crucial. Therefore, we must have our own aesthetic sense. While continuing the traditions of the ancients, we must also integrate our modern aesthetic sense. The fusion of the two is particularly important and should not be superficial.

For example, when sculpting Confucius, nobody truly knows what Confucius looked like, but how do you express his scholar's pride and his charisma? The sculpted image should be both approachable and wise, requiring the artist to possess a broad knowledge base and insight, as well as plenty of practice. Furthermore, when creating, we must consider what the most captivating moment or aspect is to catch the viewer's attention. For instance, in sculpting a young Buddhist monk, he should appear focused on his studies, yet with the natural curiosity of a child. Thus, you might notice his hand is slightly crooked, and his head is tilted, portraying his attentive yet adorable demeanor.

Finally, innovation must respect history; it should not mix elements from different historical periods. For instance, if you're creating a piece from the Tang Dynasty, it shouldn't include elements from the Song Dynasty or even the Qing Dynasty. That would be inappropriate.

For instance, currently, as I supervise Master's research students, I notice that their theses often lack original viewpoints, which is inadequate. When studying the art of the Han Dynasty in relation to contemporary art, it's imperative to understand the historical context of that period. Many of our traditional Chinese arts served political purposes and possessed strong political implications. They were closely related to the temporal and spatial background of the time, including aspects such as warfare, humanistic ideas, tools, and craftsmanship. For example, the stone carvings at the Maoling Mausoleum, a large-scale stone carving group at the tomb of General Huo Qubing of the Western Han Dynasty, are remarkably succinct. With just a triangle, they

could depict a fish, and with a single eye, they conveyed depth. Similarly, the "Gallop-ing Horse Treading on a Flying Swallow" sculpture portrays scenes of Han Dynasty warfare, serving political purposes by praising those heroes through sculpting. Additionally, the portrayal of Guanyin statues during that time utilized the simplest lines to capture the deepest content, expressing the inner emotions of human beings. However, many contemporary works tend to remain superficial. I greatly admire Han Dynasty artworks for their grandeur and simplicity.

Mao Xiaoyan: I, too, am fond of Han Dynasty artworks, which is why I chose this topic for my research.

Li Chunke: Your chosen topic holds significant research value. Many people nowadays tend to overlook the essence of traditional art and remain superficial. For example, there's a carving theme called "Ma Shang Feng Hou" (A Steed Ascends to Rank). Throughout history, numerous works have been created based on this theme. However, modern renditions often depict a robust horse with a monkey sitting on top, and that's it. But if you look at how ancient artists depicted "Ma Shang Feng Hou," it's quite intriguing. The monkey is patting the horse's rear end while looking up at the sky, fantasizing, "If I ride on you, I'll be promoted." Ignoring the horse's feelings, meanwhile, the peach in the monkey's hand resembles an official hat, visualizing its inner sentiments. Then you see the horse, its eyes shifting, licking the monkey's paw, contemplating whether or not to let the monkey ride. The anthropomorphic portrayal vividly depicts the relationship between the two, and their interaction is particularly intriguing. Overall, the piece is concise yet vivid, which embodies the essence of art.

Now, if you look at modern renditions, they may be well-executed in terms of overall aesthetics, with both the horse and the monkey depicted as robust figures. However, they often lack deeper content. It's like putting two things together without any interaction. Therefore, Han Dynasty art emphasizes "using the simplest forms to express the most complex content."

Mao Xiaoyan: How do you incorporate decorative elements from Han Dynasty jade artifacts into your teaching?

Li Chunke: There are many ways to do so. For example, the small turtle figures from the Han Dynasty, and the most typical would be the "Han Eight Cuts." The key is to integrate them with modern craftsmanship and explore their application. However, it's essential not to merely copy them but to innovate. The goal is to extract their essence, expressing the desired content using succinct language.

Mao Xiaoyan: I completely agree with your perspective. What suggestions or experiences do you have in cultivating students' innovative jade carving skills?

Li Chunke: Firstly, it's crucial to capture students' attention. For instance, when explaining about a brush holder, instead of stating its conventional use, tell students it's not for holding brushes. This approach piques students' interest, prompting them to think: If it's not for holding brushes, what is it for? This captivates their attention and enhances learning efficiency. Historically, brush holders were not used for holding brushes; ancient brushes were hung on brush racks, and brush holders were merely decorative items.

Mao Xiaoyan: In other words, it's essential to first use stories or engaging materials to capture students' attention before imparting knowledge and skills. Regarding the learning of techniques, do you have any valuable suggestions?

Li Chunke: Firstly, proficiency in drawing is paramount. Both students and teachers need a solid foundation in drawing. Understanding drawing principles, such as Chinese line drawing, where some lines express volume while others depict form, is crucial. After understanding these principles, students must learn to represent lines as three-dimensional forms, transitioning from two-dimensional to three-dimensional representations. This foundation is exceptionally important. Secondly, students should have cultural cultivation and study art theory, such as the "Six Laws of Xie He." I personally experienced the impact of this. When I started my apprenticeship in sculpture 60 years ago, my teacher gave me a book titled "Discussions on Chinese Painting," which primarily focused on the Six Laws of Xie He. This had a profound influence on me. Therefore, understanding theory is crucial. With theoretical knowledge,

students can distinguish between art and craftsmanship at a glance. Thirdly, it's about insight, which is the most challenging aspect.

Mao Xiaoyan: Well, that concludes our interview today. I sincerely appreciate your patient responses. Your insights and experiences have provided me.

4.5.2 Interview Record of Wang Jingmin

Interviewee: Wang Jingmin

Interview Date: November 27, 2023

Interview Location: Tengchong, Yunnan

Brief Introduction of Wang Jingmin:

Male, born in 1967, Senior Master of Arts and Crafts, National Master of Arts and Crafts, inheritor of the intangible cultural heritage "Huian Stone Carving" in Fujian Province, Senior Master of Arts and Crafts in Fujian Province, National Master of Folk Arts and Crafts in Rural Areas. Currently serves as the Art Director of Xinhaixia Stone Industry Art Co., Ltd., Art Director and Chief Designer of Huian Haoran Ancient Architecture and Landscape Engineering Co., Ltd., President of Huian Sculpture Art Research Association, Member of the Huian County Political Consultative Conference, Vice Chairman of the National Urban Sculpture Enterprise Committee, Executive Director of Fujian Arts and Crafts Association. He is also a member of the China Arts and Crafts Association, a member of the Sculpture Professional Committee of the China Arts and Crafts Society, Vice Chairman of the Stone Carving Professional Committee of the China Arts and Crafts Association, and Vice Chairman of the Youth Committee of the Fujian Overseas Chinese Federation. Due to his outstanding artistic achievements, his enterprises have achieved significant social and economic benefits. In May 2002, he was honored with the title of Outstanding Young Entrepreneur of Quanzhou City in the Second Session, and in September 2004, he was honored with the title of Top Ten Outstanding Young Entrepreneurs of Quanzhou City in the First Session. In May 2018, he was selected as the Seventh National Master of Arts and Crafts.

His work "Nvwa Mends the Heavens" was selected as the representative work of the first national intangible cultural heritage "Huian Stone Carving" and exhibited in Beijing.

Award-winning Stone Carving Works:

1. The work "Chinese Soul" won the Silver Award at the Third Fujian Arts and Crafts Boutique "Competition Cup" in 2002.
2. The work "Havoc in Heaven" won the Excellent Award at the Third Provincial Arts and Crafts "Competition Cup" in 2002.
3. The work "Fierce Tiger Arhat" won the Silver Award at the Fifth China (National Level) Arts and Crafts Masters Fine Exhibition held by the China Light Industry Federation in 2003.
4. The work "Teaching Children to Ascend to Heaven" won the Bronze Award at the Fifth China (National Level) Arts and Crafts Masters Fine Exhibition held by the China Light Industry Federation in 2003.
5. The work "Structural Art (Dragon Pillar)" won the Third Prize at the Wanxiang Cup Competition for Traditional Carvings in Huian, China in 2003.
6. The work "Kirin Presents Offspring" won the Silver Award at the "Golden Doctor" Cup National Rural Youth Folk Crafts Production Competition held by the Central Office of the Communist Youth League in 2004.
7. The work "Huifemale Fisherman's Song" won the Gold Award at the Chinese Folk Arts and Crafts Exhibition held by the China Arts and Crafts Association in 2004.
8. The work "West Qi Conquers the Yin Shang" won the Achievement Award at the First National Mural Exhibition held by the China Artists Association in 2004.

9. The work "Peace and Friendship" won the Gold Award at the "Golden Phoenix" Original Tourism Products and Crafts Design Competition held by the China Economic Association in 2005.

10. The work "Fairy Dancing Phoenix" won the Gold Award at the Fourth Fujian Arts and Crafts Boutique "Competition Cup" in 2005.

11. The work "Heavenly Fragrance Beckons Offspring" won the Excellent Award at the "Golden Phoenix" Original Tourism Products and Crafts Design Competition held by the China Federation of Industrial Economics in 2005.

12. The work "Listening to Xiao under the Full Moon" won the Gold Award at the China Handicrafts Exhibition "Huamao Cup" in 2006.

13. The work "We Want to Go Home" won the Gold Award at the China (Huian) International Stone Carving, Stone Materials, and Garden Stone Monument Expo "Huiyi Cup" Sculpture Fine Arts Competition in 2007.



Figure 50 Wang Jingmin

Source: (2021). Master Jade Carving -Wang Jingmin.

https://www.sohu.com/a/468879440_120416192



Figure 51 Mao Xiaoyan and Wang Jingmin's group photo



Figure 52 Interview photos of Mao Xiaoyan and Wang Jingmin

Interview Content:

Ma Xiaoyan: Hello, Master Wang. I am currently writing my doctoral thesis titled "The Application and design Research of Decorative Styling of Western Han Jade Art in Contemporary Art." I am grateful that you have accepted this interview. The content of this interview will also be included in my doctoral thesis to support my research. How do you perceive the relationship between contemporary new technologies such as digital modeling and traditional craftsmanship?

Wang Jingmin: Digital modeling is an important achievement of contemporary technology, providing a new artistic expression pathway for digital sculpture and significantly impacting wealth creation. However, we cannot overlook the value of traditional craftsmanship, which represents precious cultural heritage and constitutes an integral part of our artistic system.

In the digital era, university students need to receive basic training in traditional craftsmanship, as it forms the foundation for nurturing artisanal skills and craftsmanship inheritance. The integration of digital modeling and traditional craftsmanship is the future trend, and schools and institutions will play crucial roles in shaping a new generation of artisans proficient in both digital modeling and traditional craftsmanship.

In regions like Huian, the establishment of schools and professional training is particularly urgent. Establishing schools or collaborating with other units to establish secondary colleges can help sustain the legacy of craftsmanship. We need to focus on students' hands-on abilities in digital modeling to ensure they are well-prepared for future employment needs.

The future trend may involve students independently engaging in digital modeling and machine operation, requiring them to possess a wider range of skills. This applies to various industries, especially in the field of large-scale stone carving. We need to train students to specialize in various aspects, from researching totems to applying different materials, to fully prepare them for future work.

The emergence of digital modeling platforms has made the production process more efficient. We can purchase stone materials online, place orders for production, allocate tasks to different workshops, and then supervise the process in factories. This digital workflow allows me to take on roles such as quality control and product integration, ensuring that products maintain their artistic integrity while considering production costs.

When promoting artworks, we must be cautious to prevent excessive commercialization from negatively impacting society. Artworks can truly enter the market

only when they integrate into daily life. This requires us to consider market acceptance more in promotion, rather than solely focusing on academia.

Reflecting on the entire process of integrating digital modeling with craftsmanship, we see the role of platform integration. Aspects such as product delivery, assembly, and after-sales service are closely related to daily life. Service methods that are closely aligned with daily life, such as product delivery and assembly, are crucial means to ensure the successful entry of artworks into the market. Meanwhile, the quality of after-sales service will directly impact the development of the entire industry. By integrating new technologies and traditional craftsmanship, we can create more diverse and beloved artworks in this digital age.

Ma Xiaoyan: Do you believe that contemporary arts and crafts need to keep pace with the rapid development of new technologies and innovations today?

Wang Jingmin: Yes, absolutely. It's crucial to keep up with the times to achieve industrial development. Mass production must leverage contemporary technologies and equipment, allowing the general public to enjoy these products. I can also design and sell products from an artistic perspective. Previously, I might have only sold items for ten thousand yuan, but now you can purchase similar products for just over a hundred yuan, although the quality may not be as exquisite as my personally crafted artworks. Of Source, some artworks still hold collectible value and can be positioned in the high-end market with correspondingly higher prices. There are demands for both commoditized products, primarily met through mass production, and collectibles, which are relatively scarce. The market seems somewhat subdued, perhaps reflecting the changes of the times.

Therefore, products must be diverse, covering high-end, mid-range, and low-end markets to cater to the needs of different segments of society. Education in schools also needs to address different levels of education, including doctoral and graduate education, as well as vocational education. Not every child is suited for traditional academic education; some may prefer vocational education or technical

schools, and they may achieve great success upon their return. It's hard to predict, but this is the reality.

Ma Xiaoyan: We just mentioned that traditional manual craftsmanship and modern mechanical production each have their own advantages. How do you view the relationship between the two?

Wang Jingmin: Throughout history, before the advent of machinery, all manual crafts were constantly evolving, reflecting the development of human wisdom. The dexterity and ingenuity of manual craftsmanship actually represent a profound understanding and flexible application of tools. Why can some people work faster than others using the same tools to produce the same works? The reason lies in the different methods of tool usage. Clever application of tools can make work both easier and more efficient, and the products produced will be liked by everyone. Nowadays, there are already contemporary tools such as CNC equipment, and concepts of artificial intelligence, such as Italian robotic arms, are also constantly evolving. When it comes to intelligence, various aspects, including cost, must be considered. The development of artificial intelligence is rapid; we have a friend from Taiwan who specializes in artificial intelligence. A few years ago, their factory was just starting out, and the boss said it didn't seem mature enough yet, but it was expected to improve soon. The carving equipment we see now is mainly CNC, not intelligent. Intelligence may mean that we can control it through voice commands without the need for specific software, adapting to all scenarios. Unlike now, where you need to design a program and input it via a USB drive. In the future, voice control and even remote control may be possible, which is true intelligence. This includes integrating 3D modeling with these technologies for direct operation.

Ma Xiaoyan: Yes, artificial intelligence is a direction in design.

Wang Jingmin: Absolutely, young people should learn about artificial intelligence. Researching artificial intelligence is definitely the trend of the future. In the coming decades, AI may be the main focus. All existing artificial intelligence, without AI intervention, I think, cannot truly be considered skills.

Ma Xiaoyan: Mr. Wang, your insights are very forward-thinking.

Wang Jingmin: I don't know much about this, but personally, I believe that although not necessarily accurate, artificial intelligence is definitely a direction. It may lead to unemployment in many industries, but at the same time, it will also bring about a civilization beyond the times. Perhaps in a year or two, life will no longer be so difficult. Despite losing their jobs, people can still make money through other means and enjoy a better life.

Ma Xiaoyan: What are your thoughts on the use of traditional elements in contemporary art or design?

Wang Jingmin: In my opinion, I once thought that my words might have been somewhat extreme, even questioning innovation, feeling that innovation might just be an overly hyped tactic. Why did I say that? Because I firmly believe that if you abandon the inheritance of tradition, then you are forgetting your foundation. I believe that in the process of inheriting tradition, both the temporal and individual perspectives have undergone changes, and the tools are no longer the same. This raises a question: at this point, can we still use the original methods for creation? I think exploring each person's perspective on life is unique.

In my view, I am skeptical of those who advocate simplicity purely for the sake of pursuing purity. I don't agree that they purely long for simplicity, but rather because of the complexity of modern tools. When we face such a vast amount of information, our predecessors only saw very few things, and just a few words passed down by the masters were enough for creation. Nowadays, the information we come into contact with is so vast, and the thoughts are so complex, making it difficult to concentrate. In this restless atmosphere, what is created inevitably carries restlessness, and the lines cannot maintain a simple and normal state. Therefore, I believe that in contemporary times, the pursuit of simplicity is true art, although the simpler it is, the more difficult it is. Under different leadership thoughts, scenarios, and tools, everyone is different. There is no contradiction between inheritance and innovation. There is no need to emphasize innovation, but since innovation has been chosen, I will accept it. For the

contemporary, I emphasize the need to follow the changes of the times and details, be flexible, and create according to demand. However, if tradition is not emphasized, then there is no need to talk about inheritance. In my opinion, these two are not opposites but complement each other.

Ma Xiaoyan: Tradition has historical background and accumulation, and design should focus on thought and connotation.

Wang Jingmin: The connotation of humanistic thought runs through various fields, and inheritance is both a means and an understanding of historical culture. The expressions of each era are different because people's thoughts evolve. Our current thoughts are different from those of the Han Dynasty; society has changed, and the forms of expression have also changed accordingly. The government provides opportunities and support, but ultimately, it still relies on the market to drive output. Craftspeople need to study the market, combine life needs to create commodities, realize the artification of commodities, and industrial development needs to emphasize both inheritance and adaptation to the market at the same time. We can inherit works with collection value, but inherited works may not necessarily meet market demands. A craftsman may only create a few classic works in his lifetime, and it is precisely these classic works that play a leading role in the market.

Ma Xiaoyan: How do universities and master-level figures play a leading role in the market?

Wang Jingmin: The works of masters play an important role in the market, and the viewpoints of masters are spread through discussions and exchanges, exerting intangible leading effects. Masters should possess independent personal charm and be able to exert influence anytime, anywhere.

Ma Xiaoyan: For crafts such as jade carving or stone carving, what do you think is their current development trend?

Wang Jingmin: Currently, the economic situation is not good, and the demand is limited. Therefore, artists need to consider creating works that can be completed in their spare time, making them true artworks. Although some people will

buy, artists cannot remain idle; they need to continuously research materials, tools, and equipment. This includes researching which materials to use, what equipment to use, and what plans to follow for creation. When there is demand in the market, artists need to quickly produce and sell to make profits. To become a master of arts and crafts, one must have an economic foundation to purchase the necessary materials and tools.

Ma Xiaoyan: What sells best in the market?

Wang Jingmin: I think everything has a market, and everything can sell well. The key is whether you have done your research. For example, we can learn from social media platforms that almost anything has a market as long as you can keep up with the trends. At the same time, pay attention to politics. Our lives are closely related to politics, and politics has a profound impact on the economy. For example, the government may introduce a policy that is very beneficial to our industry, such as allocating funds to support creation. This is the relationship between politics and the economy.

Ma Xiaoyan: Alright, that's all for today. I'm honored to have chatted with you for so long, and I've gained a lot from it.

4.5.3 Interview Record with Wang Chaoyang

Interviewee: Wang Chaoyang

Interview Date: December 2, 2023

Interview Location: Ruili

Introduction of Wang Chaoyang:

Born in 1970 in Nanyang, Henan Province, Wang Chaoyang is a renowned jade carving artist. His works, such as "Red Classic" and "Blessing," pioneered the art of jade carving, making him a representative figure in contemporary Chinese jade carving. He is hailed as the "Qi Baishi of the jade carving world." After nearly thirty years of diligent research, leveraging the original beauty of jade, Wang Chaoyang created a technique called "Water Rhyme Ink Work." "Water Rhyme" is named so because the

color of jade has no fixed position, requiring the sculptor to adapt to it, flowing like water with the terrain. When carving, one must follow the beauty of color to express the natural beauty of the material. "Ink Work" mainly utilizes traditional Chinese ink painting techniques. By carving with the wisdom of water, Wang Chaoyang combines the adaptability of water and the methods of Chinese ink painting. He also pioneered a new aesthetic in contemporary jade carving called the "Grinding Jade Method," advocating that jade carving is about expressing space. Material takes precedence, reducing the carving of images to a minimum, maximizing imagination, and showcasing the beauty of jade to the fullest extent, allowing viewers to engage more aesthetically and imaginatively, reshaping the beauty of humanity and nature through jade carving. His works' unique artistic features are highly praised and loved by professionals both within and outside the industry.

Achievements:

Won several Excellent Works Awards at the Ruili "Jade Carving Fine Works Competition" and was honored with the "Ten Distinguished Figures of Ruili Jade Carving."

In October 2004, at the "China Yunnan International Jewelry and Jade Expo and Trade Fair" held in Yunnan, the selected work "Joy, Anger, Sorrow, Joy, Ugliness" won the Gold Award.

In July 2005, successfully passed the qualification examination for "National Senior Craftsman" jointly awarded by the Ministry of Light Industry and the Ministry of Labor Security.

In November 2005, at the "Tiangong Award," the highest award in the jade carving industry jointly organized by the China National Jewelry Association and the Ministry of Light Industry, the selected work "Spotted Dog" won the Bronze Award, one of the six major awards of the Tiangong Award; "Gardenia Blossoms" won the "Excellent Works Award."

In December 2005, representing Dehong Prefecture, was honored as a "Skilled Technician in Yunnan Province."

From September 2006 to July 2007, underwent advanced studies in the Sculpture Department, Central Academy of Fine Arts.

In 2007, the works "Fragrance," "Youth," "A Dream Beyond the Screen," and "Childhood Fun," submitted to the "Divine Craftsman Award" Jade Carving Competition, were awarded the Gold Prize.

In 2008, the inaugural "Bianhe Cup" awarded the Gold Prize to the work "Sun of the Tribe."

In the 2008 2nd "Divine Craftsman Award" Jade Carving Competition, the works "Lotus Emerging from Water" and "Contemplation" were awarded the Gold Prize.

At the 2008 "Tiangong Award" competition, the work "Military Cap" was honored with the "Best Creative Award."

In 2009, at the 3rd "Divine Craftsman Award" Jade Carving Competition, the works "Childhood Fun" and "Beethoven" were awarded the Gold Prize.

In 2009, was named one of the "Top Ten Jade Carving Masters in Yunnan."

In 2009, specially designated as the official representative inheritor of the "Jade Carving" project in the "Traditional Techniques" category of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Ruili City.

In 2010, the work "Annual Rings" was awarded the Gold Prize in the Chinese Jade (Stone) Art Hundred Flowers Awards.

In 2010, the work "Man and Nature" won the Gold Prize in the "Divine Craftsman Award" and the "Bianhe Cup."

In May 2011, was appointed as a member of the Sixth Expert Committee by the Yunnan Jewelry and Jade Jewelry Industry Association.

In 2012, the work "Deep Breath" won the Gold Prize at the Yunnan Jade Carving Masters Works Exhibition.

In 2013, the work "Temperature" won the Gold Prize at the Yunnan Jade Carving Masters Works Exhibition.

In 2015, the work "The Mark of Buddha" was awarded the Special Gold Prize in the "Divine Craftsman Award."

In 2016, the work "Unveiling the Truth" won the Gold Prize in the "Divine Craftsman Award."

In 2017, the work "Green Tara" won the Gold Prize in the "Divine Craftsman Award," and the work "Flying Apsaras" won the Silver Prize.

In 2018, was recognized as the "First Yunnan Technical Master."

In 2018, the work "Mutual Support" won the Gold Prize in the "Divine Craftsman Award," and the work "Emptiness" won the Silver Prize.



Figure 53 Wang Chaoyang



Figure 54 Interview photos of Mao Xiaoyan and Wang Jingmin



Figure 55 Mao Xiaoyan and Wang Chaoyang's group photo



Figure 56 Wang Chaoyang studio exterior location



Figure 57 Wang Chaoyang studio



Figure 58 Wang Chaoyang works



Figure 59 Wang Chaoyang is working



Figure 60 Wang Chaoyang explains the work

Interview content

Mao Xiaoyan: Hello, Professor Wang. It's a pleasure to have this interview with you. Currently, I am pursuing my doctoral degree in Thailand, and the title of my dissertation is "The Application and design Research of Decorative Styling of Western Han Jade Objects in Contemporary Art Creation." It mainly explores the application and design of traditional elements, using Western Han jade objects as an example, in contemporary art creation. I understand that you have made many achievements and gained insights in both traditional art and contemporary innovation in jade carving. I hope to learn a lot from you through this interview, and I will also record the content of this interview in my doctoral dissertation. China has a rich heritage of traditional art spanning thousands of years, but unfortunately, some traditional arts have faded from our contemporary life, which is regrettable. What do you think are the values and significance of outstanding traditional art in contemporary art? How can we transform them to rejuvenate them in contemporary life? Could you please share your views starting from Han Dynasty jade carving?

Wang Chaoyang: Thank you for your question. Let me address the first issue, the value and significance of traditional elements in contemporary art. First, we

need to clarify what "tradition" refers to. Tradition includes traditional themes, such as the red dragon of the Han Dynasty; then there are traditional styles; and there is also traditional aesthetics, all of which can be extracted from tradition.

First is the theme. Currently, the entire market directly replicates themes, producing imitations of Han Dynasty styles, which are replicas of ancient artifacts. We do not engage in this kind of replication of themes or styles. Instead, we study the aesthetics of the Han Dynasty: what are the core elements, why did people of the Han Dynasty carve red dragons in a certain way, and how should modern people approach it? This involves many aspects.

Regarding the style, the people of the Han Dynasty were exceptionally skilled, with a high aesthetic sense. They combined square and circle shapes exceptionally well, and all their designs revolved around squares and circles. There are many dimensions involved, such as points, lines, planes, density, and rotation, all of which are classic features of Han Dynasty art. There is also the technique of carving, the most classic being the "Han Eight Carvings," summarizing a shape with the character "eight," which is particularly sophisticated. After extracting these elements, we recreate what we want to create. After completing it, it gives people a sense of antiquity, resembling the Han Dynasty, but they can't pinpoint where it came from. This is the difference between incorporating it into our style and simply imitating it. We have spent a lot of time not only studying ancient jade from the Han Dynasty but also studying Han Dynasty stone carvings, pottery, murals, and portrait bricks, among others. They are actually interconnected; it's just that the forms, materials, and techniques of expression are different. When faced with these works, one can feel the relaxation and freedom of Han Dynasty aesthetics.

When we went to Egypt, the carved art there also holds very high value. However, because it was created for divine authority, namely the Pharaoh, the carvings exhibit a particularly formal and regulated demeanor. But it's different for us in the Han Dynasty. During the Han Dynasty, from top to bottom, people were especially relaxed. For example, in stone carving, Han Dynasty stone carvings flowed freely, much like the

freedom felt after drinking wine, giving a sense of unrestrained liberation. That's the essence of the Han Dynasty. We learned a lot from this. The elements we absorbed include both the Han Dynasty's styles and aesthetics. Modeling represents the form, while aesthetics embody this relaxed and liberated state, not bound by meticulous details. However, the detailing in Western Han jade carving is exceptionally well done, and very stylish, such as the vigorous and vivid depiction of the twisting body of the Chi dragon in the Han Dynasty. It's just that compared to other arts, the production of jade artifacts appears slightly formal. This is related to its material, craftsmanship, and direct connection to imperial authority.

Mao Xiaoyan: So, you are also researching the transformation of elements from the Han Dynasty?

Wang Chaoyang: We have several stages. We are studying the transformation of Han Dynasty art, researching some parts, such as Buddhist statues from the Northern Wei and Northern Qi periods, as well as those from the Han and Shang Dynasties. We have delved deeply into these.

Mao Xiaoyan: Just now, you mentioned the extraction of elements, what to use, and how to use it? How do you go about it? Do you have any insights on this?

Wang Chaoyang: First, I don't simply copy its style; instead, I adopt its conceptual modeling and aesthetic sophistication. In terms of modeling, I extract the combination of square and circle, the integration of lines and surfaces, as well as the summarization of carving techniques. As for aesthetics, I extract that sense of relaxation, the feeling of being relaxed yet restrained, and a sense of freedom.

Mao Xiaoyan: Do you have any relevant works now? I would like to learn about the transformation of language through your works. I believe innovation needs to trace back to our most essential elements. How do you think this should be done?

Wang Chaoyang: I agree with your viewpoint. Whether it's tracing back or innovating, we need to understand what the essence is. However, many people nowadays misunderstand tradition as merely style. For most, tradition is just about style. They think if ancient people made a Buddha statue in a certain way, then making the

same Buddha statue means we are carrying on the tradition. If that were the case, should we also keep our hair in braids as ancient people did? Should we also wear Han Dynasty clothing? Clearly, it's not the same thing. What we need to inherit is the spirit of the ancients, their aesthetics. The simplicity of Han Dynasty art is an important element of its aesthetics.

Mao Xiaoyan: For a piece like yours, it's impossible to pinpoint it as a specific reference to any particular Han Dynasty jade artifact, right?

Wang Chaoyang: Yes, you can feel the Han Dynasty vibe in it, but you won't find its prototype. It's original; it only extracts elements from the Han Dynasty, such as the square contour typical of the era, the lines resembling the "Han Eight Cuts," and the treatment of the character "王" (Wang). These are all very typical, reflecting the combination of yin and yang, the spatial interplay of yin and yang lines, all demonstrated in the Han Eight Cuts carving technique. The form of this tiger is square, a generalized approach. The people of the Han Dynasty were particularly adept at this. They understood when to be round and when to be square, demonstrating strength with clean and decisive lines, which is what made them particularly adept.



Figure 61 Wang Chaoyang works of chi tiger handle pieces

Mao Xiaoyan: What impact do traditional elements have on the development of contemporary art?

Wang Chaoyang: The so-called traditional elements are actually forward-looking. If we look at it from a Western perspective, artists like Picasso, Gauguin, and Van Gogh all learned from ancient traditions, drawing inspiration from traditional art to create epoch-making works. Picasso drew inspiration from African art, Gauguin was influenced by Japanese ukiyo-e prints, which in turn were influenced by Chinese art. The sophistication of traditional Chinese art lies in its natural and effortless style, what we call "Tianqu." We're not abstracting for the sake of abstraction; we are rooted in this soil, nurtured by this land. Therefore, a thorough understanding and study of traditional art will propel us towards the future; this is the direction of development.

Mao Xiaoyan: How do you balance tradition and modernity and achieve fusion and innovation when applying traditional elements to contemporary art?

Wang Chaoyang: Contemporary art involves a shift in concepts. Taking painting as an example, in modern times, painting has transitioned from narrative and realism to focusing on color, light, and the essence of painting itself. Similarly, jade carving now focuses on the essence of the material. Whether the jade is carved into a tiger or a frog is not important; what matters is whether the material's qualities are brought to life. We no longer adhere to carving Buddhas or Guanyins realistically; the key lies in understanding the material and exploring various methods to achieve the desired result, thus uncovering the uniqueness of creation. Auguste Rodin, hailed as the father of modern sculpture, exemplifies this approach. His sculptures no longer focus on classical narrative realism; instead, he emphasizes the essence of the material and form. With this new understanding, his sculptures are entirely abstract and minimalist, greatly influencing subsequent artistic creations.

In recent years, we have explored a series of minimalist jade carvings, drawing inspiration from Rodin. For example, Rodin's fish is very typical. Fish is a common artistic theme, mostly depicted realistically, focusing on external features such as the body, eyes, mouth, fins, and scales. However, even a dead fish exhibits these external features. What should we do then? Rodin's approach is to capture the swimming state of the fish, the state of life, which is undoubtedly more vivid than the

fish's appearance. Even a piece of marble can convey the sensation of a fish floating and swimming. Similarly, my minimalist jade carvings seek to reveal the essence of the jade material. For instance, this particular stone, with its resemblance to a fish, is called fish-like jade. Starting from this point, I seek the dynamic movements of the fish, making our later fish carvings lively and dynamic, with minimal embellishment, focusing on essence and emphasizing the material's beauty to the fullest extent. This is our philosophy. From this emerged all my minimalist works. Later, we even abandoned this approach. Wassily Kandinsky believed that "art is not the imitation of nature but the expression of the spirit," which is the essence of abstraction. We no longer study observable phenomena in nature; instead, I began to study the changes in light and shadow, the rhythm of space, and the order of space, thereby presenting aesthetic depth. Works designed in this way are captivating, inspiring contemplation, and immersing people in the beauty of creation.



Figure 62 Wang Chaoyang's work of the minimalist series 1



Figure 63Wang Chaoyang's works of the minimalist series 2

This concept of aesthetics existed in the Han Dynasty. For example, in the stone carvings of the tomb of Huo Qubing from the Han Dynasty, many stone oxen, stone tigers, and stone horses are very primitive. Craftsmen did not carve marble into horses but rather carved marble resembling horses. This adheres to the essence of the material. This brings up another theory, which is energy. A piece of stone formed over billions of years possesses tremendous energy. However, contemporary arts and crafts carve it into the shape of a horse, which has only been around for decades, greatly diminishing its energy. We discard its energy and retain only a shell. What made ancient people remarkable was their ability to preserve the natural energy of the stone. By giving it a slight form, such as resembling a bull, it became like a mythical beast from ancient times, possessing immense energy. Although it remains still, a slight movement would cause earth-shaking tremors. This is energy. This innate advanced aesthetic of ancient people seems to have disappeared in modern times. With the development of history, people focus more on intricate details. However, in doing so for too long, they have forgotten the most essential things. This is also a question I have been contemplating recently.

4.5.4 Interview Record with Xu Yanping

Interviewee: Xu Yanping

Date of Interview: December 2, 2023

Location of Interview: Ruili, Yunnan Province, China

Introduction of Xu Yanping:

At the age of 41, Xu Yanping has been engaged in art for 24 years. He is a member of the China Arts and Crafts Association, a first-class (senior) technician of the China Light Industry Federation, an intermediate arts and crafts artist, a master of jade carving in Yunnan Province, a member of the Yunnan Artists Association, a member of the Yunnan Modern Arts and Crafts Art Committee, the Vice President of the Ruili Arts and Crafts Association, a member of the China Sculpture Society, a Chinese "Shengong" Annual Value Figure, the Vice President of the Guangdong Sculpture Art Research Association, and a member of the International Sculpture Center in the United States. He focuses on the study of contemporary art and the expression of diversity in jade art.

Main Artistic Activities

2023.9.29-11.29 Exhibition of Xu Yanping's Jade Works "Only the Vision of Sumeru" Maitreya

2023.5. "About 1500" won the Silver Award of the China Jewelry Jade Award Nanjing

2023.5. "Harmony and Dragon Spirits" won the Silver Award of the Arts and Crafts Design Innovation Competition Crane Award Nanjing

2023.5. "Wood Root Carving - March Street of Prosperous Times" won the Silver Award of the Hundred Flowers Cup Nanjing

2023.3. "Grinding Bricks into Mirrors - Attendant Bodhisattva" nominated for the Tian Gong Jade Carving Art Contest Beijing

2023.2. "Grinding Bricks into Mirrors - Pagoda" won the Silver Award of the 12th China Jade Carving Luzigang Cup Guangde

2023.2. "Grinding Bricks into Mirrors - Attendant Bodhisattva" won the Silver Award of the 12th China Jade Carving Luzigang Cup Guangde

2022.12."Impressions of Northern Wei" won the Gold Award of the 2022 China Gift Creative Design Competition Beijing

2022.12."Commas and Periods" won the Bronze Award of the 2022 China Gift Creative Design Competition Beijing

2022.12."The Third Ear" won the Bronze Award of the 2022 China Gift Creative Design Competition Beijing

2022.12."Where Did All the Time Go? 2" collected by Fujian Art Museum Fuzhou

2022.12."Overturning Mountains and Seas" collected by Fujian Art Museum Fuzhou

2021.12.12th China Luzigang Cup Suzhou

2022.11. "Buddha's Preaching" won the Bronze Award of the Guangdong Zhuoyue Cup Guangdong

2021.10.2021 Beijing International Jewelry Art Exhibition Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology

2021.10."Jade. Witness Transformation—Chinese Contemporary Jade Medium Art Exhibition" Shenzhen Jewelry Museum

2020. 9 .2020 Beijing International Design Week "Fragments of Civilization" Beijing

2020.10."Jade. Witness Academy—Invitational Exhibition of Chinese Contemporary Jade Medium Art" Beijing

2019.11.National Art Fund - "Yunnan Jade Carving Art Innovative Talent Training" Project Achievement Exhibition Yunnan Arts Institute

2019.9.National Social Science Fund - China Contemporary Handicraft Academic Nomination Exhibition China Academy of Art

2018.7.Most Valuable Commercial Designer Kunming

2018.5.China Contemporary Academy Jade Carving Exhibition Nanyang

2017.11."Jade. See the Future Chinese Contemporary Academy Jade Carving Invitational Exhibition" Suzhou

2017.11.10th China Luzigang Cup Suzhou

2017.10."Mount Sumeru in the Heart" won the Bronze Award of the Chinese Jade Shengong Award Ruili

2017.9.10th China Haipai Shengong Award "About 1500" Chinese Shengong Creative Award "Chinese Zodiac" Chinese Shengong Silver Award Shanghai

2015.9."Performance" "Time" Shanghai Design Capital Shanghai

2015.9."Where Did All the Time Go?" won the highest award "Innovation Award" of the 2015 China Haipai Shengong Awards Individual won the Chinese Shengong Creative Talent Award "One Step" won the Gold Award of the China Haipai Shengong Award Shanghai

2015.8."Where Did All the Time Go?" won the Silver Award of the 2015 Creative Yunnan "Caiyun Cup" Master Exhibition Kunming

2015.8."Where Did All the Time Go?" 2nd China Nanhong (Xichang) Cultural Festival [Yuying Award] Gold Award "Entering" won the 2nd China Nanhong (Xichang) Cultural Festival [Yuying Award] Silver Award "One Step" won the 2nd China Nanhong (Xichang) Cultural Festival [Yuying Award] Silver Award Xichang

2014.11.2014 China Jade Carving Works [Tiangong Award] Best Creative Award Beijing

2014.8.Creative Yunnan 2014 Kunming Cultural Expo Kunming

2014.8."Where Did All the Time Go?" won the Silver Award of the Yunnan Provincial Caiyun Cup Kunming

2014.8."Overturning Mountains and Seas" won the Bronze Award of the 4th Yunnan Jade Carving Master Works Exhibition Kunming

2007.4.China Songzhuang Cultural and Art Festival "Survival Scene" Exhibition Shangshang Art Museum



Figure 64 Xu Yanping

Source: Liza.(2017). Jade carving artist Xu Yanping introduced and works appreciation. Oriental Red Jewellery Jade Information Network.

<http://feicui168.com/zbdj/xyp/455.html>



Figure 65Mao Xiaoyan and Xu Yanping's group photo



Figure 66 Interview photos of Mao Xiaoyan and Xu Yanping



Figure 67 Mao Xiaoyan visited Xu Yanping's studio



Figure 68 Xu Yanping's work 1

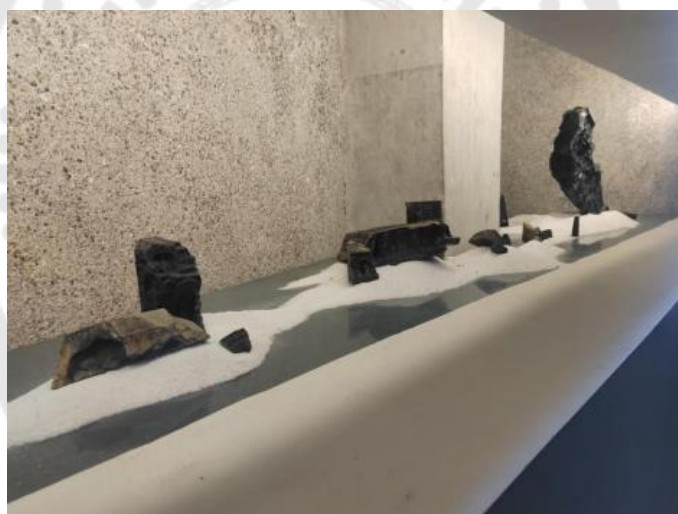


Figure 69 Xu Yanping's work 2



Figure 70 Xu Yanping's work 3



Figure 71 Xu Yanping's work 4



Figure 72 Xu Yanping's work 5



Figure 73 Xu Yanping's work 6



Figure 74 Xu Yanping studio 1

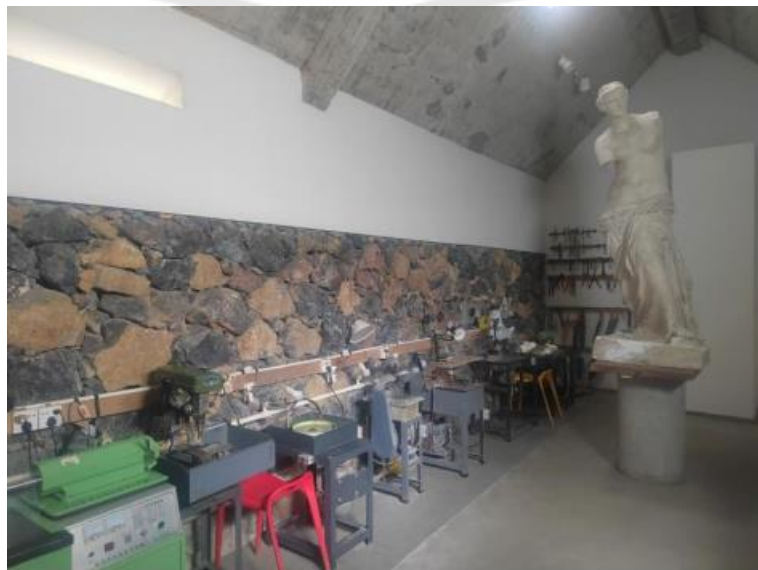


Figure 75 Xu Yanping studio 1

Interview content

Mao Xiaoyan: Hello, Brother Yanping. Thank you very much for agreeing to this interview. Recently, I have been pursuing my doctoral degree in Thailand. The title of my dissertation is "The Application and design Research of Decorative Styling of Western Han Dynasty Jade in Contemporary Art Creation," mainly exploring the application and design of traditional elements, using Western Han Dynasty jade as an example, in contemporary art creation. As an experimental jade sculptor born in the 1980s, I have noticed that you have made many attempts in innovative expression of traditional elements in recent years. I hope to discuss with you the application and design of traditional elements in contemporary art creation through this interview. First of all, I would like to hear your views on traditional elements.

Xu Yanping: Thank you, Xiaoyan. I'm glad to be involved in your research. In my research over the past few years, I have mainly focused on jade artifacts. This research path is actually based on a clear historical context. Traditional sculptures, such as the ones I create, are usually done in the same context, with traces of contemporary art. However, not all sculpture traces belong to contemporary art. Over time, people began to question whether my work really belonged to jade carving and whether jade had to be used as the medium of expression. This sparked a discussion on the definition of jade carving. China has a history of using jade for about ten thousand years, witnessing the entire evolution of Chinese civilization. Therefore, we need to trace its origins from ancient times.

During the summer vacation, I visited several museums. My understanding of the Neolithic Age is still relatively shallow. For example, what influence did the Dawenkou culture and Liangzhu culture have on later Sanxingdui and Longshan cultures? The intersections and widespread distribution of these cultures, some influencing each other and some not. Overall, there are not many relics and cultural artifacts from the Neolithic Age. The parts that can be clearly traced mainly start from

the Shang Dynasty. Relics from the Shang Dynasty are what we can trace and can be seen in various museums. If we do not limit our research to the Han Dynasty, we will find that each period builds on the previous one. For example, the divine-human-animal face patterns seen in the Liangzhu culture can be seen as precursors to the bronze Taotie patterns, showing the mutual penetration between jade and bronze civilizations. During the Western Zhou period after the Shang Dynasty, bronze ware reached its peak, followed by the Eastern Zhou, Spring and Autumn, and Warring States periods, and then the Han Dynasty, where many bold lines appeared.

The identification of bronze artifacts is quite clear, with Taotie patterns on the objects usually being square in shape. These characteristics have influenced the artistic styles of the Qin Dynasty, the Warring States period, and the Han Dynasty. There has been a stylistic evolution from three-dimensional forms transitioning to flattened lines during the Warring States period, and then to a combination of three-dimensional and linear elements during the Han Dynasty. For example, many artifacts unearthed from the tomb of the King of Nanyue actually belong to the Qin Dynasty, as the King of Nanyue, Zhao Tuo, lived to a ripe old age. He was born in the late Warring States period in the state of Qin and lived through the reigns of ten emperors from Qin Shihuang to Emperor Wu of Han, reaching the age of 103. The tomb of Zhao Mei actually contains artifacts from the period of Zhao Tuo because the practice of lavish burial was not in place during Zhao Tuo's time; it only began during the Western Han Dynasty. Therefore, although these tombs belong to the Western Han Dynasty, some of the artifacts inside may be from the Warring States period. There are several well-known sites from the Western Han Dynasty, such as the tomb of the Marquis of Haihun, where a large number of top-quality jade artifacts have been unearthed. These jade artifacts have a strong three-dimensional quality, resembling sculptures. From the perspective of sculpture, these works are very captivating. I visited several museums exhibiting artifacts unearthed from Han Dynasty tombs, including the tomb of the Marquis of Haihun, the Xu Zhou Grand Tomb, and the tomb of King Liu Sheng of Zhongshan. Xu Zhou has a particularly large number of unearthed artifacts, with most of what I saw coming from

there. One especially notable artifact from Xu Zhou is the Chi Tiger decoration from the Western Han period, as I have been researching this theme intensively in recent months. These decorations typically appear on jade belt hooks, with the tails often depicted in a Ruding style. This Chi Tiger decoration became popular during the Warring States period and continued into the Han Dynasty. I believe that when studying artifacts from the Han Dynasty, the Chi Tiger decoration is an indispensable theme.



Figure 76 Blue and White Jade Tiger. Han Dynasty

Source: Nan Ziyou. (2017). Han jade institutions.

http://www.360doc.com/content/17/0923/15/7535938_689450477.shtml

Mao Xiaoyan: Why did you decide to study Chi Hu ?

Xu Yanping: Because its form carries a strong sculptural sense, which piqued my interest. Its grandeur is quite striking, evolving into some pixiu-like figures. Chi Hu is essentially a combination of tiger and dragon, symbolizing nobility. Its form predominantly aligns with what we now call a sense of strength, dynamic lines, and so forth, thus integrating well with contemporary aesthetics.

We find it appealing, much like we do with artworks from the Northern and Southern Dynasties period. Since we have been studying human anatomy and dynamics, we've discovered that the origins of dynamics actually stem from places like

Ancient Egypt and Ancient Greece. This familiarity also applies when we examine Chi Hu decorations; its S-shaped dynamics and sense of strength leave a profound impression. Therefore, I believe that in jade carving, we should start from what we are familiar with. We can identify points of interest in ancient works that resonate with our interests in traditional and contemporary aesthetics.

My research into Gandhara art and sculptures from the Northern and Southern Dynasties period is actually closely related to the educational background we received in the academy. However, if you were asked to research dragon-shaped jade pendants, this kind of study would lean more towards a pattern-based art form.

Mao Xiaoyan: Those indeed tend to be more inclined towards pattern design.

Xu Yanping: Yes, they are different from sculptural art. Therefore, it's important to find our areas of expertise so that we can ignite research drive and find suitable research entry points. For instance, as I mentioned earlier, Chi Hu is an important theme in the study of the Han Dynasty. I also pay attention to Gang Mao (刚卯) from the Eastern Han period. Gang Mao is related to ancient characters and, at certain times, was considered a symbol of warding off evil, which is related to my previous studies on scriptures. Now, shifting focus to these, but what interests me more is their sculptural art and artifact design.



Figure 77 Gangmao of Han Dynasty

Source: Shuangyao culture.(Decrypted the Han Shuangyu -mysterious and noble Han Dynasty's treasure of wicked evil spirits. <http://www.shuangmaoart.com/smwh-jmsm.php>



Figure 78 Xu Yanping's works

Currently, our discussion primarily revolves around the art of artifacts. According to the research of Professor Zhang Wei from the Central Academy of Fine Arts, traditional Chinese sculpture tends to categorize objects as much as possible within the realm of "artifacts." In Chinese art, there is actually no independent concept of the human body. When you observe the collections in museums, you will find that even human figures are treated as artifacts. The characteristic feature of these artifacts lies in their symmetry, line design, and architectural sense.

Therefore, when we visit the Yungang Grottoes, we notice that those open-air large Buddhas give a feeling of a large container. Yesterday, I also discussed with my students that the Buddha statue is like a trophy. The era of sculpting Buddha statues should not have the concept of trophies. In any case, we can say it is a kind of artifact, and the trophy is just a metaphor, indicating it is a container. It is actually a work of art with a strong sense of architecture. This architectural sense is reflected in the

design of external lines and contours. If we discuss sculptures with architectural qualities, then it actually becomes a discussion of contemporary art.

Mao Xiaoyan: This is applying contemporary theory to the field of traditional art.

Xu Yanping: Yes, it aligns with your previous theme, the contemporary transformation of traditional studies. In fact, you are using contemporary research methods to interpret tradition.

Mao Xiaoyan: Yes, in fact, there is still an issue with jade carving, namely, the apparent lack of a corresponding theoretical system.

Xu Yanping: Yes, only something like Confucian theories such as "Eleven Virtues" exists. In other aspects, such as design, it actually doesn't.

Mao Xiaoyan: Even modern researchers tend to use Western methods, such as visual language theory, to interpret them more often. We discuss concepts like sculptural, structural, and dynamic sensations, many of which are interpreted by modern people using concepts from Western art theory to understand traditional Chinese jade artifacts. But we also see that jade artifacts unearthed from different regions and tombs have highly similar forms, indicating that there was already a set of established conventions at that time.

Xu Yanping: Jade artifacts represent the highest level of craftsmanship of the royal court. When different vassal states were enfeoffed, they would bring court artisans with them. At the same time, local artisans would also use the works of court artisans as reference, which leads to the phenomenon you mentioned. However, aesthetic preferences change with each era, and there are also regional differences. For example, Yungang and Maijishan have different styles, which are related to the aesthetics and craftsmanship level of the people leading the construction at that time.

Mao Xiaoyan: Can we consider that the unified standards and high level they adhered to represented the highest level of that period? Although some works may be appropriately adjusted according to local styles, are they consistent in terms of standards?

Xu Yanping: Indeed, this uniformity reflects the supreme authority and nobility of the royal court. Therefore, whether it is the tomb of Haihunhou or artifacts unearthed from other places, they all demonstrate a similar level of artistic achievement as the Western Han Dynasty. For example, the tomb of Emperor Wu of Han, which has not yet been excavated, may yield a large number of artifacts once unearthed. Similarly, in the tomb of the King of Nanyue, an area of 100 square meters yielded a rich collection worthy of a museum.

Mao Xiaoyan: I visited the tomb of the King of Nanyue when I was still a graduate student. Although I didn't know much about jade carving at the time, the unearthed artifacts left a deep impression on me. Indeed, the variety and quality of the unearthed artifacts there are superb, worthy of being called top-notch.

Xu Yanping: Indeed, those jade pieces and other jade artifacts are all exquisitely crafted. Later, some artifacts were even magnified and replicated, showcased at the entrance of the museum. For example, the Jade Dancing Figure was enlarged into a sculpture, and the Jade Pendant with Hollow-carved Dragon and Phoenix Designs was designed as a symbol of the tomb of the King of Nanyue.



Figure 79 Yubi of The tomb of the Nanyue King

Source: Nanyue King Museum. Interview | Several generations of literary bloggers, jointly build the Bay Area IP top flow- "Nanyue King".

<https://www.163.com/dy/article/H0U1HOUP051496G4.html>



Figure 80 Logo of the Nanyue King Museum

Source: Nanyue King Museum. Interview | Several generations of literary bloggers, jointly build the Bay Area IP top flow- "Nanyue King".
<https://www.163.com/dy/article/H0U1HOUP051496G4.html>



Figure 81 Jade Dancer

Source: Produced in the Western Han Dynasty, now collected in the Nanyue King Museum, Guangzhou. <https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1674112812277020180>



Figure 82 Jade Dance Sculpture

Source: Southern Vietnamese Tomb Jade Dance Sculpture. modern.

Guangzhou. <https://www.quanjing.com/images/nanyuewangmu.html>

Mao Xiaoyan: Chinese arts and crafts have always emphasized practicality. Even those works that cannot be used for practical storage still carry a certain social function. Therefore, overall, these works are practical objects closely linked to our daily lives. Its core lies in practicality, which is an important characteristic of traditional Chinese art.

Mao Xiaoyan: It is this kind of thinking that has given me new insights. In the process of transforming or innovating traditional elements into contemporary ones, selecting appropriate elements is crucial. Your previous discussion has inspired me. How should we choose and apply these elements? For example, you chose the theme of the "chi dragon." Could you share your specific ideas and plans in this regard?

Xu Yanping: Our creative foundation still adheres to traditional craftsmanship but incorporates the fusion of modern elements. In studying traditional works, we found that certain characteristics may not exist, which is the opportunity for our artistic transformation. For example, integrating the modern understanding of dynamic lines, mechanics, and anatomy into traditional artistic expressions. This fusion is inevitable; apart from emphasizing strength and lines, most aspects are similar. However, some subtle details are difficult to express accurately in language.

Mao Xiaoyan: This consideration seems to be more focused on the aspect of form. What about considering the techniques used or the materials and forms employed?

Xu Yanping: What type of medium are you referring to?

Mao Xiaoyan: For example, I mean the materials used or the forms of creation?

Xu Yanping: Regarding this point, we are currently in the exploration and learning phase. When discussing jade as a creative medium, the important question is whether to treat it as jade carving or sculpture? Apart from its cultural attributes and historical background, when we integrate it into specific media or forms of expression, we face different considerations.

Mao Xiaoyan: Are you referring to how to present this theme in different ways?

Xu Yanping: Not just the mode of presentation, because regardless, the core theme remains the chi dragon. However, there can be various forms of expression, such as representational, abstract, intentional, complete, partial, or even fragmented. These all represent the diversity of artistic expression.

Xu Yanping: Currently, these attempts are valuable, constituting deeper explorations and transformations of traditional elements. I am still in the learning and exploration phase, without delving deeply into transformation yet. There are certain challenges and pressures in choosing such a theme for creation. If the transformation is not done well, it may not match the original. After all, those works already belong to the classics.

Mao Xiaoyan: This extreme power is indeed the core of artistic creation.

Xu Yanping: Indeed, in this aspect, there's hardly any room for improvement. My current transformation may focus on enhancing his strength in craftsmanship and delicacy. Ancient craftsmanship may lack refinement in certain aspects, but they demonstrate ultimate delicacy in others such as line treatment. My

goal is to pursue excellence in craftsmanship, combining modern kinetics and personal understanding, but for now, I'm still following the ancient methods.

Xu Yanping: The process of transformation involves multiple aspects. For example, in shaping the instrument type, I may draw inspiration from the aesthetic beauty of Han Dynasty instruments and integrate it into the outer contour form of the artifact. This transformation not only involves the use of lines but also includes the combination of elevation disparity and patterns. This approach is also applicable to the study of dragon decorations and other themes from the Warring States and Han periods, as well as the atmospheric artifacts and silk products from the Mawangdui period. The aesthetics of this period are interconnected. I believe that only through in-depth study of these ancient patterns and artistic styles can one truly integrate and influence the design of artifacts during creation.

Mao Xiaoyan: Your profound understanding of history and tradition is the foundation of your artistic creation.

Xu Yanping: I am still in the learning and exploration phase, without delving deeply into transformation yet. There are challenges in choosing such a theme for creation because if the transformation is not done well, it may not match the original. My current focus is on establishing standards, understanding how to appropriately exaggerate while preserving the essence of the original. This is a process of learning and absorption, and only through deep understanding and research can accurate judgment and adjustments be made during creation.

Mao Xiaoyan: Your modesty is admirable, but in my research, you are the leading figure among the new generation of artists in China.

Xu Yanping: My work is just a part of artistic exploration. Each stage is a learning process, and when we face new subjects and phenomena, we need to learn and understand objectively. It's like the difference between 1.73 meters and 1.78 meters, which requires precise measurement to determine. When I create chi dragons, I don't change them first; instead, I deeply understand them to ensure that this knowledge is rooted in my heart. Only then can my creation truly have depth and influence. If you

start to exaggerate excessively, then the resulting work is like some jade carvings from the Ming and Qing dynasties, seemingly intricate but actually far from genuine classical works.

Mao Xiaoyan: So, your insight or advice is to delve into its origins or essence. Only with a full understanding of these can you innovate or make changes. Otherwise, it's superficial work, of little value, merely pandering to the crowd.

Xu Yanping: Exactly. If you're learning the fundamentals, don't settle for shallow understanding. First, you need to grasp the essence before you can have a say. At the very least, you should be able to clearly articulate your understanding and know where you've made improvements.

Mao Xiaoyan: Yes, and in the research process, we shouldn't limit ourselves to observing the surface; we should also study the contemporary art, humanities, culture, and historical background. Only by deeply understanding why the ancients adopted certain lines or forms can we know how to combine them with modern aesthetics and carry out contemporary transformations.

Xu Yanping: Indeed. This is essentially a process where each period is a new learning opportunity during the process of study and research. As long as you're willing to learn, you can delve deeper into understanding. That's why we tend to study the works of the ancients because those works are accessible materials for all of us. Every time you visit a museum, your perceptions and acquired knowledge will differ. However, those standard works remain unchanged, and you continuously refine your understanding, gradually delving deeper.

Mao Xiaoyan: Cognition also changes accordingly.

Xu Yanping: Yes, but the standard itself remains unchanged. It's still the same, so you continually adjust your understanding. When you study a person who keeps changing, you're always playing catch-up. But if you study a standard, as long as you're willing to delve into it, you'll understand it more and more. It's like cultivation; you need to understand the standard first to know how to exaggerate. I'm still in the process of establishing this standard.

Mao Xiaoyan: I recently visited the Liangzhu archaeological site, and I was deeply impressed. I think, to some extent, our craftsmanship or art is regressing. I studied the Han Dynasty because that period has relatively abundant documentary materials. In fact, I believe that after the Han Dynasty, the art of jade carving began to decline.

Xu Yanping: Yes, if you look at past artworks, you'll find that over time, many things have become secularized, losing the depth of abstract language in the process of secularization.

Mao Xiaoyan: Yes, although jade carving has interacted with bronze ware or other categories of jade carving, they still maintain a relatively independent artistic language. But later on, it seems to have turned into something like ceramic figurines, losing its original artistic features and depth. So, I believe that the art of the Han Dynasty still has high research value.

Mao Xiaoyan: Recently, I have been working on my research topic, including the projects I'm applying for. After visiting Thailand, I plan to conduct a comparative study of Sino-Thai design based on the elements of Han Dynasty jade carving, exploring the design thinking and creative thinking of Chinese and Thai students. I plan to introduce the concept of Han Dynasty jade artifacts and let Thai students engage in design practice. This will be an attempt to explore the combination of traditional elements and contemporary design thinking.

Xu Yanping: Contemporary creation offers many possibilities in terms of materials and forms. We can explore the modern transformation of traditional elements or attempt to use jade, a traditional material, to express non-traditional themes and forms.

Mao Xiaoyan: Indeed, such explorations may reveal new perspectives and innovative approaches. Through novel applications of traditional materials, we can better understand and inherit traditional culture.

Xu Yanping: We need to continue exploring and learning, combining the essence of ancient culture with the innovation of modern art. It's an evolving process

that requires both respect for tradition and daring innovation. This will be a valuable exploration. Understanding and comparing artistic creations from different cultural backgrounds will help us to better understand the integration of traditional and contemporary art.

Mao Xiaoyan: We also discussed the issue of materials and artistic forms. Modern jade carving creations can be divided into two categories: one based on modern design and expressive forms using traditional elements, and the other using jade to express non-traditional themes and forms.

Xu Yanping: In traditional culture, the use of jade holds profound cultural significance. For example, the six ritual vessels made of jade mentioned in the "Book of Rites" reflect the Confucian reverence for the heavens and the earth. The "jade pig-dragon" is a typical element in ancient jade carving art, reflecting the exquisite craftsmanship and profound understanding of jade materials by ancient people.

Xu Yanping: In contemporary art creation, the use of jade is often a symbolic suggestion. For instance, artist Liang Kegang creates artworks resembling handcuffs using jade materials resembling bracelets. This type of creation not only symbolizes the value of jade itself but also implies psychological suggestions. It suggests how the high value and material worth of jade can psychologically bind and influence people. Such creations can be seen as contemporary transformations and reinterpretations of traditional jade values.



Figure 83 Luxury Prisoner

Source: Liang Kegang, Material. (2008). Emerald. a luxurious annual meeting in Chengdu, behavior art. https://www.sohu.com/a/460155397_100195769

Mao Xiaoyan: So, I can understand that when modern artists use jade as a material, they are not just limited to its traditional physical attributes but rather transform it into a medium capable of expressing ideas and emotions.

Xu Yanping: Yes, although this creative approach may seem straightforward, it carries depth. It not only visualizes the physical properties of jade but also involves metaphor and implication. This mode of artistic expression has, to some extent, surpassed the traditional realm of "skillful jade carving," presenting more profound meanings. The transformation of bronzeware into jade artifacts has been considered a relatively reasonable artistic expression. Whether applying the style of bronzeware to jade artifacts or creating works in traditional bronzeware styles using jade materials, these reflect artists' understanding of and innovation in traditional culture. For example, the creation of the "jade pig-dragon" using jade material is seen in contemporary art as a reasonable continuation and innovation of traditional culture.

Mao Xiaoyan: From this perspective, it seems that ancient people, when using jade, did not overly emphasize its specific attributes but rather focused on its potential and possibilities as an artistic medium.

Xu Yanping: Traditionally, the attributes of jade did not include bright colors. Ancient people mainly used white jade for sacrificial purposes, considering jade as symbolizing eternity, surpassing the hardness of stones. The ancient concept did not revolve around skillful jade carving. They regarded jade as a medium for expressing the symbols of a mysterious culture. Finding a good piece of jade was extremely rare in the past, so early works were highly precious, such as the translucent carved jade artifacts from the Han Dynasty.

Mao Xiaoyan: So, we don't need to overly emphasize the specific attributes of jade now but rather focus more on its value as a medium of artistic expression.

Xu Yanping: Yes, but we also cannot completely ignore the culture of sacred jade, as during the period of sacred jade culture, the emphasis was more on the divinity and religious significance of jade.

Mao Xiaoyan: In modern psychology, this divinity can be understood as a dialogue with the individual's psyche.

Xu Yanping: Each period has a different definition of the significance of jade. The views on jade during the Wang jade period and the civilian jade period are completely different. In ancient times, jade was a symbol of status and class, whereas now, anyone with wealth can purchase high-quality jade. Contemporary jade carving emphasizes more on the auspicious meanings of jade, which is also part of psychology. People buy jade objects with wishes for peace, wealth, and smoothness.

Mao Xiaoyan: I fully agree with your point of view. Today's discussion has been enlightening for me. Once again, thank you for your insights.

4.5.5 Interview record of Lu Weiping

Interview expert: Lu Weiping

Interview time: December 6, 2023

Interview location: Tengchong, Yunnan province

Personal Profile of Lu Weiping: Currently a doctoral candidate at the Jewelry College of China University of Geosciences (Wuhan), Lu Weiping holds a Master of Fine Arts from the Central Academy of Fine Arts. Presently, Lu serves as the Head of the Design and Craft Department at the Jewelry College of Dianxi West University of Applied Sciences. He is also a senior craft artist, enjoying special subsidies from the Yunnan Provincial Government and has been selected as a chief technician under the "Xingdian Talent Plan." Additionally, Lu has been recognized as a national technical expert in light industry and holds the title of senior technician. He is an appointed expert committee member for the development of the National Occupational Skill Standards for Craft Art Designers and a member of the Expert Committee of the China Light Industry Jewelry Center and the Yunnan Artists Association.

As a member of expert panels, Lu has participated in numerous projects organized by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security. He has contributed to the implementation of the "China Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritor Training Program" led by the Central Academy of Fine Arts. Lu has led seven research projects, including joint research projects on basic research among local undergraduate institutions in Yunnan Province and the Youth Creative Talent Project funded by the Yunnan Art Fund. He has published three papers in academic journals such as "Chinese Gems" and has contributed to over ten research achievements, including the compilation of textbooks such as "Engraving Craft" for the GIC series at the Jewelry College of China University of Geosciences (Wuhan).

Lu's works have won significant awards in the field of arts and crafts, including Silver Awards at the China Arts and Crafts Expo, the "Baihe Cup" Silver Award, and the "Baihe Award" Silver Award. His works have been selected multiple times for the National Arts and Crafts Exhibition, the 9th China Beijing International Art Biennale, the 2018 China Contemporary Arts and Crafts Biennale, the 15th Yunnan Art Exhibition, the 7th Yunnan Provincial Youth Art Nomination Exhibition, the 2021 South Asia Southeast Asia Metal Craft Exhibition, the 6th China Chengdu International Intangible Cultural Heritage Exhibition, and nearly 20 other important international and domestic exhibitions. Many of Lu's works are housed in national and provincial-level art institutions such as the China Artists Association, the China Three Gorges Museum, the Fujian Provincial Art Museum, the Quanzhou Overseas Transportation History Museum in Fujian Province, and the Overseas Chinese Museum.



Figure 84 Lu Weiping



Figure 85 Mao Xiaoyan and Lu Weiping group photo



Figure 86 Interview photo of Mao Xiaoyan and Lu Weiping



Figure 87 The corner of Lu Weiping Studio 1



Figure 88 Lu Weiping Studio corner 2



Figure 89 Lu Weiping studio corner 3



Figure 90 Lu Weiping studio corner 4



Figure 91 Lu Weiping's Works

Interview content

Mao Xiaoyan: Hello Weiping, it's a pleasure to have this interview with you. Today, we'll delve into the discussion of traditional elements and contemporary innovation. Considering your previous exploration of contemporary transformation and innovation of traditional elements, such as your work "Mech Armor" which incorporates elements from the Warring States period, how did you conceptualize and practice the contemporary transformation of these traditional elements? Could you please share your insights and thought process during the creation of "Mech Armor"?

Lu Weiping: Firstly, I have a great affinity for jade artifacts from the Warring States period. I believe that for artistic creation, it's essential to return to the source and embrace tradition as much as possible. Thus, I spent some time delving into history. Given the relatively scarce relics from the Qin Dynasty and the abundance from the Shang and Zhou Dynasties, I found the Warring States period to be particularly suitable. Personally, I felt that the sculptural treatment was quite satisfactory, appearing more orderly compared to previous works, possibly reflecting my personal aesthetic preferences. However, as I progressed, I felt it became overly intricate. Consequently, I opted to use Warring States jade artifacts as a starting point, selecting the dragon motif as an embellishment. Warring States jade artifacts tend to be relatively flat, presenting a simple and robust overall appearance. I've always been fond of mechanical elements, perhaps influenced by my previous experience in mechanical engineering and my involvement in contemporary sculpture under the guidance of mentors, which often incorporated mechanical elements. Hence, this became my focal point.

Mao Xiaoyan: What underlying message do you intend to convey through this series of works?

Lu Weiping: The main essence I seek to convey is the reinterpretation of traditional themes or their combination with modern design. Essentially, it's about taking traditional elements and giving them a fresh perspective through redesign. This can be seen as a form of exploration. Such creations may not be readily understood, or they may not conform to the paradigm of traditional sculpture. However, for individuals like us

with academic backgrounds and training, it's more about personal artistic expression. Hence, it tends to be somewhat personalized. I've actually created two versions of this piece. Though I've drafted some sketches for future versions, they haven't been realized yet. ◦

Mao Xiaoyan: As you mentioned, your series of works are more of an exploration. Through this exploration, you've received feedback from within the industry, and the results seem quite promising, don't they?

Lu Weiping: Yes, I believe it's quite significant within the industry. In this field, everyone is constantly exploring, and there may have been relatively few predecessors in this particular area. This means that whether your work succeeds or fails, you need to continue pushing forward. This point, whether in experimentation, success, or failure, requires continual exploration. Some of my works have also received recognition from industry experts. For example, the first set was exhibited at the "120 Years of Jade in Yunnan" exhibition organized by Yunnan Zhongbao School, where the "Mech Armor" received a gold award and was collected by the Fujian Provincial Art Museum. The 2.0 version was exhibited at the Chongqing Three Gorges Museum and participated in the second National Arts and Crafts Exhibition at the National Museum, where it received positive feedback. Although the National Museum expressed interest in acquiring it, for certain reasons, I did not agree to the acquisition.

Mao Xiaoyan: Through your works, what insights have you gained, especially in terms of innovation in jade carving and the contemporary application of traditional elements?

Lu Weiping: In reality, I have two main directions. One is contemporary artistic expression, which is more experimental. In this direction, there are relatively few limitations on creative exploration, and I can draw inspiration from many contemporary art techniques, such as Qiu Zhijie's "Writing the Orchid Pavilion Preface a Thousand Times." He wrote the preface a thousand times, allowing ink to accumulate on the paper, achieving a new material state and proposing the concept of "repetition of tradition yet destruction of tradition."

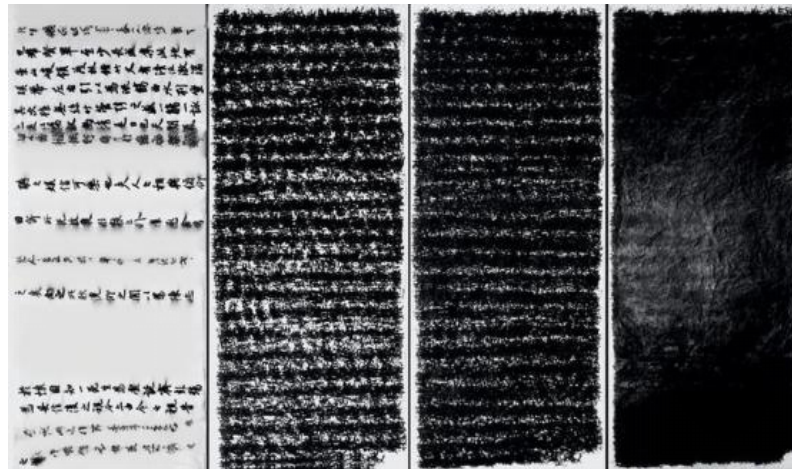


Figure 92 "Repeat writing a thousand times of the Orchid Pavilion preface" -Qiu Zhijie

Source: (2015). 56th Venice Biennale: World Future. Bazaar Art.

<https://artda.cn/guoneixinwen-c-9615.html>

Lu Weiping: In the process of exploration, you may not necessarily need to carve specific items but rather focus more on expressing the materials. I believe that in jade carving, if you have strong convictions about your ideas, then this experimental exploration becomes more intriguing and potent. Additionally, I've seen early works by Qiu Qijing where he carved a piece of stone into jade and displayed two stones together, which is also an interesting exploration, challenging the conventional notion that carving requires meaning and expression.

Of Source, there is another type of work that emphasizes contemporary life situations and design. In this regard, I feel it requires more caution because the pace of product development needs to be more steady. This may involve product promotion and sales, an area I currently don't have a firm grasp on. Despite having some works, they haven't garnered much attention or sales.

Mao Xiaoyan: Re-creating traditional themes is a topic many are researching now because we need roots. Could you share your insights on this aspect of your creative process?

Lu Weiping: When re-creating traditional themes, it's important to recognize the influence of one's cultural background, and unearthing these elements requires a conscious approach. In my creative process, I tend to lean towards methods like Qiu Zhijie's, emphasizing thorough research and multi-faceted perspectives. For example, if one were to create a traditional theme like Warring States Mech Armor, it requires in-depth research, not just browsing images but conducting comprehensive research akin to a doctoral thesis to gain a deeper understanding. Delving deeply into the research on this theme may challenge preconceptions, and the depth of this research directly affects the quality of the creative display. Unearthing the intrinsic and profound aspects of societal culture and aesthetics is a crucial aspect of creativity. Creators need to profoundly understand the theme, uncover its cultural connotations, to present something unique and profound in their works. Essentially, it involves delving deeply into the cultural and aesthetic elements within the theme and transforming them. This process is similar to writing an essay, requiring in-depth research and methodology; surface-level exploration won't suffice. The depth of exploration and the utilization of methodology directly influence the uniqueness of the work. If exploration remains superficial, the work may fail to leave a lasting impression. Hence, in creative endeavors, profound exploration and research intensity are paramount.

Mao Xiaoyan: Please discuss the impact of new technologies and science on traditional crafts, especially jade carving.

Lu Weiping: The influence of technology on art and design is evident, as it is intertwined with the history of technological development. For instance, the introduction of oil painting pigments and tools altered the form, themes, and modes of expression in painting. The emergence of Impressionism stemmed from 19th-century observations and theoretical discoveries, once again changing the manner and concepts of painting. Modern new media technology has further propelled artistic innovation. For example, CNC machining has brought about efficiency and novel modes of expression, significantly reducing production time compared to traditional manual methods. This change is not only reflected in the quantity of works but also in their

presentation forms. The introduction of new technology enables artists to express their creativity more flexibly while creating new artistic forms.

Mao Xiaoyan: What are your thoughts or insights on the application of new technologies such as mechanical carving, metalworking, and the integration of jade carving?

Lu Weiping: I am fascinated by these technologies. The application of new technologies not only enhances production efficiency but also brings about new considerations for artistic expression. For instance, the introduction of CNC machining makes it easier to handle regular and complex shapes. These new modes of expression themselves become part of the artwork, enriching both the quantity and experience of the works. Furthermore, the application of new technologies enables artists to better disseminate their works. Through virtual technology, the presentation of artworks is no longer limited to photos but can be done through animations or short films, making the presentation of works more vivid and diverse. For example, with technical support, I could entirely transform my jade carving works into a short film, showcasing their entirety and details, which was unimaginable in the past.

Mao Xiaoyan: What about the intervention of artificial intelligence? Do you have any research or opinions on this?

Lu Weiping: Currently, my research on artificial intelligence is not extensive enough, but I believe it will certainly be a crucial direction in the future, with profound implications for creativity and artistic expression.

Mao Xiaoyan: Well, thank you very much for your insights. You've sparked a lot of thinking for me.

5.5.6 Interview record of Xie Zhaohua

Interview expert: Xie Zhaohua

Interview time: November 27, 2023

Interview location: Tengchong, Yunnan province

Xie Zhaohua Profile: Director of the China Light Industry Jewelry Center, Director of the Development and Cooperation Department, Senior Supervisor, Senior Judge, Senior Technician. Since 2016, involved in organizing the selection activities of the China Jewelry Jade Hundred Flowers Award and various local award activities nationwide, such as the Shanghai Jade Dragon Award, Suzhou Luzigang Cup, among others. Since 2018, organized the National Jewelry Testing and Production Vocational Skills Competition approved by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, which includes crafts and jewelry and gemstone industries, selecting a large number of high-end industry elites for the industry.



Figure 93 Xie Zhaohua



Figure 94 Mao Xiaoyan poses with Xie Zhaohua



Figure 95 interview photo of Mao Xiaoyan and Xie Zhaohua



Figure 96 Xie Zhaohua speaks photos

Source: Chinese jade carving "Lu Zigang Cup" boutique exhibition speech



Figure 97 Xie Zhaohua participated in the event photo 1

Source: (2019). Xie Zhaohua explained to Zhang Chonghe, president of China Light Industry Federation, in the Suzhou Luzigang Cup selection event



Figure 98 Xie Zhaohua participated in the event photo 2

Source: (2019). Xie Zhaohua and the expert s discussed their works during the Suzhou Luzigang Cup selection event



Figure 99 Xie Zhaohua participated in the event photo 3

Source: (2022). Xie Zhaohua communicated with Sri Lanka Ambassador to China on the gem cooperation project



Figure 100 Xie Zhaohua participated in the event photo 4

Source: In the vocational skills competition selection work, approve the judges' scores

Interview content

Mao Xiaoyan: Hello Director Xie, it's a pleasure to have you for this interview. Recently, I have been pursuing my doctoral degree in Thailand. My dissertation topic is "The Application and design of Decorative Styling of Western Han Jade Artifacts in Contemporary Art Creation", focusing on the utilization and innovation

of traditional elements, using Western Han jade artifacts as an example, in contemporary art creation. As the Director of the China Light Industry Jewelry Center and Director of the Development and Cooperation Department, you have been involved in organizing various competitions and exhibitions nationwide, thus possessing a deep understanding of the domestic jade carving market. Today, I hope to gain insights into the forefront of the jade carving market through our conversation. Firstly, I would like to inquire about your understanding of "heritage".

Xie Zhaohua: My understanding of "heritage" involves passing down from the older generation of masters to the present, where we carry forward and embody it with our own cognition, insights, and understanding. Many people nowadays tend to admire Western culture. However, it's noteworthy that many international brands, including Cartier and Tiffany, incorporate elements derived from our Chinese civilization. Chinese art emphasizes the beauty of lines, which has been widely adopted and referenced in Western design, including jewelry design. Traditional Chinese culture is gaining global attention, and everyone is engaged in heritage and innovation in different ways.

Mao Xiaoyan: How do you perceive the current trends in the jade carving market?

Xie Zhaohua: The jade carving market exhibits a clear trend, with relatively low popularity for large-scale artworks and art pieces. For instance, large-scale artworks carved by masters often have price tags ranging from several million to tens of millions, yet their sales performance in the current market often falls short of expectations. To address survival issues, jade carving artists prioritize the production of derivative products or commodities to support their artistic creations.

Currently, the structure of consumer groups has undergone changes, with younger consumers showing a stronger preference for novel designs rather than traditional large-scale jade carving artworks. In recent years, cartoon-style jade carvings have gained popularity due to their unique designs. Meanwhile, in the Sihui and Pingzhou markets, many contemporary artworks and sculptures have achieved good

sales performances. Taking Zhuangjia Jade as an example, they have successfully combined jade with ceramics. Although jade accounts for only a small part of the overall composition, the combination with ceramics has proven to be exceptionally effective. An individual piece of jade sells for about one thousand yuan, while a standalone ceramic pot also sells for around one thousand yuan. However, the combination of the two is priced at 6,000 yuan, and it quickly sells out, demonstrating high demand.

The current transformation in the consumer market indicates a gradual shift in consumer preferences towards innovative designs. As jade carvers, we should not solely rely on high-priced large-scale works to guide the market. Instead, we should focus on designing more accessible pieces that appeal to the broader public, gradually guiding the new generation of consumers to become collectors and eventually nurturing them into high-end collectors.

This is a progressive process, especially for the younger generation, particularly those born after 2000. When choosing jade carvings, they tend to prefer shapes resembling characters like Baymax or Transformers. Gemstone cutting is also no longer conventional but rather focuses more on irregular shapes. Therefore, in the current craft market, it is necessary to combine traditional craftsmanship with contemporary artistic aesthetics to innovate and produce works that meet the current demands of the consumer market.

Mao Xiaoyan: What is your opinion on the attractiveness of ancient elements among different demographic groups?

Xie Zhaohua: The allure of ancient elements is a complex and multi-layered phenomenon, exhibiting different charms among individuals of various age groups. However, defining this allure precisely is challenging as it is deeply influenced by individual cultural backgrounds and aesthetic perceptions. We must consider the diversity in interpretations of ancient elements across different periods and societies.

In current cultural disSource, the mode of inheriting traditional culture in education has drawn our attention. The younger generation is often subject to directive or aggressive cultural influences during their educational process, leading to a skewed

understanding of traditional culture. Changes in textbooks and the evolution of expressions of traditional culture have become prominent phenomena.

This issue involves a complex and sensitive theme, namely cultural inheritance and transformation. The older generation may possess a profound understanding of traditional culture, while the younger generation may harbor misunderstandings due to shifts in the education system. This has led to continuous questioning of textbooks, especially regarding modifications to idioms and vocabulary.

As times change, we observe traditional culture seeking avenues of inheritance and promotion through traditional craftsmanship and other means despite the impacts of the era. This includes conveying the essence of ancient culture and enhancing awareness of Chinese ancient culture and civilization through various art forms such as painting and sculpture.

In terms of cultural dissemination, platforms like Yi Gongzi's video explanations provide an excellent platform for people to delve deeper into ancient culture. Such modes of cultural dissemination, including in the field of craftsmanship, should play a greater guiding and educational role in traditional cultural cognition to pass down these invaluable cultural legacies to the next generation.

In contemporary times, we also observe many competitions and academic forums. While some award-winning works still maintain relatively traditional themes, there is also an emergence of innovative awards. Looking towards the future, we need to conduct in-depth research into which directions individuals are more likely to make breakthroughs in when designing.

It is noteworthy that some older craftsmen, despite having a high level of cognition in traditional culture, generally remain at the studio level. Their understanding of traditional skills mainly manifests at the technical level, with relatively weak comprehension of aspects such as the historical significance and cultural background of their works.

In recent years, through events like craft carving competitions, we have emphasized the importance of theoretical exams in cultural Sources. Theoretical

knowledge plays a crucial role in the creation and design of artists. In the market, we also observe that works produced by craftsmen graduating from universities are more popular because their education focuses more on contemporary needs and their cultural literacy is richer. Therefore, by improving cultural literacy and theoretical knowledge, we can better cultivate craftsmen with profound cultural heritage.

Furthermore, we have noticed that some senior artists have expressed difficulties in selling their current works. The main reason is that they only create what they personally perceive as good without considering the preferences of customers. This also reflects the trend of gradual pre-carving and the increasing functionality of jade, where functionality does not solely refer to the performance of tools but also embodies changes in people's psychological needs.

Therefore, understanding market demand becomes crucial. People, when making purchases, not only focus on individual works but may also seek combinations of elements in different works to meet personalized needs. This requires artists to meticulously understand customer psychology during the creative process and produce works that better cater to market demand.

Taking the recent popular trend of Buddha pendants as an example, it emphasizes the spiritual function of the works. Through jade carving, it consoles the audience and satisfies their psychological needs. Regarding personalized customization, I proposed it a few years ago, however, it hasn't been very effective within the industry because some craftsmen misunderstand the essence of customization. They simply create patterns they personally like without communicating and designing with the customer. Therefore, the success of personalized customization depends on supply and demand, meaning producing works that customers actually need. This not only involves design proficiency but also requires understanding customer needs and creating based on them. Everyone has their own characteristics and skills. First, one must refine their skills, then innovate based on elements to adapt to contemporary aesthetic needs and meet people's desires for a better life. A better life is

not just about external beauty but also about benefiting the individual, possessing both the beauty and the functionality of a better life.

Mao Xiaoyan: Artworks need to meet individual psychological needs and expectations. Purchasing something should bring joy and fulfill psychological expectations, making the investment worthwhile.

Xie Zhaohua: Yes, it is similar to the psychological comfort of burning incense and worshipping Buddha, providing oneself with spiritual suggestions through a ritual. Changes in the market and shifts in consumer groups require craftsmen to follow the development of the times, pay attention to market demand, constantly adjust, and improve their works to meet the ever-changing demands for a better life.

Mao Xiaoyan: Thank you, Director Zhao Hua Xie. Through our in-depth exchange, you have provided me with a unique perspective on the use of ancient elements in contemporary art creation and the jade carving market. Your profound insights not only offer important enlightenment for my doctoral research but also provide valuable ideas for us to better understand the inheritance and innovation of Chinese traditional culture in contemporary times.

From your responses, I deeply appreciate the diversity of ancient elements demonstrated across different age groups and cultural inheritances. Especially under the dual influence of the education system and market demand, we have witnessed multi-level changes in the understanding and inheritance of traditional culture. Under the impact of the times, traditional craftsmanship has become an effective way to promote ancient culture through modern means and innovation.

Your viewpoints also remind us, as artists and craftsmen, to closely observe market demand, gain a deeper understanding of individual psychology, and continually adjust the direction of creation. Particularly in the realm of personalized customization, truly understanding customer needs and incorporating these needs into works becomes the key to satisfying personalized market demands.

Through this in-depth interview, I not only deeply understand the vibrant expression of traditional culture in contemporary times but also have a clearer

understanding of the dynamics of the jade carving market. Once again, thank you, Director, for sharing your valuable time and profound insights. I look forward to more opportunities for such exchanges in the future.



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