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THE ORIGINS OF COLLECTING IN CHINA. UNDERGROUND JADE TREASURES AS A REFLECTION OF ANCIENT COLLECTING

Collecting is basically defined as conscious storing of objects which are internally related. Normally, collectors gather their items according to particular rules or for some purpose, e.g. for aesthetic pleasure, historical and scientific knowledge, or prestige.[1] Whatever the reasons, collecting is always connected with the instinct of possession and, in some cases, with the desire to rule the world, or with loneliness and anxiety. The study of collecting not only gives us the chance to discover the reasons as to why people are interested in particular objects, but also provides us with the key to seeing the Macrocosm in its Micro version.

Usually the collected objects are deprived of their utility and become witnesses to certain events and history. Sometimes, however, identifying the collection is not so obvious. In different times and in different places the purpose of gathering items was determined by various circumstances and needs. Susan M. Pearce, in her article "The urge to collect,"[2] recalls the different definitions of collecting, including one of the earliest from 1932 as given by Walter Nelson

[1] About the theory of collection as an anthropological fact see Krzysztof Pomian, *Zbieracze i Osobliwości. Paryż – Wenecja XVI-XVIII w.* Translated from French language Andrzej Pieńkos. Lublin: Uniwersytet Marii-Curie Skłodowskiej, 2001. English version: *Collectors and Curiosities. Paris and Venis 1500–1800*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990.

[2] Susan M. Pearce, "The urge to collect". In *Interpreting objects and collections*, edited by Susan M. Pearce, Leicester Readers in Museum Studies, London & New York: Routledge. 2003 (reprint), pp. 157–159.

Durost, for whom the subject of collection was "valued chiefly for the relation it bears to some other object or idea, or objects or ideas" and it was to be "one of a series, part of a whole, a specimen of a class". However, this kind of approach is connected, as Pearce notices, with specific kinds of collections, "like those of butterflies or cigarette cards, in which the notion of series is particularly clear, but in extended form in which sequence is largely a subjective creation of the collector, the idea has a potentially wide application."[3] Moreover, if we are dealing with a group of items gathered for some ritual purpose, as was the case in ancient China, then the activity of collecting is even more difficult to define.

The soil of China is rich in various treasures, formerly assembled in tombs or pits. These treasures reflect not only the ritual needs of the times, but in certain specific cases they also describe the tomb or pit owner's penchant for collecting. Yet, we should obviously have in mind that today's understanding of collecting is different from the one that existed in China five to two thousand years ago, especially when we take into consideration the ancient philosophy of life – which was totally submitted to the thought of death and the afterlife. Modern collecting posits that the items creating a collection should usually be non-utilitarian, internally related, classified, subjectively viewed, intentionally selected and exposed.[4] But how does this apply to ancient Chinese collecting? Can we use the same rules of judging and describe, according to these rules, whether some group of items constituted a collection or not? Certainly we will find some common features in the contemporary and ancient approach to collecting, such as the owner's subjective taste, the desire to possess something important, building groups based on internally related and intentionally selected items as well as appropriately exposed objects – but in ancient China collecting was associated especially with ritual activity which stemmed from religious beliefs, and in particular cases, from political reasons – indeed, the possession of sacred objects assured a "Mandate of Heaven," and at the same time, proved power claims.[5]

This kind of pursuit was particularly connected with creating early royal collections of antiquities which had been treated, as Lothar Ledderose and Patricia Ebrey put it in their significant papers about the imperial collections of art in China, as "magical objects," or powerful treasures (*lingbao* 灵宝) guar-

[3] Susan M. Pearce, 2003, p.157.

[4] Susan M. Pearce, 2003, p.159.

[5] Lothar Ledderose, "Some Observations on the Imperial Art Collections in China". *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society* no. 43 (1978–1979), p. 34.

anteeing the legitimacy of imperial rule.[6] The well-known story about the "Nine Cauldrons" handed down from the Xia 夏 (c. 2070–1500 BC) to the Zhou 周 (1050–221 BC) dynasty, and irretrievably lost during the Qin 秦 (c. 221–206 BC) dynasty, is an oft-quoted example illustrating the efforts of emperors who wanted to hold on to the imperial treasure.[7] Besides tripods, objects such as charts, registers or diagrams also belonged to the royal vault. According to Lothar Ledderose, they were the "tally of the ruler" and evidence of a contract concluded between Heaven and the monarch. From the author's argumentation we can deduce that the origins of the imperial collections were based on very political rationales. This conviction is shared by Patricia Ebrey, who adds some new observations emphasising the importance of private collecting as well as of libraries, which together with the palace treasures and imperial collections of auspicious objects had equal importance in creating later imperial art collections.[8] These objects, chosen in a sense primarily because of their aesthetic value, began to be formed in China in the fourth century ADwhen, as Ledderose argues, "handwritten pieces entered the palace collection as works of art."

Joseph Alsop, in his book about the *History of Art Collecting*, came up with a slightly different idea – he dates the beginnings of the first imperial collections of calligraphy and painting at around the second century AD, when the Eastern Han Emperors had already formed their "Secret Pavilions" for collecting pictures and writings.[9] Alsop distinguishes the "two eras" of Chinese art – the

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[6] Lothar Ledderose, 1978–1979, pp. 33–35. See also Patricia Buckley Ebrey, "Rethinking Imperial Art Collecting: The Case of the Northern Sung," in *Conference on Founding Paradigms. Papers on the Art and Culture of the Northern Sung Dynasty*. Edited by Wang Yao-ting. Taipei: National Palace Museum, July 2008, p. 471 (later: Patricia Buckley Ebry, 2008 a.); Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *Accumulating Culture. The Collections of Emperor Huizong*. Washington, Seattle & London: University of Washington Press, 2008, pp. 15–16 (later: Patricia Buckley Ebrey, 2008 b.).

[7] An Pingqiu, *Selection from the Records of the Historian* (*Shiji xuan*) 史记选 based on Sima Qian, *Records of the Historian*. Edited and translated into modern Chinese by An Pingqu. Translated into English by Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang, Library of Chinese Classics. Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 2008, vol. 1, p. 35. See also: John King Fairbank, Merle Goldman, *China a New History*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006, il. 2. showing a rubbing detail with the First Emperor of Qin trying to recover a bronze from the river. The detail comes from "the left shrine of the Wu family."

[8] Patricia Buckley Ebrey, 2008 a., p. 472.

[9] Joseph Alsop, *The Rare Art Traditions. The History of Art Collecting and Linked Phenomena*. New York: Bollingen Series XXXV•27, Princeton University Press, 1982, pp. 214, 216, 217–220. See also William Reynolds Beal Acker, *Some T'ang and Pre-T'ang Texts on Chinese Painting*. Connecticut: Hyperion Press, INC. Westport (reprint of the edition published by E.J. Brill, Leyden, which was issued as vol. 8 of Sinica Leidensia, 1954), 1979, pp. 112–113.

ancient one, which was "hieratic" and "ornamental" and the second one – after the foundation of the empire (the late third century BC) – which was much more libertine and allowed one to admire pieces of painting, calligraphy and architecture as well as jade and porcelain – because of their aesthetic value and not the religious context.[10] This change in ancient art allows us to understand how great of an impact this transformation had on the appreciation of art collecting which since then has become a secular activity deprived of its ritual meaning. Alsop wrote that "the ancient Chinese were certainly eager treasure gatherers" but "neither the old texts nor the results of archeology reveal a trace of ancient Chinese art collecting."[11] This statement is somehow based on the author's definition of art collecting, which reads:

> To collect is to gather objects belonging to a particular category the collector happens to fancy; and art collecting is a form of collecting in which the category is, broadly speaking, works of art.[12]

The weight of categories in art collecting indeed seems to be crucial here. In ancient China it was the ritual that imposed the type of item categories which were to be collected. This means that a collector was deprived of the chance to create his/her own categories of rarities. Undoubtedly, he/she was sensitive to the beauty of the gathered items and aware of the fact that they were exceptional, but his/her perception in many cases was limited to the borders of sacrum. Yet, there is one example from the Shang 商 dynasty (1600–1046 BC) which is an exception to this rule, namely, the jade collection of Lady Fu Hao 妇好 (d. c. 1200 BC), which will be discussed later in this paper. Hence, it must be said very clearly that not art but sacred treasures or "magical" ritual objects played the most important role in forming accumulating needs in the ancient kingdoms of China. Furthermore, in specific cases it was the raw material itself and the magical properties attributed to it that made these objects become so desired.[13] This primarily concerned pieces of jade, whose final form was

[10] Joseph Alsop, *The Rare Art Traditions. The History of Art Collecting and Linked Phenomena*. New York: Bollingen Series XXXV·27, Princeton University Press, 1982, pp. 214, 216, 217–220.

[11] Joseph Alsop, 1982, p. 216.

[12] Joseph Alsop, 1982, p. 83.

[13] Joseph Alsop, in a chapter titled "Art for use", states that "treasures have always been collected, after fashion – but for their raw materials' sake". Joseph Alsop, 1982, p. 51.

determined by "the purpose or function of the object."[14] Indeed, its shape and decorative motives had to fit the bills imposed by the religion, and therefore indicated the position of their owner. Jade wares, bronze weapons, vessels, tools, decorations, musical instruments, and later oracle bones with scripts, gold wares, lacquer objects, books in the form of bamboo slips and robes and sculptures have all been subsequently treasured in pre-imperial China.

The most tangible evidence of these collecting origins are objects unearthed from the tombs and pits. They not only reflect both the spiritual and material desires of their owners, but also pose as collections on their own. However, these were not collections intended for a living viewer but rather for a ghost, deity or other hardly explainable being.[15] One of the scholars, Wu Hung, suggests considering Chinese ancient tombs as sites requiring persistent "art productions" as well as places of a "comprehensive ensemble of various art forms."[16] Nevertheless, these "underground collections" – as I dare to call them – contain items which can be perceived in many different ways. In general, they may be divided into two groups: *mingqi* 明器 or *guiqi* 鬼器 and *renqi* 人器.[17] *Mingqi* means "spirit articles," whereas *guiqi* means "ghost instruments," and both of these types were made especially for burial purpose. *Renqi*, in turn, signifies "human vessels" (sacrificial vessels *jiqi* 祭器, lived objects *shengqi* 生器 – chosen from possessions belonging to the dead when that person was alive and objects of daily use *yongqi* 用器), which once assembled in a tomb lost all of their utilitarian meaning in favour of sacrificed wishes which bestowed a new sense to these artefacts.[18] Despite the differences between the items, the content should always be perceived as one complex group assembled as a result of ritual needs, but also reflecting the earthly fancies of the tomb's owner.

The reason for assembling valuables in tombs was undoubtedly connected with beliefs in another life after death, however, the question arises whether Chinese people truly believed in the possibility of transferring material objects into the spiritual world which, according to their faith, existed after death? This

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[14] Jessica Rawson, *Chinese Jade. From Neolithic to the Qing*. Chicago: Art Media Resources, 2002, p. 16. See also Ann Paludan, *Chinese Sculpture. A Great Tradition*. Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Editions, 2007, p. 43.

[15] Krzysztof Pomian, 2001, p. 36; Wu Hung, *The Art of the Yellow Springs. Understanding Chinese Tombs*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press 2010, p. 14.

[16] Wu Hung, 2010, pp. 10.

[17] Wu Hung, 2010, pp. 87–88

[18] Wu Hung calls it "voluntary withdrawing form the circulation". See: Wu Hung, 2010, pp. 9, 165.

is rather improbable, but they could have believed in transferring some magical image of these items, and the image was proof of their earthly merits and a pass to the heavens or to the future – a future where the physical objects would be the only real "communication tunnel" with the past.

THE BEGINNINGS OF JADE COLLECTING

During the Neolithic period, when China consisted of various communities and cultures developing in different geographic regions and mutually influencing and interacting with one another, we come across the earliest exclusive "magical objects" collected in groups and assembled in tombs.[19] These were jade wares – made of a stone valued as a gem symbolising excellence and purity.[20] The first works of this kind were discovered by archaeologists within the Xinglongwa culture 兴隆洼文化 (6000–5500 BC)[21] in the Liao River region, though much more refined examples – albeit in a smaller number – were found in the area of the Hongshan culture 红山文化 (4000 BC) at the Niuheliang 牛河梁 and Dongshanzui 东山嘴 sites in Liaoning 辽宁 province, as well as in the area of the Songze 崧泽 culture (3900–3300 BC) near Shanghai.[22] The most common jades found in these places presented the shapes of the coiled pig-

[19] Kwang-Chih Chang used the term "interaction spheres" to define the name of "China". He wrote: "I suggest that from this point on, as the regions with which we are concerned came to be joined together in archaeological terms and exhibit increasing similarities, the interaction sphere may be referred to as "Chinese"." By "spheres" he meant regions of the Yellow River called the "Central Plain" and six others, such as Shaanxi, Henan and Shanxi as the first group; Shandong and some regions in the neighbouring provinces as the second; Hubei and the neighbouring regions as the third; the southern region with Lake Boyang and the Pearl River delta as the fourth; and the northern region, especially along the Great Wall as the sixth. Kwang-Chih Chang based this classification on the research of Su Bingqi and Yin Weizhang, published as an article: "Guanyu kaoguxue wenhua de quxi leixing wenti" 关于考古学文化的区系 类型 问题 in 1981 in *Wenwu* 文物. Kwang-Chih Chang "China on the Eve of the Historical Period" in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China: from Origins of Civilization to 221 B.C.*, ed. by Michael Loewe, Edward L. Shaughnessy, Cambridge University Press 1999, pp. 58–59.

[20] C.A.S. Williams, *Chinese Symbolism and Art Motives*. 4th edition, Tokyo-Rutland, Vermont-Singapore, 2006, p. 237.

[21] The ages of the sites and cultures are based on Wang Renxiang's compilation of "Selected Sites". Wang Renxiang's "Selected Sites" in: *The Formation of Chinese Civilization. An Archaeological Perspective*. Edited by Sarah Allan. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005, pp. 295–307.

[22] Xiaoneng Yang, *The Golden Age of Chinese Archaeology. Celebrated Discoveries From The People's Republic Of China*. Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1999, pp. 80–81.

dragon, "hoof," rod, hooked-cloud, bracelets, as well as *bi* 璧 discs, *huang* 璜 arcs, *jue* 玦 ring pendants, and the *yue* 钺 axe, less often turtles or birds with spread wings.[23] All of these shapes were emblematic and indicative of the high status of their owners. Most of the Hongshan jades belonged to the category of personal ornaments, yet there were also ritual pieces which appear to have been treated as holy objects endowed with supernatural power enabling one contact with the divine world. Not without a reason did the huge clay statue of a goddess from the temple at Niuheliang have blue jade eyes.[24] Belief in the magical power of jade came not only from its beauty, but also from the meaning that was assigned to this hard, non-crystalline, translucent rock having been shaped for thousands of years inside mountains. Jade was like the reflection of Nature itself, and in a broader sense, of the whole Universe.

Belief in jade's power was astonishingly widespread. This was probably due to the rising status of shamans, who around 3000 BC increasingly more often became political leaders (elected by the people within the *shangran* 禅让 system) and who controlled the means of communicating with the Heavens.[25] Possessing ritual jades turned out to be a privilege, and the limited availability of their acquisition increased their value. Among the emerging states only sparse groups of leaders could afford to collect them for ritual as well as demonstrational purposes. Jades started appearing as symbols of wealth more often. The discoveries of large quantities and good qualities of jades assembled especially in tombs within the Lingjiatan 凌家滩 culture (5000–3000 BC, Anhui 安徽) and the Liangzhu良渚 culture (3200–2200 BC, southern Jiangsu 江苏 and northern Zhejiang 浙江) are evidence of this. There were also accumulations

[23] Forms of Hongshan jades of different types, such as birds, pig-dragons, *bi* discs, dragons, figurines, bows, hoofs, turtles, flies, silkworms, etc. are presented in: Mingjian Bowuguan Zhenpin Jianshang Conshu 民 间博伽馆珍品鉴赏丛书, *Hongshan wenhua guyu jinghua* 红山文化古玉精华, 2004. See also Liaoning Provincial Institute of Archaeology and Culture Relics, *Niuheliang Site* 牛河梁遗址, Academy Press 2004, pp. 34–43, 49–53, 58–63, 68–75; Xiaoneng Yang, 1999, pp. 82–94; Zhang Zhongpei, "The Yangshao Period. Prosperity and the Transformation of Prehistoric Society" in: *The Formation of Chinese Civilization*. 2005, pp. 65–66, 81–83.

[24] Guo Dashun, "The Hongshan Culture Complex at Niuheliang and the Origins of Ritual in China", in *New Perspectives on China's Past in the Twentieth Century, Cultures and Civilizations Reconsidered*. Edited by Xiaoneng Yang. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, Kansas City: The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 2004, vol. 1, pp. 149–50; Zhang Zhongpei, 2005, pp. 80–81.

[25] Kwang-Chih Chang, "The Rise of Kings and the Formation of City-States", in Sarah Allan (ed.), 2005, p. 130. See also Lu Liancheng and Yan Wenming, "Society during the Three Dynasties", in Sarah Allan (ed.), 2005, p. 142, where the authors mention the *shangran* system involving the abdication of rulers and the selection of successors lasting until the late Longshan period.

of jades within other cultures, such as Longshan 龍山 (3000–2000 BC, Shandong 山东 and Shanxi 山西), or Shijiahe 石家河 (2400 BC, Hubei 湖北), but the number was much lower, which could be the result of the relatively smaller role jade played in these societies.[26] Yet, it should be noted that even in the Liangzhu culture there were differences in relation to the collected jades. This certainly resulted from social distinctions as well as ritual needs, which in many cases indicated the preferred type of jade wares.

One of the earliest tombs presenting large accumulations of jade wares is situated at the Lingjiatan site (Anhui) and is signed as M4.[27] The tomb contained ninety-six jades, including four ritual *yue* axes and a jade plaque with a mysterious drawing found in a jade turtle. It is presumed that the tomb belonged to a shaman who probably also had royal authority, as evidenced by the presence of the *yue* axes symbolising military strength. The kingship organisation, based on shamanistic foundations, is much more visible at the Taosi 陶寺 site (2600–2000 BC) in Xiangfen 襄汾 county (Shanxi province), where among almost seven hundred graves only six were large and richly furnished, eighty were medium-sized and somewhat more modestly equipped, while the rest were entirely devoid of any goods.[28] Amid the pottery vessels, wooden musical instruments, ornaments made of wood, stone and jade, there were also ritual *cong* 琮 jades, which were particularly reserved for the upper classes. However, the most spectacular collection of jade wares, five hundred and eleven pieces (or one hundred jade groups), was discovered at the Fanshan 反山 site (c. 2600 BC, Zhejiang) in tomb No 20 (or M12).[29] Yet, not only the quantity, but also the quality of the jades was exceptional. In comparison with items from the site's smaller graves, the "large grave's" jades turned out to be genuine.[30] Moreover, only in this grave did *bi*, *cong* and *yue* jades appear together.

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[26] Jessica Rawson, 2002, p. 36.

[27] Zhang Zhongpei, 2005, p. 74. See also: Zhang Zhongpei, "The Formation of Ancient Civilization in China", in *New Perspectives on China's Past in the Twentieth Century*, *Cultures and Civilizations Reconsidered*, 2004, vol. 1. p. 90; Xiaoneng Yang, *Major Archaeological Discoveries in Twentieth-Century China*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, Kansas City: The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 2004, vol. 2, pp. 82–84.

[28] Wang-Chih Chang, 1999, p. 60. See also Shao Wangping, "The Formation of Civilization. The Interaction of the Longshan Period", in Sarah Allan (ed.), 2005, pp. 92–94.

[29] Shao Wangping, 2005, p. 112–115. See also Xiaoneng Yang, 2004, pp. 90–91.

[30] Zhang Dongxia, (ed.) *The Vanished Ancient Liangzhu Kingdom, A recount of the past and revealing of the secrets*. Interview with Mou Yongkang. Beijing: China Intercontinental Press, 2007 (later: Zhang Dongxia, 2007 b.) p. 182.

A perforated, flat *bi* disk with a circular hole in the center embodied – as it was believed – "the qualities of solar effulgence, and was closely connected with the powers of Heaven by means of its magical properties, and therefore the Emperor, being the Son of Heaven, was able to commune and consult with Heaven through the medium of the jade disc."[31] *Cong*, in turn, signified Earth (according to ancient beliefs the earth was square and the sky was round). Its cubical form with a hollow rounded tube in the centre probably also expressed a communication channel between the Heavens and Earth. Meanwhile, *cong*s and *bi*s, through their exoteric shapes, were tied to the supernatural cosmic powers, and jade *yue* was used for beheading people and symbolised earthly authority. The accumulation of these significant items in one place was certainly not irrelevant.

Kwang-Chih Chang wrote about this and an equally important discovery merely five kilometres northeast of Fanshan at the Yaoshan 瑶山 (Yuhang 余杭 district, c. 2800 BC) site unearthing one hundred and sixty exclusive pieces of jade:

> Almost all the jades from these and other similar tombs belong, in terms of terminology commonly employed in Chinese antiquarianism, to the *ruiyu* 瑞玉 (ritual jades) category. The excavator of Yaoshan site was certainly right to speculate that these were graves of shamans or religious leaders. Since there are no graves of any other "leader," these religious leaders in all probability were also political and military leaders, a point supported by the presence amidst the grave goods of ritual axes of jades.[32]

Not without significance in connection with the above assumptions is the fact that the remains of huge buildings made of wood were discovered close to the Fanshan relicts in 1993. These findings lead us to suppose that perhaps we are dealing with the earliest palace in China, and the person from the "large grave" at Fanshan may have lived there as a king ruling the Liangzhu Kingdom.[33] Only ruling powers could organise and control the production of such exclusive and technologically advanced jade artifacts,[34] thus, mainly they were responsible for creating these types of "ritual collections" based on offerings and gifts.

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31) C.A.S. Williams, 2006, p. 238.

32) Kwang-Chih Chang, 1999, pp. 61–63.

33) Zhang Dongxia (ed.), 2007 b., p. 184.

34) Shao Wangping, 2005, p. 114.

It is not excluded that a religious and political leader of Liangzhu bestowed his nobles with pieces of jades, however, the nobles could also have presented the jades to the ruler. It is worth mentioning that the system of offering jades also existed among private soldiers and their tenants.[35] It seems that it was due to royal orders and gifts that the earliest ways of purchasing jades were shaped. This tradition had subsequently been developed and, with the advent of the Xia dynasty, we can almost certainly assume that jades were part of the royal treasure created, among others, thanks to tributes paid to a king by the unified states. To confirm this thesis we can resort to the record of the Qing dynasty historian Gu Zuyu 顧祖禹 (1624–1680) who wrote: "It is said when the Great Yu [founder of the Xia dynasty] assembled many lords [*zhuhou* 诸侯] at Tushan 土山, ten thousand states presented jade and silk [as state gifts]."[36] With high probability a great part of this tribute went to the imperial treasure.

Jade collecting during the Xia dynasty was still associated with rituals and political aspects, however, the changes in rites and ruling principles which took place at the end of the Longshan period presumably led to the emergence of a new approach to treasuring. The transformation of the *shangran* into a hereditary system based on kinship relations gave rise to a situation where the royal treasure was monopolised by a ruling clan and the objects forming a collection, such as jades, could gain even greater value for the reason that they had belonged to ancestors. However, these were not ancestors in the simple meaning of lineage, but authoritative sacred kings who were worshipped as Fathers of the community.[37] In this way, together with the development of the cult of ancestors, we can assume that jades began to be gathered not only because of their raw material and the magical properties attributed to them, but also because of their antiquarian value.

So far we have no absolute certainty about the Xia dynasty's location, nevertheless, it is very probable that today's archaeological site – Erlitou 二里头 [(2100–1600 BC), Henan] was one of its capitals.[38] A large number of jades, such as *zhang* 璋 (the shape is somehow similar to that of a sword), *dao*刀 (knife), *ge* 戈 (dagger-axe) and *yue* excavated from the tombs located in the

[35] Shao Wangping, 2005, p. 118.

[36] The fragment comes from *Du shi fangyu jiyao* 讀史方輿紀要, quote after Kwang-Chih Chang, 2005, p. 126.

[37] Benjamin Isadore Schwartz, *The World of Thought in Ancient China*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1985, p. 21.

[38] Lu Liancheng and Yan Wenming, 2005, p. 145.

neighbourhood of the "palace" and the "ancestral temple's" remains[39] indicates that jades played a dominant role in this region in symbolising "earthly" royal authority rather than divine and magical power, which had once been assigned to *bi*s or *cong*s. These, *nota bene*, we do not find here. Unfortunately, the largest tomb, which seems to have belonged to the ruler, was looted long time ago and we can only guess what kind of treasures it contained.

It is significant that *bi* and *cong* jades appeared more occasionally in the graves of the following Shang dynasty.[40] Nevertheless, some peculiar "underground collections" contained these increasingly rare objects made in Neolithic times. Perhaps one of the most interesting examples showing a fascination with antique jade wares is that of Lady Fu Hao's 妇好 (d. c. 1200 BC) tomb unearthed at Yinxu 殷墟 (Henan province 河南) – the last capital of the Shang dynasty.[41] Fu Hao was a consort of King Wu Ding 武丁(1250–1192 BC). Her position was remarkable at that time as she was not only the king's wife but, what is unusual, an incomparable military leader, politician and even shaman. Her tomb contained 755 jade objects, among which were pieces in the forms of bronze *ge*, Neolithic rings and discs, as well as a large number of Neolithic and contemporaneous jades in the shapes of animals, and finally a group of exotic curiosities. This diverse repertoire of Lady Fu Hao's underground treasure is tangible proof of her collecting fancies, among which not only the raw material of jade might have been a priority for her, but also the fact that an artefact had belonged to her ancestors. Possessing antiques indeed solidified the owner's political and religious power. However, there is another extremely important issue, namely, the conscious selection of jade objects belonging to particular categories, i.e. animals and exotic curiosities.

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[39] Elizabeth Childs-Johnson, "Symbolic Jades of the Erlitou Period: A Xia Royal Tradition". *Archives of Asian Art*, vol. 48, (1995), pp. 64–92. It is noteworthy that in today's archaeological literature two large rammed-earth platforms, which previously had been regarded as the remains of two palaces, are treated as traces of a palace and ancestral temple. The latter could be very important evidence that the Erlitou site was one of the Xia capitals, as according to *Zuozhuan* 左傳: "Duke Zhuang 鄭莊公 28th year", a "city with the ancestral temple of the royal family was called the capital (*du* 都)" – quote after: Lu Liancheng and Yan Wenming, 2005, p. 145.

[40] Elizabeth Childs-Johnson, 1995, pp. 85–86.

[41] Hsia Nai, "The Classification, Nomenclature, and Usage of Shang Dynasty Jades", in *Studies on Shang Archaeology. Selected Papers from the International Conference on Shang Civilization*. Edited by K.C. Chang, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986, pp. 207-236, especially pp. 230-236. See also Jessica Rawson, 2002, pp. 23, 40-44, 205-207; Xiaoneng Yang, 2004, p. 140; Ann Paludan, 2007, p. 41. Wu Hung, 2010, pp. 11, 168.

> There are images of real animals, such as tigers, bears, buffaloes, elephants, deer, hares, horses, birds, cicadas, a praying mantis, fish, turtles and frogs, and there are remarkable human figures and many imaginary creatures. Foremost among these last are coiled dragons and figures of crouching men and plumed birds. Nothing like this variety and abundance is found anywhere else or at any later stage.[42)]

Lady Fu Hao's collection is the first ancient case, as yet known to us, showing an intentionally shaped class of animal jades grouped according to the owner's taste. As Jessica Rawson wrote, there could be two reasons why Fu Hao gathered these jades, firstly because they were antiques and secondly because they came from exotic lands and presented equally exotic animals.[43)] The assumption that one of the reasons might be the exotic aspect supports the fact that among Fu Hao's antique pieces there were also curios, such as a foreign stand which most likely came from southern China and undoubtedly aroused amazement among the Shang Elite.[44)] However, it is probable that the exotic jade animals "must have fitted some aspects of Shang beliefs"[45)] – and that is why they were so desired as well as copied from the southern bronzes, whereas curiosities where simply gathered for their exotic origins. Thus, the collection of the king's consort was far beyond the typical group of ritual or ornamental jades treasured because of a royal position. It is very likely that Fu Hao's collection was a reflection of her intimate will to become acquainted with distant lands or, at least, to create their image and through that to possess a sort of power over them.

At the same time as the Shang and later Eastern Zhou dynasty flourished, the tradition of jade collecting was cultivated in the south-western regions where the Shu蜀 Kingdom developed. Two places are particularly important for our further considerations: Sanxingdui 三星堆 and Jinsha 金沙 in Sichuan 四川 province. Sanxingdui is a common name for the archeological site where in 1986 archaeologists discovered two sacrificial pits housing an amazing treasure-trove composed of around 1800 objects (excluding c. 4,660 seawater

42) Quotation after Jessica Rawson, 2002, p. 207.

43) Jessica Rawson, 2002, p. 206.

44) Jessica Rawson, 2002, p. 42.

45) Jessica Rawson, 2002, p. 43.

shells).[46] Among hundreds of bronzes, earthen pot pieces, stone implements, elephant tusks, gold articles and burnt bones there were also two sizeable groups of jades in the total number of 615 pieces. There are no written historical records or documents giving any direct indications about the Sanxingdui Culture. So far, this whole place is very mysterious since there is no clear answer as to what people inhabited this site. However, further excavations nearby revealed the architectural remains of an ancient city wall, which gave the impulse to presume that Sanxingdui was the centre of the Shu Kingdom and probably the capital of the Yufu 鱼凫 Clan over 3,300–3,200 years ago.[47]

The pit findings are astonishing not only due to their opulence or art and craft values, but also because they indicate some implicit significance. The jade number is almost half that of the bronzes, but the quality and unparalleled innovation of some examples is so outstanding that it makes us suppose that the jade artefacts were no less important than the bronzes. They also functioned as ritual implements, especially those in the shapes of *zhang*, *ge*, *bi*, *qixingbi* (the unique form of the elongated *bi* in which the central hole's rim is slightly raised) and *cong*. Some of them, especially those from the group of small and simple decorated *zhang* tools, are considered to have been made much earlier than the other jade pieces, thereby we can assume that they had been passed down from generation to generation and finally assembled in those two pits.[48] Unfortunately, an explanation as to why these items, together with over a thousand other articles, were put down into the pits is still vague. Scientists have four hypotheses concerning this issue. The most feasible is the one which claims that "the pits were built [some 3,300–3,200 years ago] to contain sacrificial offerings", but none of those *gifts* had been "cast or fabricated exclusively for the two sacrificial ceremonies."[49] Moreover, archaeologists admit that the found artefacts had earlier, even hundreds of years earlier, been put together in some temple or shrine – like a royal treasure – before they were laid down in the pits and intentionally burnt, which means that "it was not an ordinary ceremonial rite."[50]

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[46] Wu Weixi and Zhu Yarong, *The Sanxingdui Site. Mystical Mask on Ancient Shu Kingdom*. Compiled by the Sanxingdui Museum. Translated by Zhao Baohua. Beijing: China Intercontinental Press, 2006, pp. 5–6.

[47] Wu Weixi and Zhu Yarong, 2006, pp. 9, 11.

[48] Wu Weixi and Zhu Yarong, 2006, p. 110.

[49] Wu Weixi and Zhu Yarong, 2006, p. 7.

[50] Wu Weixi and Zhu Yarong, 2006, pp. 7, 5.

Scholars speculate that this burning rite, called *liaoji* 燎祭, was caused by people who wanted to remember something.[51] Perhaps their kingdom was threatened by a new regime which was trying to take over, or the Sanxingdui people sacrificed this collection in a blaze to prevent it from being taken by the victors as trophies, or it may have also been a "ritual gift" for the spirits who could protect the kingdom from historical oblivion. Regardless of the reason, there are some other issues which might be more interesting for our collecting considerations. According to archaeologists, all of the artefacts from the pits were characterised by something "distinctive to different eras,"[52] which suggests that they had been purposefully selected to create a group or groups of items collected for ritual use. If we suppose that the theory about the temple or shrine in which all of these objects had been kept for years is realistic, then we should also consider the meaning of ancient temples, which except for the tombs and sacrificial pits, were also places of collecting different ritual items.

Nevertheless, part of the Shu royal treasure may have been moved to another place which became the new capital of the Shu Kingdom, namely to Jinsha, situated within the present Chengdu 成都 city. These assumptions are based on the fact that artefacts recently found by archaeologists in Jingsha show many similarities of style to the Sanxingdui objects.[53] Moreover, some of them, such as the ten *cong* jades, shall be dated with high probability for the Neolithic period, which means at least one thousand years before the Jingsha site developed.[54] However, one aspect is very mysterious. These Neolithic *congs* are supposed to have been made by people from the Liangzhu culture, which was placed more than one thousand kilometres away from Jinsha. Also, in Sanxingdui archaeologists found three *congs* which, due to their similarity in style, indicate a connection with the Liangzhu culture.[55] There arises the question then whether these jades were evidence of some connections between Neolithic cultures flourishing in distant regions or whether they were later acquired as "magical objects". Although the question remains unanswered, essential is the fact that the collecting of antiques both by the Sanxingdui and Jinsha people

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[51] Wu Weixi and Zhu Yarong, 2006, p. 7.

[52] Wu Weixi and Zhu Yarong, 2006, p. 7.

[53] Zhu Zhangyi, Zhang Qing, Wang Fang, *A 21st Century Discovery in Chinese Archaeology. The Jinsha Site*. Compiled by Chengdu Institute of Cultural Heritage and Archaeology. Translated by Wang Pingxing. Beijing: China Intercontinental Press, 2006, p. 19.

[54] Zhu Zhangyi, Zhang Qing, Wang Fang, 2006, pp. 56–57; See also Zhang Dongxia (ed.). The interview with Zhu Zhangyi, 2007 b., p. 17; Xiaoneng Yang, 2004, pp. 147–151.

[55] Wu Weixi and Zhu Yarong, 2006, p. 118.

had a crucial meaning for their ritual practices. The greatest accumulation of jade artefacts took place during the "second phase" of the sacrificial activities at Jingsha, which means around 1100–850 BC. From this period a considerable number of 150 jade items was unearthed from pit No. 6. These, as well as two thousand other jades discovered in total from the "sacrificial zone" of Jingsha seems to very distinctly certify the great value that was attributed to jades in this region.[56)]

Looking at the contents of the tombs from the early Western Zhou 西周 dynasty (1046–771 BC) we can assume that jade treasuring at this time took on a new shape. A few Neolithic jade ornaments found in Western Zhou tombs, such as at the Liulihe 琉璃河 site (Beijing 北京) or Baoji Zhuyuangou 宝鸡 竹园沟 (Shaanxi) indicate that collecting ancient jades, just as collecting jades at all, was relatively less attractive than during the Shang dynasty.[57)] Although so far none of the Western Zhou royal tombs has been found, which makes the illustration of jade collecting at this time slightly incomplete, it seems that people from the early Zhou did not have very serious needs to accumulate jades, or at least invested less interest in assembling them in graves. The reasons might have been that for the new rulers coming from the present lands of Shaanxi province some jade shapes worked out within the borders of the previous Shang dynasty could have been regarded as foreign and, because of this, incomprehensible.[58)] Nevertheless, in the western Shaanxi, the tradition of jade carving and *cong*s collecting was intermittently cultivated from the Neolithic period, however, with a fading consciousness of its ritual meaning.

An increasing significance of jade wares can be observed in the middle Western Zhou, when the growing role of ancestor worship led to serious changes in Zhou society rituals, which took place around 900 BC. It is very probable that from that period on jades started becoming more accessible to whole groups of nobles who could make jade exchanges or present them as gifts to other nobles.[59)] Excellent proof of these proceeding changes concerning jade accumulating needs are the tombs of the lords of the Jin 晋 state at Tianma Qucun 天马曲村 (nineth century BC, Shanxi)[60)], tombs at Baoji Rujiazhuang

56) Zhu Zhangyi, Zhang Qing, Wang Fang, 2006, p. 18.

57) Jessica Rawson, 2002, pp. 23, 45, 47.

58) Jessica Rawson, 2002, p. 27. See also Jessica Rawson, „Western Zhou Archaeology", in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China*, 1999 (later: Jessica Rawson, 1999 a.), p. 430.

59) Jessica Rawson, 2002, p. 53.

60) Jay Xu, "The Cemetery of the Western Zhou Lords of Jin". *Artibus Asiae*, vol. 56, No. 3/4

茹家庄 (tenth to nineth century BC, Shaanxi) belonging to the Èlite of the Yu state,[61] and the graves of the aristocracy of the state Guo 虢国 at Sanmenxia 三门峡 (c. 655 BC Henan).[62] The cemetery of the Jin Lords contained around nineteen tombs and six sacrificial pits.[63] Almost all of the tombs contained a large number of jades, except for tombs M9 and M13, which belonged to the early generation of the Marquises of Jin.[64] Yet the richest jade groups belonging to the owners of tombs M63 and M92 presented, respectively, over eight hundred jades and more than four thousand jade or stone pieces – this is not clearly specified.[65] Also, tombs M1 and M2 at Baoji Rujiazhuang belonging to the lord of Yu 禹 and his wife contained over three hundred more jade objects in total than tomb M7 at Baoji Zhuyuangou which contained merely twenty stone or jade items.[66]

However, the types of assembled jades are different from those in previous times. New, exquisitely shaped jade arks, incised plaques, beads, belts, masks and rich pectorals which covered the body of the deceased raised the idea that these splendid ornaments served not only to adorn and embellish the human body after death, but also to protect it from bad spirits and to enable other spirits to recognise the deceased person's position. Over time, covering an ancestor's body with jade pieces gave greater impetus to passing through refined decoration into real suits.[67] Once jades had been gathered mostly for their ritual and political meaning, later because they had belonged to ancestors as

(1996), pp. 193–221. See also Xiaoneng Yang, 1999, pp. 248–55; Xianneng Yang, 2004, pp. 164–167.

[61] Jessica Rawson, 2002, p. 47; Liu Liangcheng and Yan Wenming, 2005, p. 193; on issues related to conservation research on jades from Baoji Rujiazhuang, collected in the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, see Janet G. Douglas and Jun Chang Yang, "Materials and technology of Chinese Jades dating to the Western Zhou period (1050–771 BC)", in *Sciences in China Series E: Technological Sciences*, vol. 51, no. 4. Science in China Press, 2008, pp. 472–474.

[62] Lu Liancheng, "The Eastern Zhou and the Growth of Regionalism", in Sarah Allan, 2005, pp. 225–227. See also Alain Thote, "Burial Practices as Seen in Rulers' Tombs of the Eastern Zhou Period: Patterns and Regional Traditions", in *Religion and Chinese Society*, vol. I, *Ancient and Medieval China*. Edited by John Lagerwey. Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2004, p. 72. Xiaoneng Yang, 2004, pp. 168–170; Zhang Dongxia (ed.), 2007 b., pp. 118–121; 124–125.

[63] Alain Thote, 2004, p. 69.

[64] Jay Xu, 1996, p. 219. See also Lu Liancheng and Yan Wenming, 2005, p. 195.

[65] Jay Xu, 1996, p. 219. See also the note 56.

[66] Jessica Rawson, 2002, p. 47.

[67] Nevertheless, it is considered that the later "jade suits" have little connection with the earlier tradition of jade shrouds. Xiaoneng Yang, 1999, p. 129.

well as for their curious or exotic aspect, but since the Middle Zhou we can assume that they were also collected because of their strictly funerary function.

There is another striking aspect which must be considered – namely the small quantity of *bi* discs in tombs between the Neolithic and fifth century BC.[68] The reason for their scarcity, though vague, may be explained in ritual or political needs, which required treasuring discs above the ground in palaces or temples instead of putting them into the tombs. Certainly their small number does not exclude their existence during the Shang or Zhou dynasties. Isolated cases, such as Fu Hao's tomb or the tombs at Houma 侯马 (Shanxi, capital of the ancient Jin state 晋国 from 585 BC) and Liulige 琉璃阁 (Huixian 辉县, Henan) seem to certify their continuation.[69] What is important is that most of the *bi*s found there are either Neolithic pieces or later copies made of simple stone; this suggests that there must have been a strong attachment to the antique discs. Not without a reason was a precious piece of jade found, according to the story of Han Fei 韩非 (ca. 280–233), by Bian He卞荷 in the eighth century BC in the mountains of the ancient Chu 楚 Kingdom and shaped into a *bi* disc.[70] The fame and beauty of the disc must have been incomparable, and the will to possess it almost led to a war between two kingdoms during the late Warring States period 战国时代 (476–221 BC).[71]

Around the late fiften century BC the number of discs in tombs began to significantly increase. We can observe this on the example of the tomb of the Marquis Yi 乙 of Zeng 曾 State (c. 433 BC, Suizhou 随州, Hubei) where 115 discs were discovered in total, of which a majority was made in jade and the remaining in stone.[72] The increasing emergence of these objects could have had a direct connection with burial arrangements. The fact that the *bi*s were placed on the body of the deceased certifies their protective task. However, besides the discs, the tombs very often contained tens of other jade items, such as in the case of the Marquis Yi's grave.[73] The jades found there, such as body orna-

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[68] Xiaoneng Yang, 1999, pp. 58, 247–248.

[69] Xiaoneng Yang, 2004, pp. 184–187.

[70] Stephen Owen, "Han Fei, *He's Jade*". In *An Anthology of Chinese Literature. Beginnings to 1911*. Edited and translated by Stephen Owen. New York • London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996, p. 84.

[71] Stephen Owen, 1996, "Historical Records (Shi-ji)", from the „Biographies of Lian Bo and Lin Xiang-ru", p. 84–87.

[72] Jessica Rawson, 2002, p. 248.

[73] Hubei Provincial Museum, *Tomb of Marquis Yi of Zeng. Ritual and Music Civilization in the Early Warring States Period* 曾侯己墓。战国早其冃的礼乐文明. Edited by Wang Hongxing

ments (of which a particularly beautifully carved "cap belt" had to inspire admiration), pendants, combs, etc. did not seem to be only ritual instruments, but also attributes of wealth and prestige collected during one's lifetime for the purpose of submitting them to the grave.

No less impressive jade collections also appeared in other tombs or mausoleums of the Warring States period, examples are the mausoleums in Jincun 靳村 village near Luoyang 洛阳, or the tomb of the ruler Cuo Mu 错暮 (327–313 BC) of the Zhongshan Kingdom 中山 (Pingshan 屏山, Hubei), which was full of around three thousand excellent quality jade objects.[74] Equally impressive jade ornaments and rings appeared in the mausoleums or tombs of the Wei 魏 (Shanxi) or Chu States.[75] By observing the quantity and quality of the gathered underground jades, we can assume that during the Warring States period the development of carving in jade experienced its bloom. This could have stimulated aspirations for collecting, and *vice versa*, increase aspirations to have artistically developed jades, which could have affected the development of technology.

Interest in collecting jades because of ritual, political as well as antique reasons lasted continuously for the next few centuries. However, it seems that during the Qin 秦 (221–206 BC) and Han 汉 (206 BC – 220 CE) dynasties other elements appeared that had an influence on the collecting fancies, namely the aesthetic value of the jades and their rarity, or the fact that they evoked curiosity. This theory is based on the observation of very refined jade cups, beakers or pendants, rings, plaques and figurines which came into view around the foorthand third centuries BC as luxuries and typically secular items devoid of holy characteristics.[76] Many of them were certainly acquired or received as gifts

王红星, Hubei 2007 pp. 98–109. See also Hubei Provincial Museum, *Treasures Unearthed from Hubei*. Cultural Relics Press 2008, pp. 118–124; Palace Museum, *Guguong cang yu* 故宫藏玉 *Jade Artifact Collection in the Palace Museum*. Compiled by the Palace Museum. Beijing: Forbidden City Publishing House 1996, pp. 39–40; Xiaoneng Yang, 1999, p. 306–307.

[74] Hebei Provincial Institute of Cultural Relicts, *Tomb of Cuo, The King of Zhongshan State in the Warring States Period* 暮一战国中山国国王之墓, Cultural Relicts Publishing House, vol. 1. Beijing 1995, pp. 165–240, vol. 2 illustrations: CXVII-CLXXXVI. See also Palace Museum, 1996, p. 39; Thomas Lawton, *Chinese Art of the Warring States Period. Change and Continuity*, 480–222 BC. Washington: Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1982, p. 130 – footnote 3.

[75] Lu Liangcheng, „The Eastern Zhou and the Growth of Regionalism", in Sarah Allan, 2005, p. 232, il. 7.40, 7.41, p. 239.

[76] Palace Museum, 1996, pp. 81–95, fig. 35–57. See also Jessica Rawson 2002, pp. 70–71, fig. 59, 61–64; Carol Michaelson, "Qin Gold and Jade", in *The First Emperor*. Edited by Jane Portal. London: The British Museum Press, 2007, pp. 102–103, fig. 106–108; R.P. Youngman,

for the pure pleasure of looking at them and admiring their craft. We can suppose that the "blue jade five-branched lamp, seven feet and five inches high made (in the shape of) coiled hornless dragons holding lamps in their mouths" placed in Qin's emperor palace in Xiangyang 咸陽 was one of such objects.[77]

There is no certainty to whom the above-mentioned lamp belonged, however, we can assume that its owner was none other than Qin Shi Huang 秦始皇 (259–210 BC) himself, not long after whose death the Xiangyang palace was conquered by Liu Bing 劉 邦 (the later emperor Gaozu 高祖 (202 to 195 BC)) and then burnt down by Xiang Yu 项羽 (232–202).[78] Except for this rudimentary information, we do not have much more, especially since the emperor's tomb has not been discovered yet. However, there is a record written by the historian Sima Qian 司马迁 (c. 140–86 BC), who noted that Qin Shi Huan's tomb "was filled with models of palaces, pavilions and offices, as well as fine vessels, precious stones and rarities."[79] We can only suppose what kind of "precious stones" the emperor who desired to be immortal had ordered to be collected in his tomb. With high probability these were jades, as it was believed that they could protect the human body from decay and bad spirits. We could, therefore, assume that Qin Shi Huan's interests in jades sprang somehow from aesthetic reasons as well as from his superstitious beliefs. Yet, there are also political motives which might have stimulated the emperor's collecting activities. Sima Qian mentioned that at Qin's court an institution called "the Imperial Treasury" existed.[80] One of its tasks was to examine a piece of *bi* given to the ruler in strange circumstances. Thanks to this information we can suppose that the "Treasury" was not simply a repository of goods but also consisted of an examining commission having the appropriate knowledge to manage the collected items.

After the fall of the Qin dynasty and the establishment of a new one – the Han dynasty in China – as a result of many political, economic and social changes a new upper class emerged which was tied by kinship to officialdom,

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The Youngman Collection. Chinese Jades From Neolithic to Qing. Chicago: Art Media Resources, Inc., 2008, especially figs. 55, 58, 64, 68, 71, 72–77, 117, 139, 171, 203, 204.

[77] Elinor L. Pearlstein, "A Jade Sheath of Early Imperial China", *The Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies*, vol. 16, no. 2 (1990), p. 111, footnote 29. The author quotes this passage from: *Pan Ku* [Ban Gu] (The History of the Former Han Dynasty), translated by Homer H. Dubs, vol. 1, Baltimore, 1944, p. 57.

[78] An Pingqu, 2008, vol. 1, pp. 127–129, 323.

[79] An Pingqu, 2008, vol. 1, p. 63.

[80] An Pingqu, 2008, vol. 1, pp. 55.

however, locally independent.[81] The time of the old aristocratic-military families which had dominated as the previous ruling class ended forever.[82] As education based on Confucian philosophy was one of the ways to strengthen the power of the new aristocracy, the magnates aspired to be gentlemen and, the same, developed their literary and artistic horizons. It seems that these intellectual and political transformations also had an impact on jade treasuring. This became particularly noticeable around the first century BC, when jades almost totally disappeared from the tombs. It seems that they were no longer regarded as ritual objects but as admirable works assigned for "earthly display."[83] Before this happened at the end of the second century BC there were still cases of rich aristocratic tombs filled with splendid numbers of jades.

One of the examples concerns the grave of Zhao Mu 趙昧 (137–122 BC), a ruler of the Nan Yue Kingdom南越 (Guandong 廣東, Guangxi 广西, Yunan 云南). More than two hundred jade objects were buried with the king and his attendants, not counting the jade plaques sewn with silk thread and shaped in a suit completely covering the body of the deceased.[84] Except for the astonishing eleven jade pendants and a group of discs placed on the king's shroud, there were also luxurious jade vessels, weapon fittings and belt ornaments. In total there were approximately two hundred and forty jades. Part of the amassed items is considered to be antique, however, some of them might have been made in an archaic style. Perhaps the King of Nan Yue, as an amateur collector of ancient jades, could even have ordered the making of some pieces in this manner to fulfill his earthly collection.[85] However, a strong belief in the underground life after death caused at least part of this to be transferred to the ground and deposited in close vicinity of its owner. This "eternal communion" with jades was supposed to ensure the owner's "security, prosperity and longevity." Therefore, jades were regarded as an excellent pass to a good "afterlife," where possessing beauty and favourite objects guaranteed success in all respects.

It seems that the Prince of Zhongshan 中山– Liu Sheng 刘胜 (d. 113 BC), who was emperor Wu's 武帝 (156–87 BC) older brother (however not from the same mother), had quite a similar approach to jades. Liu Sheng and his wife

81) John King Fairbank, 2006, p. 60.

82) Joseph Alsop, 1982, p. 221.

83) Jessica Rawson, 2002, pp. 75, 321.

84) Elinor L. Pearlstein, 1990, pp. 113–114. Xiaoneng Yang, 1999, pp. 410–412, 414–432; Jessica Rawson, 2002, pp. 70–74; Xiaoneng Yang, 2004, pp. 256–262.

85) Jessica Rawson, 2002, p. 71.

Dou Wan 窦绾 (d. 104 BC) were buried in tombs situated under a hill at Lingshan 灵山 (Mancheng 满城, Hebei). Their burial chambers were full of extraordinary items amassed in order to reflect the luxury of the real earthly palace and the objects collected there.[86] According to historical records, the rather powerless but extremely rich Prince of Zhongshan loved a very comfortable life where wine, music and women definitely played an important role.[87] Yet, to these earthly pleasures we should also add the activity of collecting exceptionally beautiful and rare objects, among which jades certainly had a significant position.

The bodies of the Prince and his consort were, similarly as the body of the King of Nan Yue, put into suits made of thousands of jade plaques. However, the burial suits of Liu Sheng and Dou Wan were made in a much more sophisticated way and the quality of the jade plaques was superior to those made for Zhao Mo.[88] These astonishing works assigned to the couple may arouse surprise as it was unusual to create such an outstanding burial "garment" for non-kings. However, Liu Sheng, as the emperor's brother, enjoyed a variety of privileges, and this might be the reason why he was allowed to not only have a simple burial suit, but actually a sort of art sculpture designed and made for a real amateur of beauty. Moreover, in the vicinity of the Prince's body there were also twenty-six *bi* discs, which together with the jade costume comprised the collection of "burial items." However, there were also other pieces, such as ornaments, decorations and figurines. The same kinds of jades were put into the burial chamber of Dou Wan. Some of them, such as pendants or hair ornaments, must certainly have been treated as personal objects by the Princess, which she used every day to decorate herself with, however, some others, such as figurines, might have been collected for the pure pleasure of admiring them.

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[86] Edmund Capon & William MacQuitty, *Princes of Jade*. London: Sphere Books 1973, pp. 18–24; Xiaoneng Yang, 1999, pp. 388–409; Xiaoneng Yang, 2004, pp. 263–266.

[87] Sima Qian wrote: "Liu Sheng loved to drink and was very fond of women so that, with all his offspring and their families, his household numbered over 120 persons. He was always criticizing his older brother, the king of Zhao, saying, 'Although my brother is a king, he spends all his time doing the work of his own clerks and officials. A true king should pass his days listening to music and delighting himself with beautiful sights and sounds'". Burton Watson, *Records of the Grand Historian*. Translated from the original text of Sima Qian by Burton Watson. Hong Kong-New York: Renditions – Columbia University Press, 1993, vol. 1, p. 395.

[88] Elinor L. Pearlstein, 1990, p. 113. See also Xiaoneng Yang, 1999, p. 389–393.

The jades from the tombs of Liu Sheng and the King of Nan Yue are the last examples illustrating such opulent "jade underground collections."[89] After this period, for the next one hundred years until the end of the Tang dynasty, jades buried in tombs were rare. This does not mean, however, that they totally disappeared for this period of time from Chinese life and culture. On the contrary, a number of later poems and treatises on alchemy and Daoist texts mentioned jades, quite often praising them for their luminosity, translucence, pureness, etc.[90] It seems that especially Daoism developed a particular imagination of a divine jade appearing as a manifestation of superior virtues unattainable on earth. The person of the Jade Sovereign, occupying a high position in the Daoist pantheon, is also evidence of this.[91]

Moreover, by the late second century BC a new idea appeared about the destination of the body and soul after death. According to *Huai Nan Zi* 淮南子 – a book written under the patronage of the Prince of Huainan 淮南 in 139 BC – "A man is made of a fine essence which pertains to heaven but his body is the earth's so [following death] the spirit enters its gate [e.g. the sky from which it had come] and the bones and flesh return to their roots [in the earth]."[92] Thus, it is very probable that as a result of changes in beliefs people started to distinguish material and celestial goods, and the same to produce more alternate items which were put into the tombs. This could also have altered the goal of jade treasuring. Perhaps the "earthly jades" were beginning to be conceived as substitutes for the heavenly ones and instead of bringing eternality they were believed to bring spiritual and mental inspiration.[93] Since there was no more need to transfer them into the underground world, where magnificent jades already existed, the "normal jades" remained on the ground and began to be appreciated not because of their ritual or magical power, which could provide

[89] There are also several other tombs rich in jade collections and jade suits, such as the Zhou Bo 周勃 and Zhou Yafu 周亚夫 family burials in Tomb 5 at Yangjiawan 杨家湾 (Xianyang 咸阳, Shaanxi, 179–141 BC), the tombs of the Kings of Chu (?) in Beidongshan and Shizishan 狮子山 (Xuzhou 徐州, Jiangsu 江苏, 179–128 BC and 175–154 BC), and Tomb 1 in Hanshan 寒山 (Jiangsu), however, none of them attained the same level of collected jades as from the tombs of the King of Nan Yue or the Prince of Zhongshan. See Yang Hong, "Jade Suits of the Han Dynasty and Painted Pottery Figurines of the Tang Dynasty: Reflections of Han and Tang Aristocratic Burial Practices", in Xiaoneng Yang, 2004, vol. 1, pp. 348–349.

[90] Stephen Owen, 1996, pp. 355, 434. See also Jessica Rawson, 2002, pp. 80–81.

[91] Fabrizio Pregadio, *The Encyclopedia of Taoism*, vol. 1. New York: Routledge 2008, p. 1197.

[92] Quotation after Jean M. James, *A Guide to the Tomb and Shrine Art of the Han Dynasty 206 B.C. – A.D. 220*, Chinese Studies, vol. 2. New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1996, p. 4.

[93] Jessica Rawson, 2002, p. 81.

immortality, but because of their metaphorical beauty flowing from their materiality.[94]

It seems that there was no interest in written discussions or aesthetic treatises dealing with jades until the end of the Tang 唐 dynasty (618–907). The earliest texts on art in China concerned painting and calligraphy.[95] Jades then were still not treated as pieces of art but as antiquities. Yet, the concept of antiques was no longer connected with the idea of a mandate of Heaven guaranteed by the possession of magical items. The new concept of antiques was associated with the artistic and cultural aspect of ancient objects. Possessing them through imperial art collections symbolised the cultivating of tradition, which in turn strengthened political power and possessing them by private collectors helped raise their social position. Certainly, the growing number from the Song 宋dynasty (960–1279) of woodblock illustrations, books, scholars' essays discussing questions of antiquities and catalogues of different collectors, including those belonging to the Emperor Huizong 徽宗 (1101–1126) intensified the search for jades, especially those from ancient times.[96] Yet the problem of the way of acquiring the antique objects appears. One of the ways was to take part in archaeological excavations or simply in grave robbing (which was quite common practice) or to acquire them from dealers. A very encouraging environment for buying antiques of all kinds was created by bookshops, markets or even wine shops and temples, especially those existing in the capital (during the Northern Song dynasty this was Bianjing 汴京 – present day Kaifeng 开封).[97]

However, what had happened during the Song dynasty opened up a new chapter in the history of collecting in China.[98] The ability to create categories

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[94] Jessica Rawson calls it the "true essences" of jade "that could only be realised in (…) other worlds reached by death." Jessica Rawson, 2002, p. 85.

[95] The first known critical work dedicated to art, titled *Guhua pinlu* 古画品录, was written by Xie He 谢赫 (5th century AC). William Acker translates the title as "Old Record of the Classification of Painters" instead of "A Record of the Classification of Ancient Painters. See William Reynolds Beal Acker, 1979, pp. X, XIV, 1–32.

[96] Jessica Rawson, 2002, p. 88, 92–93.

[97] Robert E. Harrist, Jr., „The Artist as Antiquarian: Lin Gonglin and His Study of the Early Chinese Art". *Artibus Asiae*, vol. 55, no. 3/4 (1995), p. 240.

[98] On jade and other antiquities collecting during the Song dynasty Richard C. Rudolph, "Preliminary Notes on Sung Archaeology". *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 22, no. 2 (1963), pp. 169–177; Kwang-Chih Chang, *The Archaeology of Ancient China*, Revised and Enlarged Edition, New Haven and London: Yale University, 1971, p. 3; Joseph Alsop, 1981, pp. 248–251; Cheng Te-K'ung, *Studies in Chinese Art*, Institute of Chinese Studies Centre for Chinese Archaeology

of items and to distinguish their values as well as to identify their origins led to the formation of professional antiquarian research based on "an absolutely single-minded love of objects" – as Ouyang Xiu (1007–1072) 欧阳修 once wrote.[99] The passion for requiring uncommon items must have been one of the features characterising an excellent collector. And among these rare objects antique jades have constantly occupied a very high position. Once grouped by the scholar and collector Cao Zhao 曹昭 into the category of "precious objects" (in his *Ge Gu Yao Lun* 格古要論 – The Essential Criteria of Antiquities – published in 1388)) they have never changed this group affiliation, even though over time they acquired greater artistic meaning.[100]

STRESZCZENIE

Bogna Łakomska

POCZĄTKI KOLEKCJONERSTWA W CHINACH. ZGROMADZONE POD ZIEMIĄ ŻADY JAKO ODZWIERCIEDLENIE STAROŻYTNEGO KOLEKCJONERSTWA

Artykuł dotyka kwestii początków kolekcjonerstwa w Chinach, choć nie chodzi tu o kolekcje mające charakter artystyczny. Współczesne kolekcjonerstwo zakłada, że przedmioty tworzące kolekcję powinny być pozbawione swojej użytkowej roli, powinny być wewnętrznie powiązane, sklasyfikowane, subiektywnie ocenione, świadomie wybrane i wystawione. Ktoś mógłby zatem zapytać, jak ma się to do starożytnego chińskiego kolekcjonerstwa? I czy można stosować te same kryteria, a następnie na ich podstawie dokonywać oceny. Otóż, z pewnością znajdziemy pewne wspólne cechy we współczesnym jak i starożytnym podejściu do kolekcjonowania, a będzie to chęć posiadania czegoś ważnego, budowanie grup opartych na wewnętrznie powiązanych i świadomie wybranych obiektach jak również chęć wyeksponowania tych przedmiotów, tym niemniej dla ograniczonej i ekskluzywnej grupy, i to niekoniecznie osób, ale bardziej duchów, czy też innych nieśmiertelnych bytów. W starożytnych Chinach kolekcjonowanie było powiązane zwłaszcza z aktywnością rytualną, która wynikała

and Art. Studies Series (4). Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1983, p. 2; Robert E. Harrist, Jr., 1995, pp.473–474; Patricia Buckley Ebrey, 2008 b., pp. 80, 84, 150–151.

[99] Ouyang Xiu was the author of Ji Gu Lu 集古錄 (*Collected Records of the Past*). Sir Percival David, *Chinese Connoisseurship. The Ko Ku Yao Lun The Essencial Criteria of Antiquities a translation made and edited by Sir Percival David*. London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1971, p. 169; Ronald Egan, *The Problem of Beauty. Aesthetic Thought and Pursuits in Northern Song Dynasty China*, Cambridge (Massachusetts) and London: Harvard University Press, 2006, p. 12.

[100] Sir Percival David. pp. 119–121.

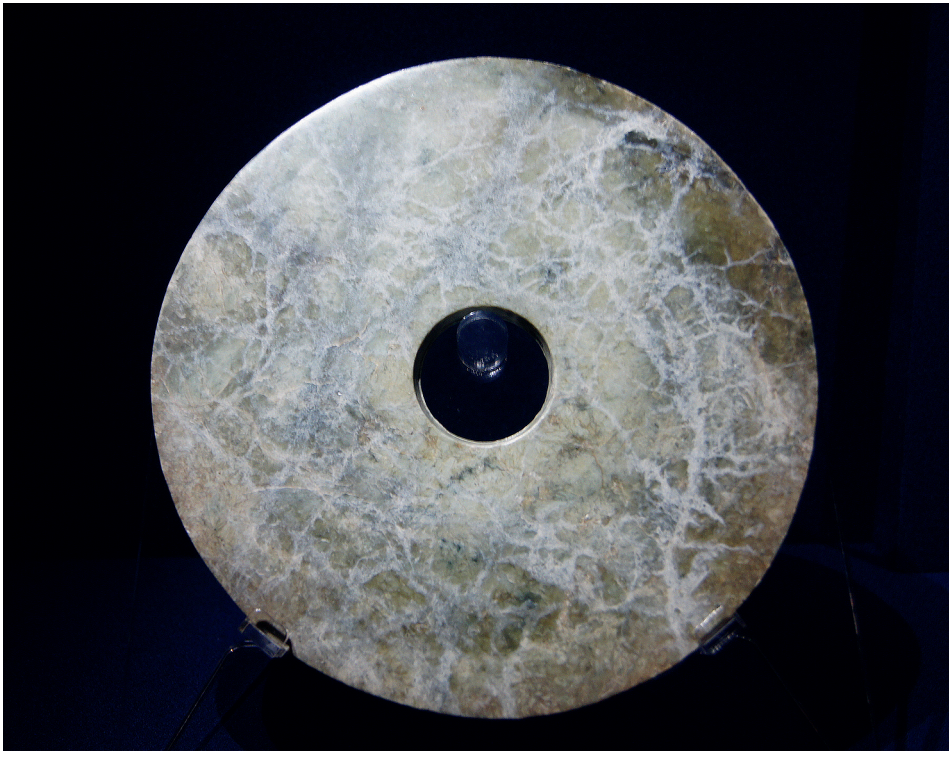
z religijnych wierzeń, a w szczególnych wypadkach z przyczyn politycznych, bowiem posiadanie uświęconych obiektów zapewniało Mandat Niebios, czyli możliwość roszczeń do władzy. Zatem trzeba wyraźnie powiedzieć, że nie sztuka, ale święte skarby, tudzież magiczne przedmioty o rytualnym znaczeniu odgrywały najbardziej istotną rolę w potrzebach akumulacyjnych starożytnych królestw Chin. Co więcej, w konkretnych przypadkach, to surowy sam w sobie materiał i magiczne właściwości, które mu przypisywano sprawiały, że obiekty stawały się pożądane. Z początku, w okresie Neolitu dotyczyło to głównie przedmiotów wykonanych z twardych krystalicznych skał nefrytowych i jadeitowych ogólnie określanych jako żady, które dziś można jeszcze wydobywać w prowincji Xinjiang albo w Tybecie. później przyszła również kolej na brązy. A najbardziej namacalnym dowodem tych kolekcjonerskich początków są obiekty odkryte w grobach i podziemnych skrytkach.

Archeologowie natrafiają na niewielkie zbiory figurek o kształtach smoko-świni, chmur, rzadziej żółwi i ptaków pochodzące z ok. 6 tysięcy lat temu. Nieco później zaczęto gromadzić tajemnicze dyski bi, albo wydrążone sześciany zwane cong. Około 5 tysięcy lat temu wiara w magiczną siłę żadów zaczęła się niezwykle rozprzestrzeniać, a to za sprawą rosnącego statusu szamanów, będących religijnymi i nierzadko politycznymi przywódcami królestw. Posiadanie żadów okazało się być przywilejem a ograniczona możliwość ich nabycia podwyższała niezwykle ich wartość. Żady zaczęto postrzegać nie tylko jako obiekt magiczny, ale również jako symbol bogactwa i władzy. I co ciekawe istotną rolę odgrywały te żady, które miały niejkao swoją historię, które należały do przodków, albo do innych podbitych ludów.

Il. 1. Jade Pig-Dragon, Neolithic Hongshan Culture (c. 10000 – 4000 years ago). In the collection of the Beijing Municipal Company of Cultural Relicts.*

* Author of the all photos: Bogna Łakomska

Il. 2. Cong with deity face design. Liangzhu Culture (ca. 5200 – 4200 years ago). Unearthed from a Liangzhu tomb at Tinglin, Jinshan, Shanghai in 1984.

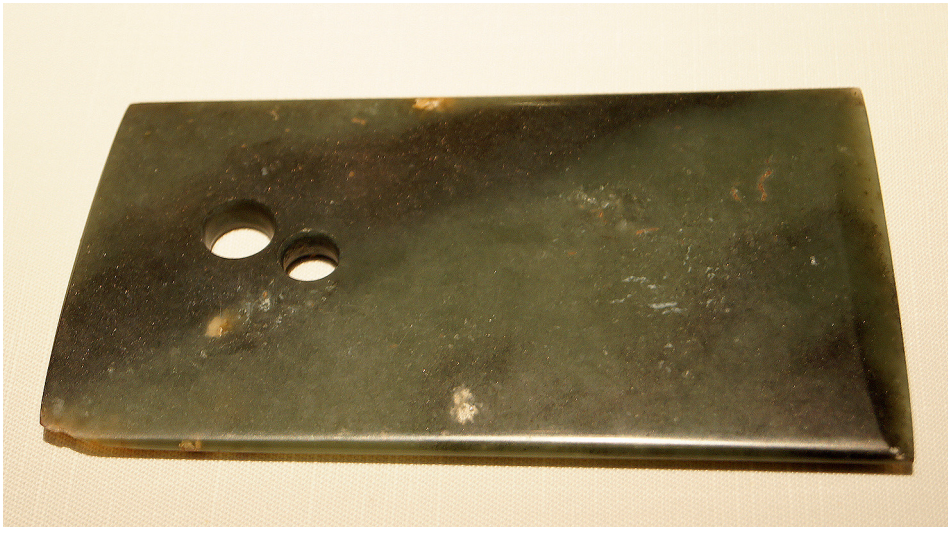


Il. 3. Jade *Bi* (disc). Liangzhu Culture (ca. 5200 – 4200 years ago). Unearthed from the Fuqianshan, Qingpu, Shanghai in 1984.

Il. 4. Jade Burial Tomb (ca. 4500 years ago). The 3rd Tomb in Sidun, Wujin County, Jingsu Province. Nanjing Museum.

Il. 5. Jade *Bi*. Taosi Culture (ca. 4300-4000 years ago). Unearthed from the Taosi Site, Xiangfen, Shanxi Province.

Il. 6. Jade hairpin. Longshan Culture (ca. 4500-4000 years ago). Unearthed from the Xizhufeng Site, Linqu County, Shandong Province.



Il. 7. Jade *Yue* (axe). Longshan Culture (ca. 4500-4000 years ago). Unearthed from the Xizhufeng Site, Linqu County, Shandong Province.

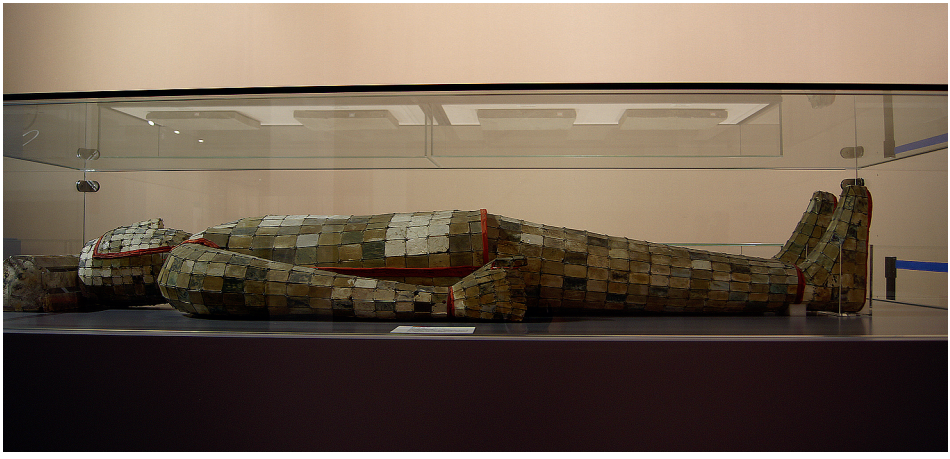
Il. 8. Divine Figure Head. Shijiahe Culture (ca. 4500-4000 years ago). Shanghai Museum.

Il. 9. Jade cattle. (Ca. 3200 years ago). Unearthed from the tomb of Fuhao, Yinxu Site, Anyang, Henan.

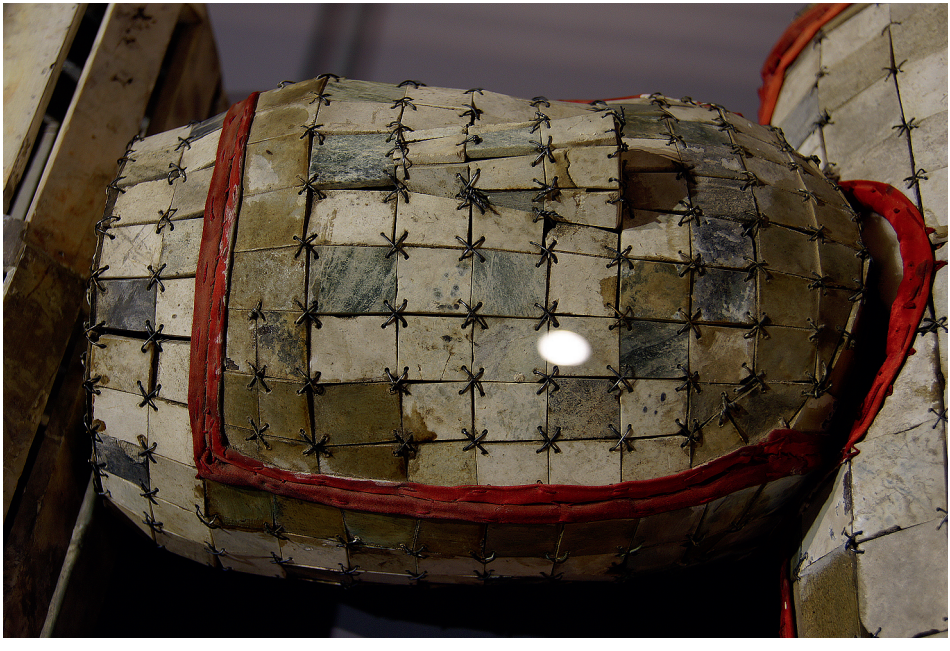
Il. 10. Jade bear. (Ca. 3200 years ago). Unearthed from the tomb of Fuhao, Yinxu Site, Anyang, Henan.

Il. 11. Jade *Zhang* (Ca. 3300-3200 years ago). Unearthed from the Sacrificial Pit I in Sanxingdui. Sanxingdui Museum.

Il. 12. Ornaments on funerary face covering. Late Western Zhou Dynasty (ca. 2800 years ago).



Il. 13. Jade "suit". Han Dynasty (25-220). Unearthed in 1973 in Dabo (once a capital Jin). Anhui Museum.



Il. 14. Upper part of the Jade "suit". Han Dynasty (25-220). Unearthed in 1973 in Dabo (once a capital Jin). Anhui Museum.