

## **Exploring the Philosophical Underpinnings of Ancient Chinese Numismatic Culture: Symbolism, Values, and Philosophical Implications in Coins and Currency**

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**Abstract:** As an important historical heritage, ancient Chinese coin culture is not only a medium of economic exchange, but also a window to explore ancient philosophical thoughts. This paper aims to deeply explore the philosophical thoughts contained in ancient Chinese coin culture, from the symbolic meaning of coins, the philosophy of Yin-yang and five elements, ritual and ritual, and the view of wealth. Through the deep excavation of the interwoven relationship between ancient coins and philosophical thoughts, this paper aims to reveal the cultural concepts and philosophical values of ancient Chinese society. First of all, this paper reviews the historical evolution of ancient Chinese coin culture. As a kind of material cultural heritage, ancient coins have experienced a long history of development. From simple shells and knife coins to later copper coins and gold and silver coins, coins have gradually become an indispensable part of social and economic life. This historical change also reflected the economic, political and cultural changes of ancient Chinese society, which paved the way for later philosophical thought. Secondly, this paper discusses how ancient philosophical thoughts infiltrated into numismatic culture. The ideas of Confucianism, Taoism, Mohism and other philosophical schools are reflected in coins. The Confucian idea of benevolence influenced the ruler's policies behind the coins, the Taoist concept of inaction reflected simplicity and indifference in the production of coins, and the Mohist spirit of universal love was in line with the value of coins as a medium. These philosophical thoughts have given coins a deeper cultural connotation and become a silent propaganda and inheritance. Further, this paper studies the symbolic meaning and philosophical meaning of ancient coins. The patterns, characters and symbols on coins often carry rich symbolic meanings. For example, the appearance of the dragon on ancient coins, as a symbol of power and auspiciousness, echoes the Confucian idea of nobility and the unity of the monarch; The pattern of grain harvest is closely related to the philosophy of Yin-yang and five elements, conveying the value of natural harmony. The interpretation of these symbolic meanings is helpful for us to better understand the ideas and cultural cognition of ancient people. In addition, this paper analyzes the role of ancient coins in ritual and ritual. In ancient China, the ritual system was rigorous and solemn, and coins played an important role in it. The use of coins as

gifts highlights their status as a symbol of wealth, and also expresses respect and wishes for the recipient. By studying the use of coins in ritual, we can get a glimpse of the etiquette concept and philosophical thinking of interpersonal relations in ancient society. Finally, this paper discusses the relationship between the ancient view of wealth and coins. Ancient Chinese people's views on wealth were often influenced by Confucianism, Taoism and other philosophical ideas. As a symbol of wealth, coins convey different values: Confucianism emphasizes the proper acquisition and distribution of wealth, Taoism emphasizes the transcendence of material desire, and Mohism advocates the fair distribution of wealth. In this context, coins are not only material wealth, but also the embodiment of philosophical value. To sum up, ancient Chinese coin culture contains a wealth of philosophical thoughts. From the historical evolution of coins, the penetration of philosophical thoughts, symbolic meaning, ritual and ceremony, and the view of wealth, we can deeply understand the cultural concepts and philosophical values of ancient society. This exploration not only provides a new perspective for the study of ancient history and culture, but also helps us better understand the cultural inheritance and development of contemporary society.

Keywords: Ancient China, Numismatic Culture, Philosophical Thought, Research

## 1. INTRODUCTION

As the treasure of Chinese civilization, ancient Chinese coin culture is not only a tool of economic communication, but also a loose leaf that records ancient philosophical thoughts. As a witness of history, coins carry the political, economic, cultural and other aspects of information in ancient society, and the philosophical thoughts contained in them profoundly reflect the values and world outlook of ancient Chinese people. This paper aims to deeply explore the philosophical thoughts contained in ancient Chinese coin culture, and reveal the cultural context and philosophical thoughts of ancient Chinese society by analyzing the symbolic meaning of coins, the relationship between coins and the philosophy of Yin-yang and the five elements, the role of coins in ritual system and ritual, and the reflection of ancient wealth view. Ancient Chinese coin culture carries a wealth of historical information, from the earliest shell coins and knife coins to the later copper, gold and silver coins, each coin carries a specific value in a specific historical period. As a special cultural symbol, coins not only have actual economic functions, but also reflect the political system, moral ethics, religious beliefs and other aspects of the society at that time. It is this characteristic of integrating multiple information that makes ancient coins a living history textbook, recording the wisdom and thinking of people at that time. Ancient Chinese philosophy is vividly reflected in coin culture. Confucianism, Taoism, Mohism and other philosophical schools had a profound impact on ancient society, and these ideas were

also integrated into the production and use of coins. The Confucian thought of benevolence endowed coins with moral connotation and emphasized the affection and friendship between people. The Taoist concept of non-action influenced the simple shape of the coins and placed the transcendence of the secular desire. These philosophical thoughts are not only a part of coin culture, but also the embodiment of ancient social culture, which provides important clues for people to understand the ideological style of ancient China. On ancient coins, patterns, characters, symbols and other rich and diverse elements often carry profound symbolic meanings, which are closely related to the philosophical thoughts of the time. For example, as a symbol of imperial power in ancient China, the appearance of the dragon on coins echoes the concept of the unity of the monarch in Confucian thought, reflecting the legitimacy and authority of the ruler. The pattern of grain harvest is closely related to the philosophy of Yin-yang and five elements, conveying the respect for the harmony of nature. These symbolic meanings not only gave the coins a more profound cultural connotation, but also provided a window for later generations to understand the ancient philosophical concepts. Rituals and rituals were an integral part of social life in ancient China, and coins played an important role in them. The use of coins as gifts reflects both the expression of wealth and the importance of social hierarchy and interpersonal relationships. The use of coins in ceremonies in ancient times is not only a material exchange, but also a cultural inheritance and value transmission (Wang et al., 2023). By analyzing the use of ancient coins in ritual, we can have a deeper understanding of the etiquette concept and philosophical thinking of interpersonal communication in ancient society. Ancient Chinese people's views on wealth are often influenced by Confucianism, Taoism and other philosophical thoughts, and coins, as a symbol of wealth, are a clear manifestation of this influence. Confucianism emphasizes the concept of just acquisition and reasonable distribution of wealth, while Taoism advocates transcending material desires. In this philosophical context, coins not only represent material wealth, but also represent a value concept and moral code. By analyzing the relationship between the ancient view of wealth and coins, we can deeply understand the ancient society's attitude towards wealth and people's moral orientation (Alkorta & Mujika, 2022; Gharib, 2020). To sum up, this paper aims to deeply study the philosophical thoughts contained in ancient Chinese coin culture, and reveal the cultural context and philosophical value of ancient Chinese society through the analysis of the symbolic meaning of coins, the philosophy of yin-yang and the five elements, the ritual system and ritual, as well as the ancient wealth view.

This exploration not only provides a new perspective for the study of ancient history and culture, but also provides inspiration for us to better understand the cultural inheritance and development of contemporary society. Through the in-depth study of the philosophical thoughts in the ancient coin culture, we can grasp the ideological style of the ancient Chinese people more comprehensively, and provide rich wisdom and enlightenment for the development of human civilization (Wu, 1982; Yong et al., 2022).

## 2. OVERVIEW OF ANCIENT CHINESE NUMISMATIC CULTURE

Ancient Chinese coin culture, as an important part of Chinese civilization, carries a wealth of historical information. It is not only a tool of economic exchange, but also a mirror, reflecting the political, economic, cultural and other aspects of ancient society. From the earliest shell coins and knife coins to the later copper, gold and silver coins, the evolution and development of coins not only witnessed the changes of ancient society, but also reflected people's ideas and value orientation.

### 2.1. Historical evolution of coins

The historical evolution of ancient Chinese coins can be traced back to the distant pre-Qin period. The earliest coins were not metal, but shells, cloth coins, etc. With the development of society, people began to use practical items such as knives and coins as a medium of exchange. In the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States period, the appearance of copper coins marked the materialization of coins. With the passage of time, various dynasties carried out different reforms and minting of coins, such as "Wuzhu Qian" in the Qin and Han dynasties and "Kaiyuan Tongbao" in the Sui and Tang Dynasties. The evolution of ancient coins not only reflects the development of economy, but also reflects the changes of political power and culture (Zhou et al., 2022).

### 2.2. Multiple roles of money

Coins in ancient China were not only a medium of economic exchange, but also played multiple social roles. First of all, as money, money has a very important position in economic life. It not only facilitates the exchange of goods, but also promotes the prosperity of commercial activities. At the same time, coins were also used in political and economic activities such as tax payment and conscription, and became one of the tools for rulers to govern. In addition, coins also played a role in cultural exchange, ritual and other

aspects, highlighting the multiple aspects of ancient society (Wu et al., 2023).

### 2.3. Cultural value of coins

Ancient Chinese coins not only represent economic value, but also contain profound cultural connotation. The inscriptions, patterns, symbols and other elements on coins often reflect the religious beliefs, political systems, values and so on of the society at that time. For example, the "Kaiyuan Tongbao" of the Tang Dynasty is engraved with Buddhist mantras, reflecting the religious atmosphere of the society at that time; The dragon coins of the Ming and Qing dynasties highlighted the symbol of imperial power. These cultural elements make ancient coins not only a cold tool of economic exchange, but also a vivid history book.

### 2.4. Money and social change

The evolution of coins in ancient China is not only a technical change, but also reflects the course of social change. For example, the monetary unification policy in Sui and Tang Dynasties reflected the strong unification of the regime at that time; The currency chaos in the Yuan and Ming dynasties reflected the political turmoil and economic difficulties. The change of ancient coins is often closely related to the change of social system and political power, which is not only the product of historical change but also the witness of historical change (Basu et al., 2021; Cai et al., 2020). To sum up, ancient Chinese coin culture is a colorful historical picture, which not only witnessed the economic changes of ancient society, but also reflected people's ideological concepts and cultural values. From shell coins and knife coins to copper coins and gold and silver coins, the evolution of ancient coins has carried rich historical information, and its multiple roles in various fields such as economy, politics and culture have highlighted the complexity and far-reaching influence of ancient coin culture. Before continuing to delve into the philosophical thoughts in ancient Chinese coin culture, we first need to have a comprehensive understanding of the overview of ancient coins, which will lay a solid foundation for subsequent research (Allen et al., 2022; Bai et al., 2022).

## 3. PHILOSOPHY AND ANCIENT NUMISMATIC CULTURE

Ancient Chinese coin culture, as a multi-dimensional cultural system, integrated many philosophical thoughts, from the Confucian benevolence, to the Taoist concept of inaction, and then to the Mohist spirit of universal

love, these philosophical thoughts were vividly reflected in the coin culture, giving the ancient society more profound meaning and value.

### 3.1. The Embodiment of Confucianism in Numismatic Culture

Confucianism is one of the most important philosophical schools in ancient China, emphasizing benevolence, etiquette and family ethics. These concepts have been widely reflected in ancient coin culture. For example, ancient coins are often inscribed with verses from Confucian classics, such as "The University" and "The Mean of the Mean," in which the moral principles emphasized were integrated with the function of coins as a medium of exchange. The beauty and dignity of ancient coins are also the embodiment of Confucian values, and the material properties of coins convey the rulers' love and care for the people, as well as the rulers' legitimacy.

### 3.2. The Influence of Taoism in Coin Culture

Taoism's emphasis on non-governance and the pursuit of transcending worldly desires corresponded with some aspects of ancient numismatic culture. As a medium of exchange, money itself has certain characteristics of inaction, which only symbolizes value and does not play a role in itself. At the same time, some ancient Taoist scholars also advocated the pursuit of light and quiet life, in contrast to the material world of coins. In the production of coins, the Taoist concept of simplicity and nature is also reflected, and some coin designs pursue simplicity and simplicity, conveying the transcendence of secular prosperity.

### 3.3. The Embodiment of Mohist Thought in Coin Culture

Mohism emphasized universal love and fairness, and believed that human beings should care for each other and pursue social equality. This spirit of universal love is also present in the ancient coin culture. As a medium of value exchange, money embodies the equal exchange relationship between people, no matter the face value. At the same time, coins also play an important role in the distribution of wealth, and its fair and reasonable distribution is in line with the Mohist concept of universal love. Some ancient coins are engraved with the words of universal love, which conveys the call for social justice and humanity.

### 3.4. The Blending of Philosophical Ideas and Symbolic Meanings of Coins

Symbolism in ancient numismatic culture is often mixed with philosophical thought. Taking the dragon as an example, its appearance on ancient coins as a symbol of power and auspiciousness is closely associated

with the Confucian idea of monarchical unity, conveying the legitimacy and majesty of the ruler. The pattern of grain abundance is related to the philosophy of Yin-yang and five elements, expressing the values of natural harmony and abundance. The integration of these symbolic meanings not only enriched the cultural connotation of coins, but also profoundly reflected the ideological concepts of ancient society.

### 3.5. The Social Influence of Philosophy and Money

Ancient coins were not only a medium of economic exchange, but also a message of philosophical thought, which had a profound impact on society. The philosophical ideas contained in these coins not only convey people's values, but also influence people's behaviour and social system to some extent. The Confucian concept of benevolence and the Taoist idea of inaction have shaped the ethics and behaviour standards of ancient society to a certain extent. And these ideas through the spread of coin culture, can be widely inherited and influenced. To sum up, the philosophical thoughts in ancient Chinese numismatic culture are a vivid history book, recording the collision and blending of different schools of thought in different periods. The philosophical thoughts of Confucianism, Taoism and Mohism were vividly reflected in the coin culture, which endowed the ancient coins with richer cultural connotation and significance. By analyzing the blending of philosophical thoughts and numismatic culture, we can understand the values and cultural inheritance of ancient society more deeply.

## 4. NUMISMATIC SYMBOLISM AND PHILOSOPHICAL IMPLICATIONS

Ancient Chinese coins are not only a material medium of exchange, but also a symbol, carrying rich cultural and philosophical connotations. The patterns, characters, symbols and other elements on the coins often reflect the religious beliefs, political systems, values and so on of the ancient society. These symbolic meanings are closely connected with the philosophical thoughts of the time, constructing a profound cultural symbol system.

### 4.1. Symbolism and Philosophical Implications of the Dragon

As an important symbol of ancient China, dragon not only represents imperial power and power, but also means auspiciousness and mystery. On ancient coins, dragons often appear in the patterns, and their symbolic

meaning is closely related to the Confucian idea of unity of monarchy. Confucianism advocated the unity of the mandate of heaven and personnel, and the emperor, as the representative of the mandate of Heaven, had the supreme authority. The dragon patterns on ancient coins reflect the legitimacy and authority of the rulers, echoing Confucian political ideas. In addition, the dragon is also associated with the philosophy of Yin-yang and the five elements, representing masculinity and power, in line with the metallic attributes of ancient numismatic culture.

#### 4.2. Symbols and Philosophical Implications of Grain Abundance

The pattern of grain abundance often appears on ancient coins, which is closely related to the philosophy of Yin-yang and five elements. According to the theory of Yin-yang and five elements, everything in the universe is composed of five elements, and five grains are part of them. In ancient times, people believed that the harvest of grain represented the harmony of nature and was an auspicious symbol. The pattern of grain abundance depicted on the coins not only reflects people's admiration for nature, but also conveys their expectations for social stability and prosperity. This symbolic meaning is closely linked to the values and philosophical ideas of ancient societies, conveying a yearning for peace and abundance.

#### 4.3. Yin-Yang, Five Elements and Coin Design

Yin-yang and five elements philosophy is one of the important philosophical systems in ancient China. It holds that everything in the world is influenced by Yin-yang and five elements. In the ancient coin culture, the concept of yin-yang and five elements is also reflected. The making of coins often follows the principle of the five elements, such as metal corresponding to gold, wood, water, fire, earth and other five elements, and the patterns and decorations on the coins are also related to the five elements. This design reflects the ancient Chinese people's cognition of the natural order, integrates the philosophical thoughts of Yin and Yang and the five elements into the coin culture, giving the coin a deeper meaning.

#### 4.4. The Inheritance of Philosophical Meanings in Numismatic Symbols

The symbolic meaning of ancient coins is not only the embodiment of the philosophical thoughts at that time, but also the inheritance of the values of later generations. These symbolic meanings transcend the limitations of time and space and become an important part of Chinese culture. For example, the symbolism of the dragon has continued to this day, as one of the



important symbols of Chinese culture, symbolizing power and majesty. The meaning of abundant grain is also passed on in the daily life of the Chinese people, representing happiness and auspiciousness. The philosophical implications of ancient coin culture not only influenced the society at that time, but also influenced the values and cultural identity of later generations.

#### 4.5. Symbolism and Contemporary Significance of Coins

The symbolic meaning in ancient numismatic culture is still of great significance in modern times. As a symbol of power, dragon can inspire the thinking and norms of power in modern society. The symbol of grain harvest can remind people of the importance of environmental protection and sustainable development. At the same time, the combination of ancient philosophical thoughts and numismatic symbols also provides a value guide for contemporary society, prompting people to think about the harmony of nature, society and interpersonal relations.

To sum up, the symbolic meanings of ancient Chinese coins not only reflect the profound ancient philosophical thoughts, but also build a rich cultural symbol system. The expression of symbols such as dragon and grain abundance on coins is closely related to different philosophical schools such as Confucianism, Taoism and Mohism, and conveys rich cultural and philosophical meanings. The inheritance and continuation of these symbolic meanings not only affected the ancient society, but also had a profound impact on the contemporary society, and inspired people's thinking about life, values and culture.

### 5. YIN-YANG, FIVE ELEMENTS AND COINS

The ancient Chinese philosophy of Yin-yang and five elements is a profound ideological system, which holds that everything in the universe is affected and restricted by Yin-yang and five elements. This philosophical concept not only runs through many fields such as traditional Chinese medicine, astronomy, geography, etc., but also deeply penetrates into ancient coin culture. Coins not only echo the concepts of Yin and Yang and the five elements in their forms and patterns, but also reflect the essence of this philosophical system in their symbolic meaning and production techniques.

#### 5.1. Basic Concepts of Yin-Yang and Five Elements Philosophy

The philosophy of Yin-yang and five elements is an ancient Chinese view of the universe, which divides all things in the world into two poles of yin-

yang, and uses the five elements of metal, wood, water, fire and earth to explain natural phenomena and changes of things. Yin and Yang symbolize the unity of opposites and constant change, while the five elements reflect the mutual relationship and evolution of things. This philosophical concept profoundly reflects the ancient Chinese understanding of nature and the universe, and also permeates the numismatic culture.

## 5.2. Yin and Yang and Five Elements in Coin Patterns

The patterns of ancient coins often incorporate elements of Yin and Yang and the five elements. In the case of the five elements, different coins may choose different materials such as metal, wood, ceramic to echo the properties of the five elements. Metal coins correspond to gold rows, and woodcut patterns correspond to wood rows. This correspondence reflects the philosophy of Yin and Yang and five elements in ancient coin making. At the same time, the patterns and decorations on the coins often echo the unity of Yin and Yang, such as the combination of dragon (Yang) and phoenix (Yin), reflecting the expression of ancient philosophical concepts.

## 5.3. The Coin Symbol Corresponds to The Five Elements

The concept of yin-yang and five elements also influences the symbolic meaning of coins. Metal is considered a masculine element, so coins made of metal often symbolize power, majesty, and wealth. Materials such as silver and copper are regarded as feminine elements, representing flexibility and peace. In ancient coins, the corresponding relationship between Yin and Yang is often reflected in the actual material and pattern design of coins. The symbolic meanings of Yin-yang and five elements endowed coins with richer connotations in ancient coin culture.

## 5.4. Yin-yang, five elements and coin making process

The making process of ancient coins was also influenced by the philosophy of Yin-yang and the five elements. The casting and production process of metal often requires the baking of fire, which reflects the restriction of fire on metal. At the same time, the production process also takes into account the balance of Yin and Yang, avoiding excessive masculine or feminine elements to maintain balance. This process reflects the ancient coin makers' understanding and application of the philosophy of Yin and Yang and the five elements.

## 5.5. The Philosophical Implications of Yin-Yang, Five Elements and Coins

The Yin-yang and five elements philosophy is not only the patterns and

symbolic meanings of ancient coins, but also reflects ancient people's exploration of the universe and life. As the carrier of Yin-yang and five elements philosophy, coins not only carry economic value, but also convey people's thoughts on nature, life and the laws of the universe. The yin-yang and five elements on the coins allow people not only to feel the profound philosophical connotation behind the coins, but also to have a deeper understanding of the mysteries of the universe. To sum up, the ancient Chinese philosophy of Yin-yang and five elements has been fully reflected in coin culture. From the making material of coins to the design of patterns, from the symbolic meaning to the making process, the concept of Yin and Yang and the five elements permeated all aspects of ancient coins. This philosophical concept gives the ancient coins a deeper meaning and cultural connotation, and also makes the coins become a micro world reflecting the philosophy of the universe. Through the study of the philosophy of Yin-yang and five elements in ancient coins, we cannot only better understand the ideas of ancient Chinese people, but also deeply explore the cultural context and philosophical thinking of ancient society.

## 6. THE ROLE OF COINS IN RITUAL AND RITUAL

In ancient China, coins were not only a medium of economic exchange, but also played an important role in social rites and rituals. As a material symbol, money has special symbolic significance in the ritual system and ceremony, reflecting the values of social order, family relations, and differences in dignity and inferiority.

### 6.1. The Relationship Between Money and Ritual

Ritual system occupies an important position in ancient Chinese society and is an important means to maintain social order and inherit culture. Coins play an indispensable role in the ritual system. For example, betrothal and dowry gifts in marriage ceremonies often involve the giving of coins. These coins not only represent the economic strength of the family, but also symbolize the respect and commitment of both parties. In sacrificial ceremonies, coins are also often used as offerings to express respect and gratitude to ancestors. In ancient ritual activities, the use of coins gave rituals a more concrete and tangible expression.

### 6.2. The Manifestation of the Relationship Between Money and Family

Ancient China attached great importance to family relations and family continuity. Coins have a special place in family rituals. For example, in the

past ancestor sacrifice ceremony, the descendants often put coins in the worship as offerings to the ancestors. This behaviour is not only a sign of respect for ancestors, but also an expression of family continuity and inheritance. In addition, some ceremonies, such as weddings and funerals, also involve the passing of coins, which reflects the wife joining her husband's family after marriage, or congratulating and consoling her relatives and friends.

### 6.3. The Manifestation of the Difference Between Money and Society

In the rites and rituals of ancient societies, coins often reflect the concept of social differences. In ancient societies, the type, quantity and use of coins were often related to social status. For example, the court would reward officials with gold and silver coins in recognition of merit and status; The common people may use copper coins on ceremonial occasions, reflecting the difference in social ranks. In this context, money is not only a currency, but also a symbol of social status and the relationship between supremacy and inferiority.

### 6.4. The Decoration and Significance of Coins in Ceremonies

In the rituals of ancient societies, coins were used not only as a medium of exchange, but also as an element of decoration and symbolism. The material, shape, pattern, etc. of the coins are given special meaning. For example, in some wedding ceremonies, the bride will wear jewellery decorated with coins, which means the sustment of wealth and happiness. The special decorations and symbolism of coins enrich the ceremonies and reinforce the status of coins as an important element in social rituals.

### 6.5. The Evolution and Modern Value of Coins in Ritual

With the evolution of The Times, the role of coins in ritual and ritual has also changed. Especially in modern society, coins gradually play less of a role in rituals and are replaced by more symbolic objects. However, the role and symbolism of coins in rituals still have a profound impact. They not only represent economic exchange, but also carry multiple cultural values such as family inheritance, social relations and the concept of supremacy. To sum up, coins in ancient China played an important role in ritual and ritual, not only as a medium of material exchange, but also as the embodiment of social relations, family inheritance and cultural symbols. The use and symbolic significance of coins in ritual and ritual reflect the values and cultural traditions of ancient society. At the same time, these concepts still have a certain influence in modern society, so that we can

better understand the rituals and rites of ancient society, and also learn from them for the inspiration of contemporary society.

## 7. WEALTH PHILOSOPHY AND MONEY

The wealth philosophy of ancient China is closely related to numismatic culture to a large extent. Wealth is not only the accumulation of material, but also a kind of value and attitude towards life. As a medium of economic exchange, coins not only represent the flow of wealth, but also reflect the ancient people's understanding and pursuit of wealth, which influenced their lifestyle and values.

### 7.1. Philosophical Basis of Ancient Wealth View

The concept of wealth in ancient China is rooted in a variety of philosophical thoughts, among which Confucianism, Taoism and Mohism have different interpretations of wealth. Confucianism emphasizes benevolence and etiquette, and wealth is understood as a means to maintain family and social stability. Taoism advocates non-governance and believes that the pursuit of wealth should be cautious and should not be too persistent. Mohism emphasized fairness and universal love, and regarded wealth as a resource to meet the needs of the people. These different views of wealth are reflected in ancient coin culture, which reflects people's pursuit of wealth and value concept through the use and circulation of coins.

### 7.2. Material and Symbolic Properties of Coins

As a material medium, money has its own value and attributes. In ancient societies, coins were usually made of metal and represented actual wealth. However, coins are also symbolic, representing the exchange of value and the flow of wealth. As a symbol of wealth, coins also imply people's pursuit and desire for wealth. The material and symbolic properties of coins together construct the multiple dimensions of the ancient view of wealth.

### 7.3. The Manifestation of Coins in Social Status and Notions of Supremacy

In ancient societies, coins were not only a symbol of wealth, but also a reflection of social status and notions of supremacy. Different kinds and denominations of coins often represent different levels of social status and wealth. The gold and silver coins given by the court were often a symbol of noble status, while ordinary people used copper coins and so on. The corresponding relationship between coins and social status profoundly reflects the ancient Chinese values of wealth and supremacy.

#### 7.4. The Influence of Money on Lifestyle and Values

The life style and values of ancient Chinese people were influenced by the view of wealth, and coins, as the representative of wealth, played an important role in it. On the one hand, money, as a medium of exchange, promotes economic prosperity and social development. On the other hand, coins have also had an impact on people's way of life, triggering reflections on material desires and spiritual pursuits. The attitude of ancient literati towards money and fame is often expressed in their poems and literary works, which also reflects the inheritance and reflection of ancient wealth philosophy in different strata of people.

#### 7.5. Wealth Philosophy Behind Coins

Ancient coin culture is not only the carrier of wealth exchange, but also contains rich philosophical thinking about wealth. The circulation and use of coins reflect the ancient people's understanding and values of wealth. Some coins are inscribed with scriptures and aphorisms from Confucianism, Taoism and Mohism, reflecting different philosophical schools' views on the pursuit of wealth. These thoughts were passed down in coin culture and influenced the ancient people's understanding of wealth and way of life. To sum up, the wealth philosophy of ancient China is closely connected with the coin culture, and the coin is not only the actual medium of wealth, but also the symbol of wealth concept. Through the use and circulation of coins, the ancient people passed on the wealth concept of different philosophical schools, and affected the value concept, lifestyle and cultural inheritance of the society. The philosophical thinking of wealth behind coins not only allows us to better understand the ideas of ancient society, but also provides thinking and reflection on the value of wealth for contemporary society.

### 8. VALUES AND POWER RELATIONS

The social structure and power system of ancient China were deeply influenced by values, and values largely shaped the operation and legitimacy of power. This relationship is manifested not only in the political sphere, but also at all levels of society. As an important carrier of the relationship between values and power, ancient coin culture reflects people's understanding, expectation and criticism of power, and also reflects the role of different values in the allocation of power.

#### 8.1. The Shaping and Legitimacy of Power by Values

The values of ancient China largely determine how power works and

its legitimacy. Confucianism emphasizes benevolence and etiquette, and advocates that the monarch should have noble moral character to gain the respect and trust of the people. Taoism advocates non-intervention, believing that excessive power will disturb the natural order. Mohism emphasized fairness and universal love and believed that the monarch should win the support of the people with fairness and good deeds. These different values influenced the legitimacy of ancient power and shaped different political systems and power configurations.

#### 8.2. Symbols of Power in Numismatic Culture

Coin designs and patterns in ancient numismatic cultures were often associated with power. On some coins, the head, name, or motto of the monarch is engraved to highlight his ruling authority. This design embodies the symbolic meaning of power, but also conveys the legitimacy and authority of the monarch. As a medium of circulation, money extends the symbol of power to the whole society, allowing people to constantly feel the existence of power in daily life.

#### 8.3. Influence of Different Values on Power

Different values have different effects on the allocation of power. Confucian values emphasize benevolence and propriety, which influence the selection of officials and policy making, making the regime more likely to be legitimacy based on benevolence. Taoist values advocate non-intervention, which affects the decision-making methods of rulers, and enables the regime to avoid excessive intervention to some extent. Mohist values emphasize fairness and universal love, which affects the social supervision and evaluation of power, and makes the regime need to pay attention to the needs and voices of the people. These different values were interwoven in the allocation of power and influenced the political pattern and social order of ancient societies (Poo, 2009).

#### 8.4. Power Criticism and Reflection in Numismatic Culture

The ancient coin culture also has no shortage of criticism and reflection on power. Some coins are engraved with images and words that reflect social inequality, corruption and other issues, expressing people's dissatisfaction and protests against the abuse of power. These coin designs, which reflect social reality, make coins not only a symbol of political power, but also a medium for social criticism and reform.

### 8.5. Continuation of Contemporary Values and Power Relations

The influence of ancient values on power relations still exists in contemporary times. The benevolence of Confucianism, the inaction of Taoism and the fairness of Mohism all influence the expectation and evaluation of power in modern society to some extent. The contemporary quest for fairness, respect and social responsibility can be traced back to the influence of ancient values. At the same time, as a monetary medium in modern society, money still reflects the relationship between government power and market power, and also reflects the requirements and criticisms of the legitimacy of power by contemporary values. To sum up, ancient Chinese values and power relations interacted to shape the ancient political system and social order. As an important reflection of the relationship between values and power, ancient coin culture embodies the shaping and criticizing of power by different values. This relationship is still influential in contemporary society, enabling us to better understand the operation and legitimacy of power, and also providing implications for political reform and social development in contemporary society.

## 9. CONCLUSION

The philosophical ideas and values contained in ancient Chinese numismatic culture have influenced all levels of society, from religious beliefs to social order, from political power to lifestyle.

Through the study of ancient coin culture, we have a deeper understanding of the ideas of ancient Chinese people, and also provide inspiration for the development of contemporary society and cultural inheritance. This paper discusses the philosophical implications of ancient numismatic culture from multiple perspectives, summarized as follows:

### 9.1. Multiple Meanings of Ancient Numismatic Culture

Ancient coin culture is not only a carrier of economic exchange, but also a cultural symbol and philosophical expression. Through the analysis of the patterns, materials and production techniques of coins, we find that there are rich philosophical implications in them, reflecting ancient people's thoughts on nature, life and the universe. As a symbol of power and monarchy, the dragon represents the harmony and richness of society, and these symbols indicate profound philosophical ideas in coin culture.

### 9.2. The Integration of Philosophy and Ancient Coin Culture

The philosophical thoughts of ancient China have been vividly expressed



in coin culture. The ideas of different schools, such as Confucianism, Taoism and Mohism, are reflected in the patterns, production techniques and symbolic meanings of coins. This blend made money not only a tool of exchange, but also a manifestation of different philosophical ideas. Coin culture not only inherits ancient thoughts, but also provides important resources for the cultural inheritance of later generations.

### 9.3. The Relationship Between Coin Culture and Social Order

Ancient coin culture played an important role in social order. Coins not only play a role as a medium in economic exchange, but also embody special significance in rites, rituals and social relations. As a symbol of wealth, coins play an important role in the difference of social dignity, family inheritance and social status. The relationship between ancient coin culture and social order reflects people's cognition and pursuit of power and value.

### 9.4. Contemporary Value of Numismatic Culture

The ancient coin culture still has a profound influence in contemporary times. Through the study of ancient coin culture, we can better understand the ideas, cultural traditions and social order of ancient Chinese society. At the same time, the values of ancient philosophy and coin culture also have a certain continuation and inspiration in contemporary society. The symbol of the dragon's power and the harmonious concept of abundant grain can provide a reference for the political, economic and cultural development of contemporary society.

### 9.5. The Profound Meaning of Coin Culture

Ancient coin culture is not only a historical relic, but also a carrier of philosophical thought and cultural inheritance. Through the study of the ancient coin culture, we cannot only explore the ancient people's lifestyle and ideas, but also draw inspiration for the contemporary society.

The profound significance of ancient coin culture is not only reflected in the historical memory, but also reflected in the contribution to the development of human thought and culture.

To sum up, ancient Chinese numismatic culture contains a wealth of philosophical thoughts and values, which influenced every level of ancient society. Through the study of ancient coin culture, we can more deeply understand the ancient people's ideas and cultural inheritance, but also can draw inspiration for contemporary society. The ancient coin culture is not only the witness of history, but also the precious heritage of the development of human thought and culture.

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