# The History and Art of Child CSC Scales









#### The History and Art of

### Chinese Seals

by Sun Weizu

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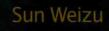
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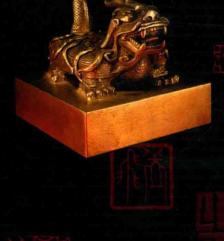
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#### Author's Preface

eople usually regard Chinese seals as an artistic phenomenon, but they are primarily, in my opinion, an institutional device deeply involved in the political and economic activities of Chinese society. This dual identity entails a very different research and analytical approach from that used in the study of other art forms such as calligraphy and painting. Compared with the development of seals in other parts of the world, the particularity of Chinese seals is that they gave birth to the art of seal engraving, a form created by men of literature and art that could work in association with calligraphy and painting. Therefore, for a fuller exposition of the development of Chinese seals and interpretation of seal works, we must not only pay attention to the external elements, but also go deep into political, economic and cultural elements as well as provenance. Direct elements include the evolution of characters and changes to seal systems, whilst indirect elements have to do with social stability or disorder, political reforms, economic prosperity or decline, ethnic conflict or integration, and changes in cultural fashion over the course of some 3,000 years. Only by understanding all this information in depth can we touch the special character and soul of Chinese seals, find the internal agent causing artistic styles to change, and illustrate why Chinese seals have continued being used and developed right to the present day, whilst early seal systems in other regions stopped or disappeared.

Based on this thinking, I believe that, in order to explain the general history of Chinese seals, we must change the long-standing situation whereby the study of ancient seals and the study of seal engraving have different research approaches and discourse systems: we must interpret the historical