

# 玉器起源探索

興隆窪文化玉器研究及圖錄

中國社會科學院 考古研究所  
香港中文大學 中國考古藝術研究中心

編

*The Origin of Jades in East Asia*  
*Jades of the Xinglongwa Culture*





這是一本中國8,000年前玉器文化研究的專著。全書分為遺址分析、玉器導讀及研究篇三個部份。本書主要對象，除玉器研究者或一般愛玉之士外，對考古、文獻史學、宗教、民族、藝術史、科技史等方面的研究均具有參考價值。

This book concerns research on jade accessories from 8,000 years ago, comprises three parts: Analysis of the Sites; Jades and Introduction. In addition to the standard interest this material may hold, the compilation brings together valuable information for research in archaeology, history, religion, ethnology, art and the history of technology.

This is an invaluable resource for all those interested in ancient China. But it is much more. The volume makes it possible to review the extraordinary nature of the culture that has been revealed.

*Jessica Rawson (Merton College, Oxford University)*

The subsequent use of jade in the Hongshan culture of the Northeast and also in later Neolithic cultures in other regions of China established its position as one of the most valuable and symbolically significant media in a variety of early societies. In the Xinglongwa culture this transformation had only just begun.

*Rowan Flad (Department of Anthropology, Harvard University)*

私は、玦状耳飾自体のルーツをかねてから中国大陸に求めている。桑野遺跡の玦状耳飾には列島の中での自生説では解釈できない要素を多く含んでいるように思う。

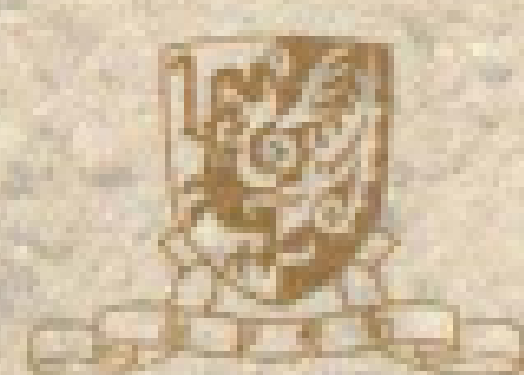
藤田富士夫（日本富山市埋蔵文化財センター）

本書刊發的興隆窪文化玉器資料均係科學發掘所獲，蘊含著數十位考古人的心血和汗水……玉玦的確來之不易。將整座墓葬打箱整取，從偏遠的小山村運到北京，雇不到吊車，裝車靠的是考古隊員的臂膀，其艱辛程度可以想像！

劉國祥（中國社會科學院考古研究所）

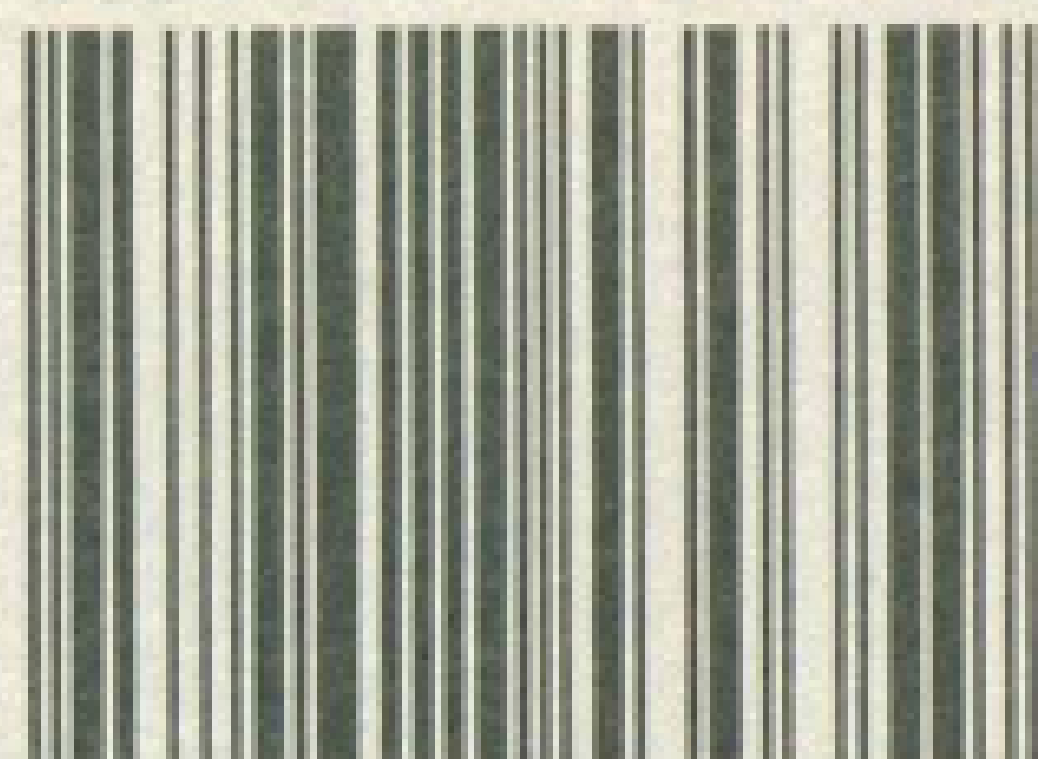
興隆窪文化玉器橫空出世，足以媲美殷墟甲骨文發現，兩者分別為中國真玉文化與漢字濫觴，都具有象徵性意義，又先後傳播覆蓋東亞廣泛之範圍，也同樣為東亞傳統文化之代表。

鄧聰（香港中文大學中國考古藝術研究中心）



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## *The Origin of Jades in East Asia*

*Jades of the Xinglongwa Culture*

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# 玉器起源探索

興隆窪文化玉器研究及圖錄

## *The Origin*

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# *Jades in East Asia*

*Jades of the Xinglongwa Culture*



中國考古藝術研究中心

CENTRE FOR CHINESE ARCHAEOLOGY AND ART

THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG



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# 序

興隆窪文化發現於20世紀80年代初期，二十多年來中國社會科學院考古研究所對興隆窪文化的興隆窪遺址和興隆溝遺址展開了大規模考古調查、發掘，取得了極為豐碩的科研成果。興隆窪文化時代屬於中國新石器時代中期，這是中國東北地區目前已知年代最早的新石器時代文化。內蒙古自治區赤峰市敖漢旗興隆窪遺址，作為興隆窪文化最重要、最典型的遺址，是迄今考古發現的中國新石器時代聚落遺址中保存最完整、布局最清楚的。在中國新石器時代聚落考古中，興隆窪遺址考古具有學術史上的里程碑意義。

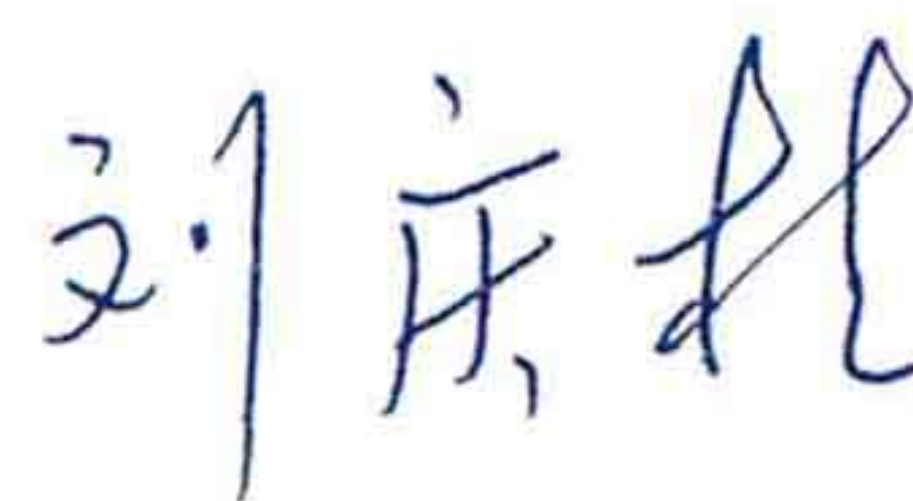
興隆窪遺址和興隆溝遺址發掘出土的各類遺物中，以玉器最為引人注目。我認為這主要有三個原因：一是興隆窪遺址出土的興隆窪文化玉器是目前所知中國國內發現年代最早的真玉器；二是玉器在中國古代文化中佔有特殊重要的地位；三是中國新石器時代玉器以紅山文化玉器、良渚文化玉器最為著名，而紅山文化是在興隆窪文化和趙寶溝文化基礎上發展而來的，興隆窪文化玉器是紅山文化玉器的源頭，而興隆窪文化玉器又以興隆窪遺址和興隆溝遺址出土玉器最具代表性。

有鑒於此，中國社會科學院考古研究所與香港中文大學中國文化研究所中國考古藝術研究中心合作，將興隆窪遺址和興隆溝遺址出土的興隆窪文化玉器，拍攝成多角度、多方位的圖版，並收集了兩個研究所為主相關學者關於興隆窪文化玉器的主要研究論文，輯成此書，奉獻學界，這無疑將極大地促進中國古代玉器研究，同時也將使人們對興隆窪文化有更為深刻的認識和瞭解。



多年來，中國社會科學院考古研究所與香港中文大學中國文化研究所在香港合作進行考古發掘、出版大型文獻《殷周金文集成釋文》、舉辦成人教育的考古學講座等，為弘揚中國古代優秀歷史文化傳統，做了許多積極的、卓有成效的工作。促進了香港與內地學者之間的合作，加深了彼此的友誼。這次兩個研究所又進一步合作編著、出版《玉器起源探索》。為此，我要特別感謝香港中文大學中國文化研究所所長蘇芳淑教授和前所長陳方正教授，長期以來為我們的學術研究合作所作的重要貢獻。

本書主編楊虎先生是興隆窪遺址的主要發現者，興隆窪遺址考古發掘的主持人、主要參加者，興隆窪文化的命名者。他為興隆窪遺址的考古調查、發掘，為興隆窪遺址文物保護，為興隆窪遺址考古發掘資料整理和報告編寫，二十多年如一日，無怨無悔、孜孜不倦忘我工作，奉獻出自己的後半生。在本書付梓之前，他卻離我們而去，這使我更加懷念老朋友、老同事——楊虎先生。我希望本書的出版是對楊虎先生的最好紀念和告慰。



劉慶柱

中國社會科學院考古研究所所長

二零零四年五月十五日



# *Foreword*

In the decades since the discovery of the Xinglongwa culture in the early 1980s, extensive surveys and excavations have been carried out at the Xinglongwa and Xinglonggou sites by the Institute of Archaeology of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. The results have been highly rewarding. The Xinglongwa culture is a mid-Neolithic culture and the earliest known Neolithic culture in Northeast China. The Xinglongwa site in Chifeng City, Aohan Banner, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, is by far the most important and representative site of this culture, yielding one of the best preserved Neolithic settlements with the most distinct layout ever found in China – a milestone in the archaeological studies of Chinese Neolithic settlements.

Of the finds uncovered from the Xinglongwa and Xinglonggou sites, jade artifacts are the most noteworthy. I believe that there are three main reasons for this. Firstly, those jades of Xinglongwa culture uncovered from the Xinglongwa site are the earliest true jade known to have been found in China. Secondly, jades played a unique and significant role in ancient Chinese culture. Thirdly, of the two most well known jade-yielding Neolithic cultures – Hongshan and Liangzhu – the former developed from the Xinglongwa and Zhaobaogou cultures, which suggests that Xinglongwa culture was the source of Hongshan culture; and the most representative of Xinglongwa jades are those uncovered from the Xinglongwa and Xinglonggou sites.

In view of this, the Institute of Archaeology of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences has been working in collaboration with Centre for Chinese Archaeology and Art of Institute of Chinese Studies of The Chinese University of Hong Kong to take pictures of the Xinglongwa jades uncovered from the Xinglongwa and Xinglonggou sites from different perspectives and contexts, and to compile important papers on these jades written mainly by scholars of these two institutes into the present book as a tribute to academia. This will certainly promote to a great extent the study of ancient Chinese jades and foster a deeper understanding of the Xinglongwa jades among the public.



Over the past years, the two institutes have actively staged a number of joint projects in Hong Kong, successfully promoting ancient Chinese history and heritage. These joint ventures, which include archaeological excavation, publication of the voluminous *Yin and Zhou Bronze Inscriptions* and a programme on archaeological studies for adult education, have greatly promoted interaction and friendship between academics of Hong Kong and Mainland China. The compilation and publication of the present book is yet another joint endeavour. We would like to express our gratitude to Professor Jenny F. So and Professor Fong-ching Chen, Director and former Director of the Institute of Chinese Studies of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, for their important contributions to our joint investigations over the years.

Mr. Yang Hu, editor of this book, was among the foremost discoverers of the Xinglongwa site. He was head of the excavation project, chief excavator of the site and namer of the Xinglongwa culture. Over the past 20 years he had devoted himself to excavation, investigation and preservation of the site, sorting out data and writing archaeological reports with amazing indefatigability and staunchness. His departure from this world before the publication of this book has grieved all his old friends and colleagues. I sincerely wish to dedicate this book to Mr. Yang, in fond memory of him and his contribution.

Liu Qingzhu  
Director, The Institute of Archaeology,  
Chinese Academy of Social Sciences  
May 15, 2004



# Foreword

Among the flood of new information on ancient China uncovered with controlled archaeological excavations in China since the mid-twentieth century, the astounding achievements of its Neolithic jade carvers represent one of its most unexpected rewards. This was brought to the fore by excavations since the 1980s, conducted by the Institute of Archaeology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, at the Neolithic site of Xinglongwa, near Chifeng, Inner Mongolia. Archaeologists uncovered a large habitation site dating back nearly eight millennia, yielding some of China's earliest known jade (nephrite) artifacts, thus providing an important starting point for the investigation into the beginnings of the use of jade (nephrite) in East Asia.

In 1998, the Centre for Chinese Archaeology and Art at the Institute of Chinese Studies, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, organized an international conference on "Archaic Jades in East Asia." Yang Hu, chief archaeologist of the Xinglongwa site, reported on its excavation and discoveries. The interest sparked by this report led to collaborative research between Yang Hu and Liu Guoxiang of the Institute of Archaeology, and Tang Chung of this Institute. This publication is the result of their academic cooperation.

To properly understand the beginnings and development of ancient China's jades, we must see them in the context of greater ancient East Asian archaeology and apply a multi-disciplinary and intercultural approach. American, Japanese, Chinese, and Hong Kong scholars of international standing contributed the seven essays in this volume. They explore, from differing perspectives, the significance of the jades from Xinglongwa – their symbolic meaning, artistic value, and mineralogical and technical characteristics – within the archaeological context of Xinglongwa and its inhabitants.



This publication is made possible through the staunch support of Liu Qingzhu and Wang Wei and Bai Yunxiang, Director and Deputy Directors of the Institute of Archaeology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and the dedicated hard work of chief archaeologists Yang Hu and Liu Guoxiang. Regrettably, Mr. Yang Hu passed away before the book can be completed. In memory of him, this volume is now dedicated.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jenny So', with a stylized, flowing script.

Jenny F. So  
Director, Institute of Chinese Studies  
The Chinese University of Hong Kong



# 序

在新知不斷湧現，舊說持續瓦解的二十一世紀，處於「黃金時代」的中國考古學，學問之發展日進月步，人們對古代中國的認知已到日日新境界。長時期以來，我們曾為新石器時代玉器的精湛吸引，驚嘆於距今五千多年前史前藝術的成就。上世紀八十年代，中國東北赤峰偏遠的興隆窪遺址，經過中國社會科學院考古研究所歷時十年的精細發掘，完整揭露出新石器時代罕見規模宏大的聚落，其中精美玉器破土而出，是目前中國也是世界範圍內最早的真玉，為探討中國「玉文化」起源，提供了極重要的視角。

一九九八年，在香港中文大學中國文化研究所中國考古藝術研究中心舉辦的「東亞古玉研究」國際會議上，楊虎先生有關興隆窪玉器的報告，頓成為玉器學界焦點。基於此，在中國社會科學院考古研究所和香港中文大學中國文化研究所的支持下，鄧聰教授和楊虎、劉國祥兩位先生就學界關注的興隆窪玉器展開專題合作研究。本書《玉器起源探索》便是這項合作研究的成果。

中國考古學是一門世界性的大學問，玉器考古研究也必須置於東亞背景下才能尋繹清楚其發展脈絡，也只有在世界範圍內的跨文化比較才能凸現其文化內涵。本書以興隆窪文化作為東亞玉器起源探索的起點，集玉器圖錄與研究論文於一體，全面探討了興隆窪玉器文化內涵。研究編收錄的七篇論文，分別由美國、日本、中國內地和香港考古學者執筆，涉及玉器譜系、價值、顏色象徵性、技術等問題，焦點集中，角度不同。



《玉器起源探索》的出版，仰賴中國社會科學院考古研究所劉慶柱所長、王巍和白雲翔兩位副所長的鼎力支持；考古學家楊虎、劉國祥先生的兢兢業業。惟獨令人遺憾的是，興隆窪文化的發現者楊虎先生於年前已歸道山。本書的出版，也是對楊虎先生的深切緬懷。

蘇芳淑

香港中文大學中國文化研究所所長



# Foreword

## Chinese jade and the early cultures of north-eastern China

The present study documents remarkable discoveries made over the last twenty years or more in what is today north-eastern China, in the present-day Autonomous Region of Inner Mongolia. Discoveries of finely crafted jades, especially slit rings and tools, have pushed back the achievements of jade working to at least 8,000 years ago. The fine translucent stones we know today as nephrite, or jade, were carefully chosen and skilfully worked by the peoples of what is now designated as the Xinglongwa culture. These jades herald the beginnings of a long tradition that distinguishes East Asia from many other parts of the world, most especially from the cultures of territories at the other end of the Eurasian landmass, Western Asia and Europe. There gold came to rule supreme at the top of a hierarchy of materials; in East Asia, starting from another base, jade was to become pre-eminent in the Chinese-speaking world.

Jade symbolises today many of the most renowned aspects of Chinese culture. It is as much a metaphor for excellence, as it is the material that was used for ceremonial sceptres and elegant decorative palace works. It is prized not only for its translucent white, pale and dark green stones, but for its soft tactile qualities and the purity associated with the finest examples. It has been used for large sculptures and fragile jewellery. But its origins within Chinese culture have hitherto been little understood.

Over the last three or four decades, large numbers of jades have been excavated from sites linked with the Neolithic cultures that go by the names of Hongshan and Liangzhu and that date to 5,000 or 6,000 years ago. The Hongshan peoples inhabited parts of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region and Liaoning Province. The Liangzhu culture was established in the south-east, in Jiangsu and Zhejiang Provinces. But the discovery of these remarkable finds simply raised a further issue: what were their antecedents? When did the peoples who inhabited the area of present-day China first start to carve jade? The finds from Xinglongwa and Xinglonggou have started to answer these questions.



Remarkable sites have been discovered and carefully excavated. The present volume brings some of the most important finds together, making available for the first time bi-lingual accounts of the excavations and detailed photographs, not only of the jades that are the centre of the discussion, but also of pottery and other finds. This is an invaluable resource for all those interested in ancient China. But it is much more. The volume makes it possible to review the extraordinary nature of the culture that has been revealed.

The preoccupation with jade is itself rare. And as important is the relative certainty with which the peoples of the time could identify and deploy nephrite. Working a stone as hard as nephrite is, furthermore, a considerable feat, and suggests that the peoples had developed skilled crafts with a considerable division of labour. While this in itself indicates a highly developed hierarchical society, the actual artefacts in jade themselves give us additional evidence. Slit rings preponderate. These come in a variety of forms, but all are characterised by a cut or slit in the circle of jade, and all seem to have been ornaments, presumably for ears. If a society invests so much labour in one particular decorative artefact, this artefact must have had a significance within that society, contributing to its social and ideological structures. What these structures were we cannot now say, but we can assess one aspect of these from the discovery of the rings near the ears of tomb occupants. It seems likely that the symbolic functions of the rings were deemed to continue after death. Thus the burial of jades tells us that the peoples of the time had highly developed ideas about burial rituals and perhaps life after death. Ornaments at the ears enhance the face and indeed attract attention to the whole head. In death also, and in an afterlife, the jades may have been thought to have served the same purposes.

Another remarkable feature of the rings is their wide distribution across north and eastern Asia. Such rings are unusual artefacts, and this type is not one that we can assume was separately discovered in a number of different areas. For although ear ornaments are common to many societies across the world, slit rings of stone have not been the independent choice of peoples in Africa or Europe, nor even in jade-using areas, such as New Zealand.

The very earliest examples seem on present evidence to be those described in this volume from the sites in the extreme north-east. From this point, they seem to have been copied in areas as far dispersed as eastern Siberia, the Bohai bay and Shandong, south-east China, in Jiangsu and Zhejiang, and sites along the Yangtze



and as far north and east as Korea, and Japan. This distribution defines an enormous sphere of interaction. The spread of the rings took many centuries, even millennia. But their use in these far flung areas indicates, above all, a sharing of the interest in nephrite, or stones similar to nephrite, as ornaments of status and ideological import. The spread of the use of jade, especially nephrite and of a particular object type, the slit ring, brings with it some paradoxes also. There must have been many shared characteristics. For example, all regions using stones as hard and tough to work as nephrite must have developed and indeed shared certain technologies. They must also have discovered sources of nephrite. As these are unlikely to have been numerous or very extensive, there are likely to have been significant trading networks. However, the trading of nephrite and the sharing of one artefact type do not imply that all the different groups of people shared similar social structures, nor is it likely that they attached similar, let alone identical, meanings to the use of jade or to the use of slit rings. The ideas associated with artefacts are transmitted by other means. They are likely to have been articulated in words and enacted in social relations and even ceremonies. None of these can we reconstruct. But we can be very sure that the peoples of the several regions that adopted jade use and slit rings would have developed their own local claims about the value of these materials and would have enacted these values in diverse social and ceremonial settings.

What, therefore, this report offers us is a route into a whole range of questions about the development of the societies of East Asia. The questions concern the discovery both of the material and of techniques for working it. They also embrace issues such as the deployment of jade in social and ideological structures. And they involve us in considering the reasons for the geographical spread of jade and especially of slit rings, and the implications of such a spread. Although we cannot establish today the ideas and beliefs that united or separated the different people who used slit rings, these valuable materials, none the less, offer us important evidence of complex societies about which these questions should be raised.



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