

NUMISMATIC NOTES AND MONOGRAPHS
No. 122

EARLY CHINESE COINAGE

By WANG YÜ-CHÜAN



THE AMERICAN NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

Broadway at 156th Street, New York

1951

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Founded 1858 • Incorporated 1865

HEADQUARTERS

BROADWAY BETWEEN 155TH & 156TH STREETS

NEW YORK 32, N. Y.

PURPOSES: The Society was founded for the collection and preservation of coins and medals and for the investigation of their history and other subjects connected therewith.

MEMBERSHIP: Applications for membership are welcomed from all interested in numismatics. Inquiries regarding membership should be addressed to the Secretary of the Society.

DUES: The annual dues for an Associate Membership are \$7.50. Issues of the *Notes and Monographs*, *Museum Notes*, *Hispanic Numismatic Series*, and *Numismatic Literature* are distributed to all members.

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MUSEUM: The Society maintains a museum located in uptown Manhattan, New York City, which houses its offices, collections and library. Collections embrace coins of all periods from their inception to modern times, medals and decorations. Selections from its cabinets are on display in an exhibition. The library, consisting of about 12,000 volumes, covers all branches of numismatics.

The Museum is open to Members and the public on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. It is closed on Sundays and Mondays and the following holidays: New Year's Day, Lincoln's Birthday, Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Election Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. The hours of the Library are from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. The public exhibition is open from 2 to 5 P.M.

NUMISMATIC NOTES AND MONOGRAPHS

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NUMISMATIC NOTES AND MONOGRAPHS

is devoted to essays and treatises on subjects relating
to coins, paper money, medals and decorations.

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By WANG YÜ-CH'UAN



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PREFACE

In this monograph we have attempted to make a preliminary reconstruction of the monetary systems of Chinese antiquity. From the pages which follow we hope our readers will find that our attempt has been fruitful.

The reason for the choice of this topic is twofold. Firstly, practically no historical literature has been preserved which provides information concerning ancient Chinese coinages, though the coinages must have played an important part in the nation's economic, social and political development. Secondly, coins of ancient China have been found in such large numbers in recent decades that they should provide helpful data for serious works in the field of historical studies, and negligence to use them should be inexcusable.

The American Numismatic Society possesses, in our opinion, the largest single collection of Chinese coins in the world. Its officers and council have long felt the necessity of such a work as the present one as a step towards developing the scholarly potentialities of its cabinet in the advancement of numismatic and historical studies of Chinese civilization. For this reason, I was generously granted the opportunity and provided with all necessary facilities to prepare this monograph.

The collection of the ancient Chinese coins at the Museum of the American Numismatic Society consists of 4,350 specimens not including cowries, cowrie imitations and the so-called "Ant Nose Money." A part of the Museum's collection was acquired by the Society itself in the course of many years. The greater part was donated by Mrs. Eric N. Baynes, daughter of the late John Reilly, Jr., who during his life time made the collection of Chinese coins his chief interest and built up a very large and excellent cabinet. The bulk of the Reilly collection was originally that of Henry Ramsden, the famous numismatist of the early years of this century. It was on the basis of the collection at the Museum of the American Numismatic Society, occasionally supplemented by information gathered from previously published coin catalogues, that this monograph was prepared.