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Cultural Anthropology Study on Historical Narrative and Jade Mythological Concepts in Records of the Great Historian: Annals of the First Emperor of Qin

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ABSTRACT

Study on the inner mechanism that drives humans' behavior has been one of the most advanced fields of humanities and social sciences. To decode the general behavior of Chinese people in the early era, this paper adopts the cultural determinism of cultural anthropology to analyze *Records of the Great Historian: Annals of the First Emperor of Qin*, an essential historical narrative at the dawning of Chinese civilization, to reveal the underlying mythological concepts that determine the ritual behavior and narrative expression and highlight the prototype function of mythological concepts in the Chinese behavior and ideology construction.

Keywords: Chinese jade, cultural origin, historical narrative, ideology construction, mythological concepts.

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Max Weber once pointed out that, "The supreme gold of social sciences is not to pursue the construction of new ideas or new concepts, but to make efforts in understanding the cultural meaning of concrete historical links". (Weber, 1999: 60) According to current academic achievements, in explaining humans' behaviors, the theory that can clearly explain this causality is cultural determinism: special cultural tradition determines the general behavior of the cultural members. This paper focuses on the *Records of the Great Historian: Annals of the First Emperor of Qin*, an essential historical narrative, to interpret the underlying causality of Chinese civilization from mythological concepts, to behaviors, and then back to historical incidents.

1.0 Concept and Cultural Determinism

Study on the inner mechanism that drives humans' behaviors has become one of the most advanced fields of humanities and social sciences, which urgently needs systematic academic studies and multidisciplinary cooperation. As the joint point of literature and cultural anthropology, mythology is attached great importance by both sides and has become the most studied field of cultural

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anthropology. The literature major usually focuses on the literary property of mythology and excel in analyzing the elements of characters, themes, motifs, linguistic rhetoric and style in mythological narrations; while, the anthropology focuses on the mechanism of mythology and rites and its function in specific cultural society. For them, literary narration is the external expressions of mythology, and what determines is the hidden values, driving forces and operating mechanism. The current research has found the dominator hidden behind the historical puppet show, i.e. the mythological belief and concepts dominating the mythological imagination and narration.

The western scholars who studied the origin of literature once focused on the ancient Greek literature, which later formed the school of Myth and Ritual in the 20th century, which holds that Greek drama originated from religious rites, and the underlying driving force behind performances is god worshipping and religious belief, not aesthetic or entertainment (Harrison, 1987: 67-80). Terms like Dionysian Spirit and Apollo Spirit extends from the field of literature to that of anthropology. And the literary study of mythology gave way to the conceptual mechanism study of mythology, i.e. the motivations behind ancient people's behaviors through reconstructing their mythological concepts, and then interpreting the dominating rules of the culture as whole, instead of the expression rules of literary texts only.

One of the theoretic heritages left by the Myth and Ritual School is the differentiation of the chronological order of myths and rites, i.e. which one came first in the time line. Viewed from the evolution facts that behaviors came before the languages, it seems that rites determined the myths; but viewed from that human beings are conceptual, mental concepts determine actual behaviors, mythic concepts play more fundamental and forceful role in determining and shaping rites. Burkert takes the funeral scene in *The Iliad* as case in his book *Homo Necans: the Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth* (Burkert, 1983), to illustrate how literary narration becomes an important medium for anthropologists to interpret funerary rituals, and how the mythological concepts dominated the transformation, transition and substitution of hunting's turning into Greek funerary rituals. In *The Origins of European Thought*, Oiansholds that philosophies and sciences originated from the religious beliefs at the outset of civilizations, "those are the basic beliefs about life, thought and fate, which determine man's discourse and actions, which are not exclusive to the Greek. In some sense, what we are digging is none other but the root or origins of civilizations in Europe and other places." (Onians, 1954: 1)

These mythological concepts, as the cultural codes hiding silently underlying historical events and incidents, become harder to beware and recognize by later generations. As Claude Levi-Strauss, the representative of structural anthropology puts it, the fundamental difference between anthropology and history is that, history studies what people are aware of, but anthropology explores what people are not aware of. For Marxists, the things unaware of in culture and society could be the deep structure of productive forces and relations. For structuralists, it could be the conceptual structure, such as conceptual logic of binary oppositions etc. Thus, in 20th century, the mainstream of research for the determinative elements of humans' society turns from material production to the conceptual.

Recently, some scholars pay particular attention to the relationships between mythology and politics and ideology. The recent works on this issue is a collection of academic papers published in 2002: *Thinking through Rituals: Philosophical Perspectives* (Schilbrack, 2002:188). In it, the 9th paper is *Myths and Ideology*, whose author is Christopher Flood, a distinguished English contemporary political theorist, who concluded his paper as: "The political mythological theories should be demystified, since the daily activities of political interactive texts is filled with mythological creation. There's no need to regard myths as some special ways of expression or confine beliefs to an irrational psychopathic mythology. Mythological creation is no rare matter or mistake. It's nothing less than a way to make the political events easy to comprehend by way of ideological beliefs. After a long time, some narration seemed quite important for a social group; while, some others soon disappeared. But the creation and re-creation of mythological narrations is permanent in the political life." (Schilbrack, 2002:188) Flood stresses that mythological concepts plays a deterministic role and prototype function in the formation and evolution of ideology. Once the prototype of certain cultural community is revealed, the

evolution track of its historical cultural texts and the stable operative relations between coding and re-coding will emerge.

Karl, a contemporary English historical theorist, defined cultural “determinism” as: “It is a faith, believing that every single incident results from one or several reason and it won’t happen in a different way unless the reason or something of the reason changes. Determinism is not something about history, but about all human beings’ behaviors. People’s behaviors have no reasons, so they are not determined.” (Carr, 1981: 100) From this, we could see that the initial beliefs of human being should be traced back to all cultures and civilizations in the prehistoric age. The Mythological Concepts might become the common and effective research approach for humanities and social sciences only after making clear how the core concepts of a culture come into being from the perspective of the pre-historical tradition. Thus on the one hand, we should keep alert for the authoritative narration in history records, on the other hand, we should realize the dialectical tension between the truth and the fake within myths, the myths’ possibility and capability of narrating history.

2.0 “Little/Great Tradition” and “Quadruple Evidences”

Following the Levi-Straussian logic of mythical thought and contends that myths “derive their meaning as part of a system” and “their structural relationship can, to a certain extent be decoded” (Allan, 1991: 125), the school of Chinese cultural anthropology pay attention to the reproduction of the authentic history in myths relies on the concept of “mythistory”. Though it has its theoretical support in western mythological research, it is still closely rooted in Chinese native materials. Given mythology is multi-faceted and also the “prototype” that constructs Chinese civilization, the school of Chinese cultural anthropology, with the leading scholar Ye Shuxian, uses the concept “Mythological China” to generalize the self-expression of Chinese civilization. Owing to the activation of myths’ multi-interpretation capacity and the penetrating understanding of the relations between mythology and history, “Myth history” offers methodological support for the deep exploration of the origins of Chinese civilization.

Based on Wang Guowei’s “Dual Evidences” (canonical texts and excavated documents) and Rao Zongyi’s “Triple Evidences” (canonical texts, excavated documents and material objects) for textual criticism, this school proposes and advocates “Quadruple Evidences”, seeking evidence from not only canonical texts and excavated documents but material culture, a narrative of objects and icons (Ye, 2010: 1-8) and intangible heritage, which was usually studied by folklorists and ethnologists. (Ye, 2012: 87-90) Such methodology of quadruple attestation, however ambitious, theoretically surpasses previous scholars’ practices, whose versatile expertise was primarily based on early Chinese philosophy and history, etymology and archaeology (e.g. ritual bronzes oracle bones, bamboo slips).

In May, 2013, at the international symposium on literary anthropology held at the Shaanxi Normal University, Chinese literary anthropologists borrowed and adopted a pair of western anthropological terms, the “Little Tradition” (the folk/unlettered) and the “Great Tradition” (the elites/literate), which were coined by Milton Singer and Robert Redfield when they studied the orthogenesis of Indian Civilization in Madras city, now known as Chennai. Chinese literary anthropologists redefined the “Little Tradition” as the cultural tradition marked by metal and language characters and the “Great Tradition” as the cultural tradition before the appearance of characters, metals and nations (Ye, 2012: 8). On the basis of this redefinition of tradition, the Chinese literary anthropology school integrated jade into its objects of study, that is the literary textual evidence, the material evidence, the unearthed archeological evidence, and the anthropological evidence, were thought together to propose that jade, as the material symbol of civilization origin, functions as a centripetal force that leads a path from the prehistoric multi-cultures to the integrated civilization of Central Plains.

Both the western and Chinese cultural anthropology agree that to explore the source of every civilization’s concepts, the formation history of its mythological concepts during the pre-historic period

or at the beginning of its civilization shall be studied first. This also explain why the definition of cultural anthropology turns from the “the science of man” in the early 19th century to “The Interpretation of Cultures” (Geertz, 1973). What it explores changes from the deduction of general pattern of all human cultures’ evolution is to the interpretation of special characteristics and unique features of each culture. The concept of man becomes relatively more concrete instead of being highly abstract. (Ye, 2003: 19-39)

To explain why the ancient Egyptian civilization in the North Africa created is the Great Pyramids, what the ancient Indian civilization created is Hinduism and Buddhist monastic life, while, what the Chinese civilization created is the Great Wall and the imperial seal, we need to inspect each culture from the inside perspective to understand its inner cultural rules. Only in this way could our interpretation be more specific and reliable. Without the mythological values of regarding gold as holy, the ancient Greek won’t have the imaginative narration of gold age and gold apple. Similarly, without Chinese mythological values of worshiping jade as holy and immortal, Chinese won’t have the mythological history of jade stories, including Bian He’s presenting beautiful jade to the kings, Bi of He (Bi-a piece of jade with hole in center), and Wan Bi Gui Zhao (literal meaning-Bi came back to Zhao sound and safe, extended meaning-to return a thing intact to its owner), let alone First Emperor of Qin’s imperial seal and Emperor Wu of Han’s funeral rites of being buried with gold and jade clothes on. Thus our task is to turn from the literary study of the mythology to the genetic or archaeological study on its mythological concepts, which is similar to the archaeology of knowledge proposed by Michel Foucault. Then, the scope and subject of mythology extends from ancient mythological narratives in written form to the pre-writing prehistoric jade articles for worshipping purposes.

3.0 Historical Narrative of Jade Bi in Annals of the First Emperor of Qin

In *The Heir and the Sage*, Sarah Allan says that, “Ancient Chinese literature contains few myths in the traditional sense of stories of the supernatural but much history.” (Allan, 1981: ix). At the time when mythology is introduced into China at the beginning of the last century, while “the problem of myth for Western philosophers is a problem of interpreting the meaning of myths and explaining the phenomenon of myth-making” as Allan remarks, “the problem of myth for the sinologist is one of finding any myths to interpret and of explaining why there are so few.” (Allan, 1991: 19) For Allan, however this paucity has deeper root in “the structure of Chinese religion.” (Allan, 1991: 19) Utilizing Claude Levi Strauss’s structuralist theory and methodology in her analysis of the foundation and succession myths of early Chinese dynasties Allan shows that “history, as it appears in the major texts from the classical period of early China (fifth-first centuries B.C.), has come to function like myth.” (Allan, 1981: 10) Referring to this sort of “historical myth-or mythical history” (Allan, 1981: 12) as “legend”, Allan concludes that the legend types in Chinese thought have affected Chinese politics and literature throughout history, and in the end of *The Heir and the Sage*, Allan suggests additionally that the problem of Chinese historical fiction’s reliance on such types “must be left for another study.” (Allan, 1981: 145)

To decode why the ancient Chinese were different from the ancient Egyptian and the Greek, we have to resort to the underlying conceptual structure and unique culture genes against the broad view of global civilization. Burkert illustrates how mythological concepts dominate the behaviors of historical figures are related to Homer’s Epic, the first literary works of the western civilization, in *Homo Necans: the Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth* (Burkert, 1983). In China, there is no such grand narration like Homer’s Epic was left at the dawning of Chinese civilization. The following will choose part of the historical narration in the first Chinese comprehensive history book, i.e. *Records of the Great Historian: Annals of the First Emperor of Qin*, which talks about the behaviors and incidents of the supreme nation ruler, to illustrate the potential dominance of mythological concepts.

In *Chronology on Chinese and Foreign History*, several events happened in the year of 211 BC were recorded: China, 211 BC, the 36th year of the First Emperor of Qin’s reign. People in the East Town carved

“The First Emperor of Qin dies and the state divides” in a meteorolite. All the citizens living nearby the meteorolite was killed by (the First Emperor of Qin).30 thousand families were forced to immigrate to Yuzhong, north to the Yellow River.Syracuse was defeated by and surrendered to Roman. The rest of Sicily also afflicted to Roman. (Jian, 1961: 99)

Based on the around-100-word narration, the historians wrote *Records of the Great Historian: Annals of the First Emperor of Qin*.To figure out the causality of this event, the original text is given in the following:The Mars invaded the Scorpio.A meterolite fell onto the East Town, and became a stone on the earth. People carved “The First Emperor of Qin dies and the state divides” in it.The Emperor heard of it and sent an official to investigate it. Nobody admitted his guilt. So the Emperor ordered to kill all the people living nearby the stone and burned the stone.The Emperor was upset and ordered the scholar at court to write Xian Zhen Ren Shi (a poem to praise the Emperor) as the lyrics, and the musicians to make tune to it, so that it could be sung and tribute to around the country, Till the autumn, a messenger passed by Pingshu Road, Huayin Town. Someone holding a Jade Bi (piece of jade with hole in center) stopped the messenger and said, “Please bring this to Mr. Hao Chi for me.”He also said, “In this year, the ancestral Long will die.”The messenger asked him the reason, but he disappeared, only leaving the Jade Bi.The messenger took back the Bi and told the Emperors all he experienced.For quite a while, the Emperor remained silent, and then said, “Ghosts in the mountains could only foresee things in the next year.”Later, he said, “the ancestral dragon should be the ancestor of man.”He asked the jade council to inspect the Jade Bi, which was identified as the very Jade Bi the Emperor himself dropped in the river when he toured the country in the 28th year of his reign. So the First Emperor practiced divination to it, and the oracle said that it was blessing to migrate. So the he ordered to 30,000 families migrate to Yuzhong, north to the Yellow River. All members of these families are entitled as the first class officials. (Qian, 1982: 259)

The 36th year of the Emperor of Qin was also 211 BC, which is the 10th year Ying Zheng, King of Qin, united China and established the first empire in China.According to the tradition, there should have been a series of celebrations in the 10th year.But in *Annals of the First Emperor of Qin*, Sima Qianrecorded little about this year’s events – only two of them were related in this paragraph: first, the prediction carved in the meteorolite which brought about the deaths of countless families.The sentence that “So the Emperor ordered to kill all the people living nearby the stone” clearly shows the cruelty of this tyrant and his inward cowardice. Second, the mysterious message conveyed by the Jade Bi, like the oracle in the Apollo temple in the Greek myths, brought by the immortal. Eight years ago, Ying Zheng was stuck in a storm when crossing the river. He threw this Jade Bi into the river which protected him to cross the river sound and safe.Eight years later, this Jade Bi magically returned to the Emperor. He ordered the officials in the jade council and divined it personally. As a result, such historical event happened – “he ordered 30 thousand families migrate to Yuzhong, north to the Yellow River.”If we reason why the Emperor did these two big actions in this year – slaughter of the innocent and migration of many families – both of them resulted from the mythological concepts the ruler believed. The reason to kill is directly illustrated in the text – to punish the fabricator of unlucky augury. The stone on the earth came from the sky, which was deemed as the mythological media or will from holy heaven. To eliminate the spiritual threat brought by this meteorolite with unlucky augury, what Ying Zheng could do was only to make a slaughter. The reason to migrate 30 thousand families was a bit more complicated. It came with the mythological message brought by a lost-then-found Bi: “God of River left Bi to God of Hao Chi, to tell the First Emperor of Qin that his reign will end. And the River of Qin was loyal to its King. So, since its King is going to die, God of River first came to tell him.” (Qian, 1982: 259) The capability of prediction of God of River is limited, only able to foresee the second year. Faced with this mysterious message, Ying Zheng himself didn’t understand, so he divined it to ask the heaven’s will. The result showed that, if he migrated many people, he would be able to turn calamities to blessings. In Annotations to *Records of the Great Historian*, Zhang Shoujie of Tang dynasty clearly illustrated that: “he ordered to migrate 30 thousand family because the divination said that it was good to move people.” (Qian, 1982: 259) 20,000 families, with the elders and youngsters, were forced to migrate, just in order to conform to the oracle.

Faced with the fallen meteorolite and the unlucky words inscribed by his people, Emperor of Qin remained silent for a long time before he said that sentence, which could be seen as a motto for people at that time: “Ghosts in the mountains can only foresee things in the next year.” In other words, the supernatural ghosts’ capacity in foreseeing the future has a time limit. What they can see is that of the next year, and not any further. We have no idea how SimaQian knew this concrete and exact sentence when the First Emperor of Qin was encountered with such an event. Maybe, in the West Han dynasty when Sima lived, people still held to the folk belief in this sentence. In *Annals of the First Emperor of Qin*, narration about the next year (i.e. 201 BC, the 37th year of the First Emperor’s reign) told us the death of the First Emperor in July. So we can hardly be sure that: Sima is writing historical records or mythical legend. Why the “things in the next year” foreseen by the ghost can be so precise and efficacious?

Jade Bi, a round sacrificial jade with a hole in the center, dating from the 6000-year-old Hongshan Culture and 500-year-old Liangzhu Culture, then extending the more-than-2000-year-old Qin dynasty, had lasted for nearly 4000 years. Without understanding the conceptual tradition of jade myths, the later generations are subject to neglect the essential roles jades played in ancient historical narrations. Ying Zheng, the founder of the first united empire in China, couldn’t foresee his own fate or that of the empire’s regime. With ambition and fear in mind, how he relied on the priests (necromancer, wizards) is demonstrated vividly here. (Jiegang, 1978: 9-12) The four characters “Shi Huagn Bu Zhi” (meaning: the First Emperor practiced divination) by SimaQian let us see the profound historical tradition after Shang dynasty that the emperors practiced divination by themselves, which was still popular after Qin and Han united China as one. Some popular western theory, such as “Axial Period”, and “philosophical revolution” might be failed to interpret such incidents mentioned above.

4.0 Mythological Prophet, Great Wall and Jade Imperial Seal

In fact, under SimaQian’s pen, the Emperor of Qin had long been concerned about the future of this newly founded state. The fundamental motive why he spared no efforts in building the Great Wall to prevent the invasion of the northern nomadic tribes was the five-character statement uttered by Lu Sheng, i.e. “Wang Qin Zhe Hu Ye” (meaning: north tribes terminates Qin’s regime). The Great Wall was built mainly to prevent the invasion of the northern nomadic tribes. Lu Sheng belongs to a religious cast that claims that he acquire a mysterious capacity of communicating with the supernatural power, such as ghosts and gods, or even conveying the message on their behalf. In *Annals of the First Emperor of Qin*, which recorded with deliberate selection about what happened from 215 BC to 213 BC:

In the 32nd year, the Emperor of Qin went to Jie Shi. He sent Lu Sheng from Yan to visit Xian Men and Gao Shi. He ordered people to set up a monument at the gate of Jie Shi Mountain. So the city was destroyed and the dike was broken. He sent Han Zhong, Hou Gong and Shi Sheng to look for the elixir of life. The Emperor of Qin toured the north and returned to the capital from Shang County. Lu Sheng from Yan came back from the sea. He presented a book with pictures to tell the Emperor about the supernatural power of ghosts and gods, saying that “north tribes terminates Qin’s regime”. Hearing the horrible forecast, the Emperor Qing ordered the general MengTian to take 300,000 soldiers to attack the northern tribes and conquer the land south to the Yellow river.

In the 33rd year, the Emperor sent the once arrested people, the married slaves and businessmen to conquer Luliang area and set up the Guilin, Xiangjun, and Nanhai counties there to be guarded by the relegated officials. Xiongnu in the north-west were driven off. Along the Yellow river, from Yuzhong in the west to Yinshan in the east, 44 prefectures were set up, and walls were built along the river to set up fortresses. The Emperor also ordered MengTian to cross the river, conquer Gaoque, Yangshan, and Beijia, and build fortresses to drive off the northern tribes. The relegated officials were migrated to fill the newly-founded prefectures. People were forbidden to worship the Ling star which was in charge of the crops. A comet appeared in the west. In the 34th year, the unjust judges were sent to build the Great Wall and guard the Nanyue area. (Qian, 1982: 259)

Historical narrations about these two years emphasized the First Emperor’s efforts in strengthening the

frontier fortresses in the north and south. Sima Qian quoted *On Fault of Qin* by Jia Yi, “The Emperor of Qin commanded the construction of the Great Wall to ward off the invasion of Xiongnu (the nomadic tribes in the north). Therefore, neither did the nomadic tribes dare to take cows to pasture nor the warriors dare to revenge by pulling the bow.” The Emperor entrusted Lu Sheng from Yan such an important mission because of his mysterious capability of communicating with supernatural ghosts and gods. The five-character oracle uttered by Lu Sheng, i.e. “Wang Qin Zhe Hu Ye” (meaning: north tribes terminates Qin’s regime)” was the main cause of Ying Zheng’s commanding 300,000 soldiers to attack the tribes in the north and the construction of the Great Wall.

From it, we can see that, the Emperor Qin, who regarded himself as the chosen by heaven’s will and his achievements exceeding the previous emperors and sovereigns, still couldn’t be content comfortably in enjoying the peace of the newly founded state. He thought highly of any omen which embody the will of heaven and reflect the intentions of the ghosts and gods, so that he can draw on advantages and avoid potential risks. Oedipus, the king of Thebes in ancient Greek, who is of super intelligence and widow, being the hero who can solve the Sphinx’s riddle. However he still couldn’t foresee his own fate, unknowingly killing his father and marrying his own mother. The only man who could penetrate all these was none other but the King’s priest Tiresias, a blind prophet. Similarly, the regime of Qin Empire, Ying Zheng, needed the priest Lu Sheng to pass on the heaven’s will and the intentions of ghosts and gods. The mythological concepts in their beliefs became the one of the most important foundation of the ruler’s reign.

Parallel with jade Bi that embodies the heaven’s will, the jade imperial seal initiated by the Emperor Qin symbolizes the supreme national power is also based on the mythological logics of the integrity of man and nature and the unification of the state and the church. In *The Emperor and the Assassin* (Clements, 2008: 1), a picture inscribed on a stone in the Han dynasty which was unearthed in Wuliang ancestral temple, Shandong Province, the only magic weapon the Emperor Qin used to threaten the assassin was the imperial jade seal held in his left hand and lifted over his head. The jade seal is not only the holy symbolism of luminous bodies in the sky, but also the holy signs which embody the will of heaven, i.e. Eight characters inscribed in the front of seal character by Li Si, the Prime Minister of Qin: “Shou Ming Yu Tian, JiShou Yong Cha” (meaning: Heaven’s Will Grant Ruling, long Lasting and prosperous).” (Tang, 1998: 158) In spite the harsh reality that, the Qin dynasty only lasted for 15 years, which constitutes a sharp contrast and irony with the ideal “long Lasting and prosperous”, the ruler’s faith in the mysterious heaven’s will is for sure and real. The historical narrative, great wall construction and jade imperial seal, from different perspectives, reflected the same potential dominance of pre-state pre-historical jade beliefs in the coding and decoding of cultural texts’ construction. (Cassirer, 1988)

5.0 Cultural Determinism of Jade Mythological Narrative

In order to grasp the archeology of Chinese civilization core value that implies in the jade-oriented theory, it’s necessary to analyze the theoretical structure of the jade-oriented theory. And the fundamental work shall be centered on the spiritual and conceptual analysis of jade — the core of jade myths. The following analysis is the induction and explanation of the inherent logic structures underlying in the jade-oriented ideology.

Jade, as a natural mineral, enjoy certain characteristics that are superior to other minerals. Firstly, it’s formed in extremely harsh conditions, which makes it rare and special. Secondly, it has special physical properties, such as, the hardness, color and luster, and the touch. Numerous phrases and idioms in *Shijing* (Book of Odes), including “a gentleman is as gentle as jade”, “a gentleman always wear jade”, a gentleman shall cultivate his morals the way jade is sculpted — by “cutting, polishing, carving and rubbing”, and the concept of “jade virtues”: all these are related to jade’s physical properties. However, Ye Shuxian explains them as the reflection of the great tradition of “jade-as-god”. And the reason why jade is respected in the little tradition of Chinese civilization lies in the jade myths of 5000 years ago. “Jade myths” are particular to Chinese mythology, and the mythological mode of thoughts provide a multi-dimensional panoramic view of the origin of Chinese civilization.

The psychoanalysis of jade is interpreted on the mystical witchcraft and magic in the comparative religious studies. Chinese jade, together with the western “hierophany” — gold and Lapis Lazuli, enjoys a holy and sublime status in the early civilization. The earliest “jade as god” appears in the great tradition of mythological world. Ye analyzes six jade myths — Yellow Emperor plants jade, etc. — that starts from “the legendary Chinese ancestor Yellow Emperor and ends with the three wise rulers of Xia, Shang and Zhou dynasties.” (Ye, 2012: 23). The analysis, stretching 2000 years, is the transition period from great tradition to little tradition. Ye “interpreted the little tradition of characters by the knowledge of great tradition” (Ye, 2012: 13), and verified the great tradition by the little tradition.

All of the six myths listed by Ye Shuxian show jade’s sanctity and function of connecting man and god. To be specific: Yellow Emperor’s planting jade, recorded in *The Classic of Mountains and Seas*, shows that jade can increase the power of gods or ghosts and protect the gentlemen from the evil (Ye, 2012: 14); the story that a jade article made Yu the Great the ruler of the country, as recorded in *Shang Shu* and *Records of the Grand Historian*, shows jade’s honorable status in secular world (Ye, 2012: 16-17); Qi of Xia going up to heaven with the ring of jade in his right hand and semi-circular jade wearing around his waist shows that semi-circular jades and jade wearing are all holy media that connect man and god (Ye, 2012: 19); according to *The Yizhoushu*, Zhou, the last emperor of Shang dynasty, burned himself together with jade, which implies that jade can be smelted (Ye, 2012: 20); Jiang Ziya got semi-circular jade and the Duke of Zhou talked to the ancestors with jade sacrificial vessel, which shows that jade conveys mythical information (Ye, 2012: 21); King Mu of Zhou visited the Yellow Emperor’s Palace and got jade bough and jade leaf, which hints that the Yellow Emperor’s Palace may be the palace where the worship of god with jades is performed (Ye, 2012: 22). In the previous interpretation of mythological stories, Ye re-interpreted both the great and little tradition under the guide of the “jade-as-god” concept and presented the multi-dimensions of jade myths.

With the aid of two scholars (Charles de Brosses and F. M. Muller) of comparative studies of religion, Ye Shuxian confirms the mythological association between “jade” and “god”, points out that the great tradition of regarding jade as god has potentially dominated the little tradition of “jade is virtue”, and, more importantly, he suggests the method of searching for the driving force of regarding “jade as god”, that is the “supernatural power” in myths (Ye, 2012: 25). The eternity concept in jade-as-god theory is the Chinese version of the pursuit for eternal life in mythical mode of thoughts. The association of water as the source and the color similarity with the sky provides mythical logics for jade’s holiness. Holy narratives, Nüwa (a Chinese goddess) repairing the heaven with “five-colored stones” jade being the essence from “the combination of heaven and earth”, intensifies jade’s holiness by integration of both the water as the source and the color similarity. As the driving force of Chinese civilization, jade-as-god concept integrates the material and spiritual elements of Civilization origin. The pursuit of jade mineral and the privilege of “worshiping god with jade” bred the bud of early Chinese civilization. Jade, which integrates the material resources and spiritual ideology, becomes a holy gold apple that attracts various power groups, invoking the birth of Chinese civilization.

6.0 Conclusions

With an intention to figure out the underlying motives of human behaviors, the paper focuses on the deterministic role of mythological concepts in shaping the inward ideology and exterior behavior in the integrated view of ideological history and cultural history. Historical incidents do not come out of vacuum and exist in an isolated realm. To figure out the causality of historical incidents, it might be possible to reproduce the mental concepts dominating the sublime rulers. Historical narrative is absolutely not the exactly account of authentic history, but it takes efforts to penetrate through the literary narration to perceive the authentic history or grasp the leading threats to authentic history. By elucidating the connection between mythical concepts narration and historical narration, mythological determinism successfully gets rid of the narrow discipline limitation and is regarded as the common source and the integrated origin of the modern principles, like literature, history and philosophy. The historical and rational elements in mythshed light on the dialectics of mythical narratives. The

discovering of inter relation between mythology and history, the revealing of the dialectics within mythical narration offer methodological support for the deep exploration of the origins of Chinese civilization.

Berger holds that, “The sociology of knowledge must not only deal with the empirical knowledge, but also the various processes during which all these knowledge was constructed into the reality”. (Berger, 2009: 3). From this, we could see that the determining function of mythology in the reality-construction and life-reformation, as the sign symbols, which accomplished essential spiritual transformation by way of holy symbols. The ideology of jade mythology includes concepts and notions that regarding jade as god, as the symbol of celestial bodies, as the symbol of immortality etc., sorcery rites and practices like worshipping gods or the ancestors with jades, legends and stories which value jades, ideal morals (the virtues of jade) and teaching or learning method (cutting, grinding, carving and polishing) extended from jades, the social customs of wearing jades (a gentleman must wear jade), linguistic customs formed from the supreme values of jade, naming people with jade or jade articles (Jade Girl, Jade Lake), various idioms and proverbs with jade myths as the core values etc. In the long term interaction of multi cultures, these jade-related ideology predominated in the Central Plains, became the identity shared by many kingdoms and tribes surrounding the Central Plains. Jade contributes to the construction of the fundamental element of Chinese cultural identity, and functions as the sign of bonding identity several thousand years prior to the First Emperor of Qin’s unifying China. It can be identified and proven by the prosperity of jade production of Dawenkou Culture in the east, Qijia Culture in the west, Hongshan Culture in the north, Lingjiatan Culture in the south, and Liangzhe Culture, Shijiahe Culture, and the commonality of jade articles, such as Huang (semi-circular jades), Bi (round flat pieces of jade with a hole in its center, which was used for ceremonial purposes in ancient China), Qiong (fine jades) etc.

Jade, as the gene of Chinese culture, plays an integrated function in the material and spiritual resource possession and distribution. The critical link between mythology and cultural origin lies in the special cultural factors that mold the ideology. When we explore into the genes of a culture, we can grasp the core values of a special society during the interaction between material and concept, thus exploring the identity factors that unified multi-elements. Jade mythology can be the key to open how Chinese civilization came into being in its special fashion. At the turning point to the civilization, jade articles function as the bonding that integrates the Central Plains and the surrounding areas. Such bonding was both material (from the mining, exploitation, transportation, exchange to the processing and distribution of jade minerals), and spiritual (the cross-region spreading and unification of jade’s mythological concept). The long-term interaction of material and spiritual demand finally brought to the eve of Chinese civilization (the era before the Bronze Age) its core values: jade as holy, jade as treasure, and jade ware as the sign to communicate man and heaven (man and god). The cultural determinism of jade reveals the Chinese cultural continuity in the panoramic manner. From the historical background of “worshiping the heaven with jade” to the gold medals inserted with jade in the Beijing Olympics, from the “virtue of jade” emphasized by Confucian morals to the “fortune of jade” acquired by jade business and trade, from being buried minerals in the primitive age to the symbol of sublimity in the civilization age, from its natural reserved, modest and mild properties to humans’ quarreling and fighting for it, jade has gone through the building of Chinese civilization with various gestures, which provides us a panoramic perspective to know about the integrity and continuity of Chinese civilization.

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