

Oracle Bone Inscriptions in Anyang City, China: Construction of Self-Identity and Utilizing Values Inherited from the Past

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Abstract

This research, focusing on the 'Oracle Bone Script' of Anyang City, China, holds significant academic value. It delves into the discovery of oracle bones and their use for divination and sacrifice during the Shang Dynasty, shedding light on the social, political, economic, and cultural aspects of the time, as well as local wisdom. The study investigates the connection between oracle bones and the lives and society of the local people in Anyang, including the construction of identity and the utilization of oracle bones' value. The main findings of the study, titled 'Oracle Bone Script Culture of Anyang, China,' highlight the inseparable link between 'self-identity construction' and 'value utilization of inheritance.' These two elements interact to shape a distinctive oracle bone culture that mirrors the self-identity of the people of Anyang. The research's academic significance lies in its exploration of ancient cultural identity and its provision of crucial educational and informational value for the cultural development policies of various countries.

Keywords: Oracle Culture, Self-identity, Value Utilization, Nation-state, Localism and Globalization.

Oracle bone inscriptions appeared in the late Shang Dynasty and have more than 3,000 years of history. Oracle bone inscriptions are ancient Chinese characters and pictographic characters (Jiao et al., 2023). They are engraved on tortoise shells and animal bones, called "tortoise shells and animal bone inscriptions." Oracle bone inscriptions were used for divination and sacrifice in the Shang Dynasty, reflecting the social culture, politics, economy, and local

wisdom of the Shang Dynasty. Oracle bone inscriptions are the "material carrier" of written records, according to Jones's "Material Culture (Golovinskiy & Funkhouser, 2008)." As the place where oracle bone inscriptions were discovered, the relationship between the local people of Anyang and oracle bone inscriptions embodies the identity shaping of "oracle bone culture," which reflects the self-identity of oracle bone inscriptions (Gao et al., 2022). In the

academic dimension, the actors of "oracle bone culture" are the cultural roles of "products in the process of self-identity shaping (Zeng et al., 2018)." Through establishing social relations between local, national, and globalization, the division of labor, and cooperation between the nation-state and the international community, oracle bone inscriptions have been elevated from regional to world culture, showing the world "Anyang's oracle bone culture (Ren et al., 2017)." At the same time, with the spread of Anyang's "oracle bone culture," people outside the Anyang community regard Anyang people as "inheritors of oracle bone culture."

The phenomenon of "Oracle Bone Culture in Anyang, China," includes essential academic viewpoints, as mentioned earlier. However, the overall study of Oracle Bone Culture in Anyang focuses on collecting primary data about the phenomenon. "Oracle Bone Culture in Anyang, Henan, China: Modernity, Self-Identity and Value Utilization of Heritage" is a study that provides essential information to describe and analyze academic issues such as self-identity and value utilization. In addition, this study can serve as a critical knowledge base for developing Chinese communities in the context of the current Chinese government and global heritage protection and value utilization (Zhou & De la Torre, 2016).

Research Methodology

This is an essential study using qualitative research methods. The collected data includes field survey data from oracle bone museums and documentary data. The researcher's field data was collected through observation, participant observation, general interview, critical informant interview, and focus group interview: documentary data and generally related documents, paper documents, and Internet systems. Data synthesis is based on the research framework, the value utilization information from the construction of oracle bone self-identity to inheritance. In addition, the relationship

between oracle bone inscriptions and the social life of Anyang locals. The research results are presented in a descriptive analysis under two main concepts: Modernity and Self-identity (Wang & Zhi, 2013).

Research Results

Part 1: Historical and Cultural Development before Oracle Bone Inscriptions became National Heritage and World Heritage

1.1 Oracle Bone Inscriptions and their Discovery

Oracle-Bone Script is one of the earliest Chinese characters. It is a script carved on tortoise shells or animal bones by the royal family in the middle and late Shang Dynasty for divination and record. It has a history of more than 3,000 years. Oracle-Bone Script was unearthed in the Xiaotun Village area of Anyang City. The Xiaotun Village area was the capital of the Shang King Pan Geng to Emperor Xin in the late Shang Dynasty, known as "Yin" in history. After the Shang Dynasty was destroyed, this place became a ruin, so later generations called it Yin Ruins, and thus Oracle-Bone Script is also called "Yin Ruins Script." Yin Ruins is the first capital site in Chinese history that can be documented and confirmed by archaeology and the Oracle-Bone Script.

Therefore, the discovery of the Oracle-Bone Script is significant for understanding China's politics, economy, culture, religion, and other aspects of the Shang Dynasty. It reflects the critical academic value of Oracle-Bone Script.



Figure 1 : "Oracle Bone Inscriptions" Oracle

bone inscriptions, also known as "deeds," "oracle bone inscriptions," "Yinxu characters," or "tortoise shell and animal bone inscriptions," are the earliest mature writing system discovered in China so far. They are the source of Chinese characters and the source of Chinese characters—the root of excellent traditional culture. The late Shang Dynasty is represented by the Yin Ruins in Anyang.

Source: Retouched and photographed by the author, October 15, 2021.

2) The Divination and Sacrificial Functions of Oracle Bone Inscriptions in the Shang Dynasty

In the Shang Dynasty, oracle bone inscriptions were mainly used to record information on sacrifices, divination, and commerce (Wang et al., 2013;). A position was called a diviner when oracle bone inscriptions were used for divination. The diviner would burn and drill a nest groove with a redbud wood column so that a crack in the shape of the word "卜" would appear on the front of the bone. The crack was called a "divination sign," used to infer a matter's fortune. Understanding the oracle inscriptions on oracle bones has become the first-hand material for studying the history of the Shang Dynasty. From the above physical space, local knowledge of Anyang, China has been accumulated, and the history of textual oracle bone inscriptions and the function and

significance of oracle bone inscriptions in the Shang Dynasty society has been understood and studied.

3) The Time, Place, People, and Events when Oracle Bone Inscriptions were Discovered

Oracle bone inscriptions were discovered in the late 19th century, when farmers in Xiaotun Village, northwest of Anyang, Henan Province, sold the tortoise shells and animal bones they occasionally found as Chinese medicinal materials. Some scholars identified ancient characters in them and began to search for them vigorously. Soon, paleographers determined that the characters on them were from the Shang Dynasty and then conducted a judgment and analysis of the area, concluding that Xiaotun Village was the ruins of the Shang Dynasty capital mentioned in ancient books. In the autumn of the 25th year of the reign of Emperor Guangxu of the Qing Dynasty (1899 AD), Wang Yirong (1845-1900), a Beijing official, contracted malaria. He sent someone to buy Chinese medicine called dragon bones, and some symbols were engraved on them. After research, it was found that they were oracle bone inscriptions, so Wang Yirong was called the father of oracle bone (Wang et al., 1998; Xiao, 1984).

1.2 A Preliminary Study on the Value of Oracle Bone Inscriptions in the Late Qing Dynasty and Modern China

1) Research on the Protection of Oracle Bone Inscriptions by Scholars in the late Qing Dynasty

From the discovery to identifying and protecting oracle bone inscriptions, it has been a long historical process for me to identify myself. Here are some representative scholars of oracle bone inscriptions:

a. Oracle Bone Inscriptions and the Father of Oracle Bone Inscriptions: In the 25th year of Emperor Guangxu's reign in the Qing Dynasty (1899 AD), Wang Yirong (1845-1900), the chief academic officer of the Imperial Academy, the highest institution of learning in the Qing Dynasty, contracted malaria. When picking up medicine, he found many similar patterns on the

medicinal material called dragon bones. He drew these mysterious patterns and confirmed that they were oracle bone scripts, and they were relatively complete and dated from the Shang Dynasty. Later, people honored the first person to discover the oracle bone script as the "Father of Oracle Bone Script."



Figure 2 : "Father of Oracle Bone Inscriptions"
Later generations called Wang Yirong, the father of Oracle Bone Inscriptions.

Source: <https://www.thepaper.cn/> [Accessed on October 27, 2023]

b. The Four Oracle Bones Masters: The Four Oracle Bones Masters refer to four famous scholars who studied oracle bones in modern China: Luo Zhenyu (alias Xuetang), Wang Guowei (alias Guantang), Guo Moruo (alias Tang), and Dong Zuobin (alias Dutang). When evaluating early oracle bone scholars, famous scholars wrote the famous sentence "The Four Oracle Bones Masters, Guo, Dong, Luo, and Wang." Tang Lan once commented on their Yinxi research: "Xuetang is a pioneer in oracle bone research, Guantang is an archaeological and historical researcher, Yantang is a researcher who distinguishes eras, and Dingtang is a researcher who studies oracle bone divination characters. The four are top figures in four research fields."

c. The Ten Archaeological Brothers: The "Ten Archaeological Brothers" are the ten team members, except for the leader, Liang Siyong, during the official excavation of Yinxi. These ten people have similar interests and close relationships. They are ranked according to age

and seniority during the excavation of Yinxi. From 1928 to 1937, during the archaeological excavation of Yinxi in Anyang, "Li Ji served as an escort officer to protect ancient cultural relics from being destroyed in the war. He was responsible for transportation and loading and unloading throughout the process. The research on oracle bone inscriptions by modern Chinese oracle bone scholars and the discovery, recognition, protection, and research of oracle bone scholars is the process of self-identifying oracle bone inscriptions. From the past to the present, China has gradually become more robust, and oracle bone inscriptions have received more and more attention. The function of oracle bone inscriptions' self-identity has also changed (Xu et al., 2004) .

2) A study on the Theft by Foreign Scholars in the late Qing Dynasty

Due to the corruption and incompetence of the Qing government at that time, oracle bones were lost during this period, and invaders plundered many of them directly and indirectly. While domestic scholars were devoted to searching and studying oracle bones, missionaries and scholars from Europe, America, and Japan became very interested in this precious historical material, followed by theft and plunder. Samuel Couling, a British Baptist missionary to Qingzhou, said in his book *Oracle Bones Found in Henan*, published in 1914: "After buying the first batch of oracle bones, more and more came from Henan, and we tried to buy them. The market price kept rising, and we couldn't afford them. The first batch of joint collections, which we thought would be the last we could get, was given to the Kansas Museum in Pittsburgh (USA). Later, we got another batch and sold it at the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh. The best third batch, which included some of the best specimens and a beautifully carved deer antler, was first collected by us and then belonged to my research. In 1911, it was sold to the British Museum. Ming Yishi, a University of Toronto graduate, discovered the location of Yinxi in

China in 1910. He brought over 5,000 oracle bones to Canada, now housed in the Royal Ontario Museum. Dr. Xu Jinxiong later selected 3,175 pieces for publication. This highlights the importance of oracle bone inscriptions in academia. In modern China, attitudes towards oracle bones have shifted from selling them as dragon bones to valuing and preserving them. This marks a crucial step in the protection and appreciation of oracle bone inscriptions (Hu, 2020).

Part 2: The Process of Oracle Bone Inscriptions Becoming a National and World-Class Heritage

The leadership of the national and ethnic systems and local people jointly promote local heritage culture to become a global heritage culture. The historical period of China's late Qing Dynasty and modern society, the national process and the national heritage construction process; telling the cultural heritage construction process of the successful selection of the Yinxu, the site of the discovery of oracle bones, into the World Cultural Heritage and the successful selection of oracle bones into the World Memory List through the joint efforts of the state and the localities, provides a solid foundation for the third part of self-identity construction to the use of cultural value.

2.1 The Historical Construction Process Before Oracle Bone Inscriptions Became a National Heritage

Modern history has transformed the identity of oracle bones into value. China's modern history and the history of oracle bones have been a history of wandering. Western invaders stole and plundered Oracle bones, and when China became strong, oracle bones were protected and used.

1) Before 1949: Western Economic and Cultural Penetration Promoted the Construction of Self-Identity

The corruption and incompetence of the Qing government in modern China led to the plunder of China by Western invaders, including countless Chinese treasures, of which oracle

bone inscriptions were one. For example, Western missionaries came to Anyang, Henan, and China, which led to the loss of many oracle bone inscriptions, including those from Britain, Canada, Japan, and the United States. British Baptist missionaries to Qingzhou, Ku Shouling, and Canadian sinologist Dr. Ming Yishi took away many oracle bone inscriptions, resulting in the loss of Chinese oracle bone culture. With the introduction of revolutionary ideas on May 4, 1919, China entered the era of new democracy. China became increasingly powerful and gradually began building a national identity.

2) Around 1949-1990: The Nation-State Strongly Supported the Excavation of Oracle Bone Inscriptions and Formed a Cultural Identity

As the country gradually rose, three excavations occurred in Yinxu from 1936 to 1991. 1949 the People's Republic of China was founded, and China was recovering politically, economically, and culturally. Deng Xiaoping promoted reform and opening. Around the reform and opening in 1978, the support of representatives of the national leadership for China's cultural industry was also the most powerful driving force and a representative of national identity.

In 1972, UNESCO adopted the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, which aims to protect cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value to all humanity. China officially joined the convention in 1985. In 1987, six Chinese heritage projects, including the Great Wall, the Forbidden City in Beijing, and Mount Tai, were included in the World Heritage List. This laid the foundation for Yinxu to apply for World Cultural Heritage.

3) 1990 to Present: World Cultural Heritage and Chinese Character Museum are a Good Start for Ethnic Policy

Since the reform and opening in 1978, China has achieved significant progress in politics, economy, and culture. The Yinxu site successfully applied for world cultural heritage status with the support of Premier Li Keqiang.

The Chinese Writing Museum was established to support this application. At the 30th session of the World Heritage Committee in 2006, Anyang Yinxu was designated as a world cultural heritage site. Research groups have explored the connection between China's modern history and oracle bone inscriptions, highlighting the promotion of national and cultural identity. Premier Li Keqiang's support for cultural heritage sites, including the Yin Ruins in Anyang City, has further strengthened cultural identity.



Figure 3: The left picture shows the "World Cultural Heritage Yinxu," the place where oracle bone inscriptions were discovered, and the heritage of the Shang Dynasty capital; the right picture shows the Chinese Character Museum, established during the application of Yinxu for World Cultural Heritage, and an essential venue for promoting the cultural value of oracle bone inscriptions

Source: Author Jiao Pu, photographed on July 15, 2021; Xinhua News Agency [accessed on October 27, 2023]

2.2 Joint Efforts of the State and local Governments: The Successful Inclusion of Yinxu, the Site of Oracle Bone Inscriptions, in the World Cultural Heritage and the Value Construction process of the Chinese Character Museum

1) The Reason why Yinxu Applied for World Cultural Heritage

Yinxu in Anyang is the site of the discovery of oracle bones and the ruins of the capital of the Shang Dynasty. In August 1999, scholars invited to attend the international academic seminar commemorating the 100th anniversary of the discovery of oracle bones issued a strong appeal:

"Yinxu occupies a critical position in the history of the development of Chinese civilization and has become a treasure of the entire human society and the commonwealth of the people of the world. Previously, the State Administration of Cultural Heritage had included Yinxu and Longmen in the second batch of Henan Province's preliminary list for applying for World Cultural Heritage.

2) The Difficult Process of Yinxu Applying for World Cultural Heritage

In April 2001, the Anyang government initiated the application of Yinxu for the World Cultural Heritage List. In May, the Henan Provincial People's Government established the Leading Group for Applying Yinxu for the World Cultural Heritage List, with Governor Li Keqiang as the honorary group leader.

In September 2001, Henan Province reviewed and approved the "Regulations on the Protection and Management of Yinxu in Anyang, Henan Province." On the same day, Anyang City held a mobilization meeting for the application of Yinxu for the World Cultural Heritage List, and citizens who supported it signed on the banner, "It is our common wish to apply for Yinxu for the World Cultural Heritage List."

At the 26th World Heritage Conference held in Budapest in 2002, it was decided that a country could only apply for one project per year, and the original plan to include Yinxu in the World Cultural Heritage List in 2003 was blocked. Due to the fierce competition for "application for heritage" in China, the time for Yinxu to join the list was postponed to 2008. (Li Genlin. 2006; Zhang Xilei Song Zhenke. 2006) .

Yinxu faced setbacks during its five-year World Heritage application process, including delays due to changes in the number of applications. In 2006, UNESCO requested additional information for the Yinxu application, leading to challenges in compiling the required text. The limited number of applications also caused postponements in the review process. Despite these obstacles, positive public support

was evident. In 2002, the Anyang Municipal Government initiated a donation campaign to fund Yinxu's application, with leaders and citizens contributing enthusiastically. This effort lasted over a month and helped drive environmental improvements for the World Cultural Heritage application.

3) The Result of the Unity of the People is the Success of Yinxu's Application for World Cultural Heritage

On July 13, Beijing time, the 30th UNESCO World Heritage Committee meeting held in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, reported that the application for the Yin Ruins in Anyang, Henan Province, was successful and was included in the World Heritage List as a world cultural heritage! The Yin Ruins in Anyang became China's 33rd World Heritage Site. The representatives of the 21 conference member states unanimously approved it, congratulating Yin Ruins, Henan, and China (Zhang & He, 2018).

4) The Extension of Yinxu's Value to World Cultural Heritage Includes the Establishment of the Chinese Character Museum

The Chinese Character Museum was established in April 2001 to support the Yinxu application for World Cultural Heritage. The Henan and Anyang governments proposed the museum with strong government support. Li Keqiang endorsed the museum's construction during an investigation in Anyang, and it was officially opened on November 16, 2009. Comrade Jiang Zemin wrote the museum's name at the opening ceremony. The museum's completion aided in the successful application of Anyang Yinxu for World Cultural Heritage status and serves as an important venue for promoting the value of oracle bone inscriptions (Gillespie, 1997).

2.3 Joint Efforts of the State and Local Governments: Oracle Bone Inscriptions were Successfully Selected for the Memory of the World Register

The "Battle" process of Successfully being Selected into the Memory of the World Register

In August 2006, experts and scholars at a symposium in Anyang, Henan, called for the application of oracle bone inscriptions for World Cultural Heritage status. In July 2013, I was tasked with drafting application texts in Chinese and English for the "Asia/Pacific Memory Of The World Register" and the "International Memory of the World Register." With assistance from Song Zhenhao and Dr. Zhi Xiaona, the application was completed in November 2013 and officially submitted in 2016. After a series of reviews, oracle bone inscriptions were successfully selected for the Memory of the World Register in October 2017. This recognition, along with the Yin Ruins being designated as World Cultural Heritage, highlights the cultural significance of Anyang and the efforts of its people in preserving oracle bone culture. The Chinese Character Museum, established in cooperation with the Yin Ruins, will play a crucial role in promoting the cultural value of oracle bone inscriptions. This achievement serves as a model for studying and preserving cultural heritage globally and supports China's cultural heritage development policies (Buck et al., 1991).

Part 3: The Construction and Display of the process from Self-Identification to Cultural Value Utilization in the Context of Oracle Bone Inscriptions becoming a World-Class Heritage

In modern Chinese society, attention and support for oracle bone inscriptions are received locally, nationally, and globally. National leadership and local political measures support the construction of self-identity, which presents value at the present tense's political, economic, and cultural levels. Oracle bone museums serve as a case study of the process from self-identity construction to cultural value utilization (Li, 1981).

3.1 Self-Construction and Value Protection at the Local and National Levels

1) Political Presentation

a. Attention from national leaders: Premier Li Keqiang supports the successful application of Yinxu as a world cultural heritage. General

Secretary Xi Jinping came to Yinxu and proposed that I have longed for Yinxu. This time, I came to learn and understand Chinese civilization more deeply, apply the past to the present, and provide a reference for better building the modern society of the Chinese nation. Comrade Jiang Zemin wrote the museum's name when the Chinese Character Museum opened.

b. Support from local governments: In January 2023, Anyang issued the "Implementation Opinions on Building the "Chinese Character Capital" and Building an International Tourism Destination" and further promoted the research and use of Chinese characters represented by oracle bone inscriptions and made every effort to create the "Chinese Character Capital" city theme cultural brand and build Anyang into an international tourism destination city with distinctive cultural characteristics.

2) Economic Presentation

a. Expert support: Professor Chen Nan of Tsinghua University has extensively researched oracle bone inscriptions. He has researched the creation and cultural products of oracle bone inscriptions. He has written books such as "Rhythm Design. Chinese Character Art Design Perspective" and "Interpretation of the 92 Methods of Spacing Structure Design". Many of Professor Chen Nan's oracle bone inscription cultural products are displayed in the Chinese Character Museum. On January 17, 2023, the article "Feeling Chinese Character Culture in Font Design" was published in the People's Daily, and he also wrote the book "History of Chinese Character Design".

b. Tourism service development: Anyang Bus, from April to June 2023, Anyang Bus will open a particular tourist line to facilitate tourists' travel—utilization of public facilities: oracle bone script streetlamps on several streets in Anyang. Oracle bone bookstore, located in Anyang Yinxu Archaeological Cultural Tourism Town, the completion and commissioning of the 105th Oracle bone bookstore in our city marks

the over-completion of the three-year livelihood project of 100 oracle bone bookstores in the city.

c. Tourism scenic spot development: In November 2022, Yinxu Archaeological Cultural Tourism Town was officially opened to the public, attracting many citizens to take photos and check in. As a supporting service project of Yinxu National Archaeological Site Park,

d. Cultural and creative industry development: Cultural Industry Department of China Character Museum, it is worth noting that there is a cultural and innovative ice cream series that has recently emerged in China Fangzun, a piece of oracle bone script, and the oracle bone script "wen" character.

3) Cultural Presentation

a. Educational practice:

Completion of Oracle Primary School: On April 20, 2023, the third primary school in Anyang High-tech Zone was officially renamed "Anyang Oracle Primary School" and held a plaque unveiling ceremony—the first primary school named after Oracle was established. Let the excellent traditional Chinese culture represented by Oracle take root in the hearts of young students. Anyang Normal University: Anyang Normal University has an Oracle Revitalization and Utilization Center Laboratory specializing in Oracle Cultural Creative Design Competition. Many excellent works have appeared in digital media, game fields, poster design, and micro-expression design. There is also the Oracle gymnastics that Anyang has recently promoted. Oracle Lecture Hall regularly has experts explaining, and there is also a volunteer home. Men, women, young and old, can volunteer to become guides explaining to tourists. The Oracle street lights on the streets of public landscape cities also serve as propaganda (Li, 2002).

b. Media communication:

Some domestic entertainment programs. CCTV's entertainment programs "Classic China" and "National Treasure" visited the world's cultural heritage Yinxu to film stories about the Shang Dynasty, oracle bones, etc. The cultural

promotion has prompted more and more people to pay attention to Yinxu and promote economic development (Yuan et al., 2007).

3.2 From Self-Construction to Value Presentation at the International Level

1) Oracle bone calligraphy exhibition held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York: From October 18 to 19, 2019, an international academic seminar commemorating the 120th anniversary of the discovery of oracle bone inscriptions was held in Anyang. Xinhua News Agency, United Nations, April 25 (Reprinted: Reporter Ma Jianguo Lin Yuan) This year marks the 120th anniversary of the discovery of oracle bone inscriptions, known as the ancestor of Chinese characters. An oracle bone calligraphy art exhibition opened at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on the 24th, attracting diplomats from many countries stationed at the United Nations and overseas Chinese to watch.

2) On October 11, 2021, on the big screen in Times Square, New York, the oracle bone inheritor Han Xiao appeared to explain the oracle bone script, and a Chinese girl was writing the oracle bone script "China," showing Chinese culture to the world.

3) The opening ceremony and award ceremony of the 2023 China International Chinese Character Cultural Creative Design Competition Award-winning Works Exhibition were held in the Xuanwen Pavilion Hall of the Chinese Character Museum. The competition received submissions from all over the country, including the United States and Australia, covering various fields such as books, clothing, and font design.

3.3 From the Self-Construction of Oracle Bone Inscription Museums to Value Utilization

1) The Establishment of the Yinxu World Cultural Heritage and the Chinese Character Museum

The Process of the Yinxu World Heritage Application: Li Keqiang personally served as the honorary leader of the leading group to apply Yinxu for World Cultural Heritage in Henan Province. He has been in the field many times to

promote the application of Yinxu for World Cultural Heritage and the archaeological work of the whole province. In 2006, Yinxu successfully applied for World Cultural Heritage.

In his congratulatory letter to the 120th anniversary of the discovery and study of oracle bones, Xi Jinping wrote, "The great discovery of oracle bones in Yinxu has epoch-making significance in the history of the development of Chinese civilization and even human civilization. On October 28, 2022, General Secretary Xi Jinping visited the Yinxu site in Anyang City. Speaking of "Yinxu, I have longed for it. Xi Jinping mentioned Anyang's "Yinxu Oracle Bone Inscriptions" in his 2024 New Year's message."

The Establishment of the Chinese Character Museum: In April 2001, to support the application of Yinxu for World Cultural Heritage, the Anyang government proposed to the Henan Provincial Government to build a museum with characters as the theme, and the government strongly supported the proposal. When Li Keqiang visited Anyang, he specifically requested that the construction of the Character Museum be approved as soon as possible and fully supported as a critical project of Henan Province. The museum opened in October 2009, and Jiang Zemin also wrote the name of the Chinese Character Museum.

2) The Cultural Interactive Display of the Yinxu Museum

A. Yinxu Museum Exhibition Hall

F Yinxu Museum is an important place to learn about the history of the Shang Dynasty and oracle bone inscriptions. It has the Dayi Shang Hall, Bronze Hall, Jade Hall, and Writing Hall, where you can carefully appreciate the 3,000-year history (Zhang & Luo, 1980).

B. Yinxu Museum Cultural Communication

Yinxu has held many public lectures that are conducive to the interaction and communication of oracle bone lovers.

For example, On June 11, 2023, a researcher from the Institute of Archaeology of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences conducted an

identity analysis of the professional groups in Yinxu through cultural relics and the audience at the "Exploring the Origin of Dayi Shang Public Lecture" at the Yinxu Museum, which was well received by the audience.

3) The Unique Cultural Interactive Communication form of the Chinese Character Museum

A. Academic Research Value

The Oracle Bone Inscription "Character Show" Performance of the Chinese Character Museum

The Chinese Character Museum's "Character Show" program was performed on the "Walking in Henan" program in Zhengzhou, Henan Province, on September 3, 2022. This program is a creative oracle bone script called "Character Show," which is organized and choreographed by the staff of the Chinese Character Museum. They were wearing golden performance costumes, using different parts and movements of body movements, and two or three people from different oracle bone script fonts. The left side of the picture screen is the calligraphy oracle bone script, and the right side is modern text. In front of the screen is the body performance of the performer using body language to show the oracle bone script shape (Liu et al., 2007).

The staff of the Chinese Character Museum used body movements to imitate. The front and back arm movements of the three oracle bone scripts formed the beautiful "美" character, the two people faced the "斗" character with their arms crossed, and the three people lined up in a row to form the "众" character of the big "众."



Figure 4: The Chinese Character Museum's "Character Show" uses different body parts and movements to display the oracle bone script. Source: the author's classmate Liu Wei provided the picture on October 17, 2022

B. Social Education Window Inheritance

a. Chinese Character Museum Oracle Bone Literature School

The Oracle Bone School is a public welfare social education activity base for the Chinese Character Museum to inherit the Chinese character culture. Its primary function is to give full play to the role of the second classroom for primary and secondary school students, comprehensively utilize the museum's Chinese character education resources, combine Chinese traditional festivals and Chinese character cultural background, and continue to carry out rich and colorful Chinese character education activities, to provide convenient learning space and educational services for young students to learn Chinese characters well, use Chinese characters well, fall in love with Chinese characters, and spread Chinese characters.



Figure 5: The Oracle Bone School is a public welfare social education activity base for the Chinese Character Museum to inherit the

Chinese character culture. This shows that the Chinese Character Museum focuses on cultivating the next generation of successors of character culture exchange.

Source: Multimedia Technology Chinese Character Museum Official Website [Accessed on March 24, 2023]

b. Volunteer Home

The Chinese Character Museum's volunteer service started on the eve of its opening. From 2009 to date, nine batches of volunteers have been recruited, more than 600 volunteers have passed the assessment, and there are currently 116 registered volunteers. The volunteers are talented, including volunteers with special skills such as photography, vocal music, instrumental music, dance, and calligraphy, in addition to explanation volunteers. A particular calligraphy volunteer service station provides the audience with accessible weekly explanations and guidance on calligraphy knowledge and techniques.



Figure 6: The group photo of the volunteers shows that the Chinese Character Museum attaches great importance to the cultural exchange of characters. The people of Anyang have become the cultural inheritors of Chinese characters. The Chinese Character Museum conveys China's long cultural history through this medium.

Source: Multimedia Technology Chinese Character Museum Official Website [Accessed on March 4, 2023]

In this study, the process of oracle bone inscriptions' self-identification and cultural value utilization is the result of local culture rising to

global culture, the joint efforts of the nation-state, and the international division of labor. It is the social relationship established by the local, national, and global that has pushed oracle bone culture onto the world stage. The study emphasizes the significance of oracle bone culture in the Anyang community, showcasing its importance in social and cultural life. Oracle bone inscriptions, the oldest Chinese characters, play a crucial role in the inheritance and value utilization of the Anyang community, reflecting diverse cultural values in politics, economy, and culture. The research underscores the importance of self-identity construction and heritage value utilization, particularly in the context of modernization and globalization. The material culture, such as oracle bone inscriptions, bridges the past and present, meeting the cultural needs of contemporary society. Anyang's cultural advantages are leveraged to create diverse cultural consumption forms, promoting cultural exchange and enhancing the image of oracle bone inscriptions. The verification of research results through national policies and support from various organizations confirms the unique world heritage status of oracle bone inscriptions in Anyang. This cultural heritage plays a vital role in constructing self-identity and promoting cultural exchange both domestically and internationally. The study sheds light on the challenges and opportunities for cultural inheritance and value utilization in modern Chinese society, showcasing the diverse forms of oracle bone value utilization in the present context.

The implications of the study's findings for contemporary society and cultural preservation efforts are significant. Understanding the construction of self-identity and the utilization of values inherited from the past in the context of Oracle Bone Inscriptions in Anyang City, China, can provide valuable insights for contemporary cultural preservation efforts. It can help in forming policies and strategies for the preservation and promotion of similar cultural heritage around the world.

Comparative analyses with similar cultural phenomena from other regions would indeed provide a broader perspective on the significance of the study's findings. By comparing the Oracle Bone Inscriptions with other cultural phenomena, researchers can draw parallels, contrasts, and valuable lessons that can contribute to a deeper understanding of the global significance of ancient cultural practices and their impact on societies.

A deeper exploration of the role of technology and modern developments in the preservation and dissemination of oracle bone culture could enrich the discussion. Understanding how modern technology and developments can be utilized in the preservation, dissemination, and promotion of oracle bone culture is crucial for ensuring its continued relevance and accessibility to contemporary audiences. This exploration can shed light on innovative approaches to preserve and share ancient cultural heritage in the digital age.

Conclusion

The phenomenon of "Oracle Bone Script Culture" in Anyang, China, reflects social and

academic issues related to self-identity and value utilization in the globalized oracle bone script culture. Oracle bone script, with a history of over 3,000 years, is an ancient Chinese pictographic character engraved on tortoise shells and animal bones. The local knowledge and wisdom associated with the discovery and use of these characters in Anyang contribute to the establishment of social relations at regional, national, and global levels, promoting cultural values on the world stage. The transition from local to global culture is facilitated by the nation-state system and international cooperation, leading to the promotion of cultural values. Anyang, as the birthplace of oracle bone inscriptions, has played a crucial role in promoting this cultural heritage globally. The people of Anyang demonstrate themselves as the inheritors and value promoters of oracle bone inscription culture, showcasing diverse forms of value utilization. This process highlights the importance of self-identity construction and cultural inheritance in modernity.

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