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The China Numismatic Museum was established in 1992. It covers about one thousand five hundred square meters, and is part of the People's Bank of China. The main exhibition of the Museum is called "Chinese Currency", which means the main content of the exhibition is the history of Chinese Currency. In China, exhibitions about the history of currency were often organized in various places. They all give a survey about the Chinese currency in a chronological way. This method enables the public to discover the historical lineage. However, most coins of various Chinese dynasties were round with a square hole. The only difference is the Chinese characters. Although most of the specialists would like such an exhibition in order to admire some rare coins, we think this option is less appropriate for the average visitor. So, we planned a new design for our museum. The principle we had in mind was that both academic specialists and the public should enjoy the museum. There is a Chinese saying for this: "Enjoy both refiner and vulgar".

This thinking was embodied in two aspects: substance and form.

The first is substance. We divided the whole collection into five parts: Unification of Currency; Round Coins with a Square Hole; Gold and Silver; Paper Money and Banks; Today and Future. For each section we took both the chronological order and the various themes into account. For example, the first part Unification of Currency was divided into three sub-units: Material Objective Currency; Currency of the Spring Autumn and Warring States; Unification of Currency. In the first and second sub-units, we expressed the natural origins of currency by means of shell money, stone shells, bronze shells, gold and silver shells, silk and bronze ingots.

In the third unit, we displayed Ban Liang coins excavated from a tomb of Qin State in Warring States of the Pre-Qin Period, and Ban Liang coins of the Qin Dynasty after the unification in 221 BC. The casting of the Ban Liang coins by Qin State of Warring States was confirmed only ten years ago. Before, most people thought that Emperor Qin Shi Huang united the money of the whole country by casting Ban Liang in the past. The Ban Liang coins excavated from the aforementioned tomb are fewer. Moreover, the round coin with a square hole was used for more than two thousand years (from 3rd century BC to the early 20th century). This is too much to exhibit.

We limited the collection into one part named Round Sky and Square earth, and divided this part into three units: Wu Zhu Coin and Coin with a Character Bao; Money and Society; Technique and Art. The Wu Zhu coin and the Coin with a Character Bao are two kinds of representative coins. Zhu is an ancient weight unit. Wu Zhu means five Zhu; it was used from the second century BC to the seventh century AD. Although the casting of the coin started only during the Tang Dynasty in seventh century, the

character Zhu was not used yet. It was replaced by the character Bao, which means treasure. So the round coin became very popular in different periods and was known as Kai Yuan Tong Bao of the Tang Dynasty, Da Guan Tong Bao of the Song Dynasty, Hong Wu Tong Bao of the Ming Dynasty and Kang Xi Tong Bao of the Qing Dynasty, etc. We used only six cases in the first unit to show this process, nevertheless this covered already more than a few thousand years.

In the second unit we selected some coins issued in various confused periods in history. These coins of a non-standard purity, although of much value reflected the relationship between money and Society, in a political, economical and military way. In the unit Technique and Art, we selected some moulds or models to illustrate the development of the technique of striking coins. We took various coins with different handwriting to show the art of characters on the Chinese coin. A similar method of display was used in the other parts, such as in the Paper Money and Bank section and in the Gold and Silver section.

Our principle of selecting the items was originally based on its academic nature and its rare nature. For example, the Wu Zhu coin and Kai Yuan Tong Bao coin, two kinds of ancient coins that were struck in great amounts. But due to the great number of coins and the long period of circulation, their identification became a very big difficulty. We chose some Wu Zhu coins from a tomb of a local king of the Han Dynasty. After all the government of the Han Dynasty decided that the Wu Zhu coin had to be minted in a central mint instead of being minted freely. This happened in the year that the king died. So, although the Wu Zhu coin is a kind of general coin, it has a very high scientific value. The Kai Yuan Tong Bao coin was used during the whole Tang Dynasty for more than three hundred years. On these coins there are different characters in handwriting and they are struck in different periods. We chose some Ksi Yuan Tong Bao coins from tombs of different periods which have a high scientific value for identifying the chronology of the Kai Yuan Tong Bao coin.

The above mentioned coins were of great interest to various scholars, but other people could also trace the development of the round coin with a square hole.

The form design is very important for an exhibition, especially for numismatic collections as money can be very small items.

For the sake of the style harmony between substance and form, all our exhibition cases and exhibition boards are made of wood. As our exhibition hall is underground, we have to use artificial light. The window of the showcase is smaller, and the illumination in the exhibition hall is lower, so the vision-line of spectators will be concentrated on the smaller exhibits.

The arrangement of the exhibits should be rhythmical. There is a saying in China: Experts see the key, but laymen see the bustling. The public will feel depressed about these very small things. Therefore we must make some hot points. For example, the shell is both used as ornament and as

money. We duplicated a horse head ornamented with shells according to a model of an excavated carriage in the unit on Material Object Currency. In the part of Round Sky and Square earth, we displayed a bronze coin tree more than 1.8 meters high from a tomb of the 2nd century. The coin tree is a symbol of treasure in the eyes of the Chinese. But in the part on Gold and Silver, we displayed the biggest gold coin in the world; the Panda Gold Coin with a weight of 5 kilograms.

We placed some large models to regulate the atmosphere of the exhibition hall and to impress the spectators. In the part on the round coin, we duplicated the tomb cave of the local king of the Han Dynasty, where the important Wu Zhu coins were excavated. In the Paper Money and Bank section, we put an old coin shop so people can see how money circulated in the past. The coin shop was very popular; many visitors took pictures.

Due to the limited time, I could only talk a little about our museum. We hope that we can learn more from every body else here.

Thank you very much for your attention.