

## **A Study on the Liangzhu Stone and Jade Artifacts Excavated in Guangdong Province**

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### **Abstract**

Considerable consensus has been achieved among scholars on the “Liangzhu-style carving patterns” after years of in-depth study since the discovery of the Neolithic culture (3200-2200 BCE) in the Taihu Lake region more than three quarters of a century ago. During the 1980s, successive finds in Guangdong, China’s southmost province and far removed from Taihu, of tube-form cong bracelets and other objects ornamented in the Liangzhu style have aroused rounds of inconclusive discussion: are they original relics from Liangzhu, or imitations by the residents of the local Neolithic Shixia culture?

The present author visited Guangdong in December 2009 to personally inspect the stone and jade objects unearthed at Shixia, Lumei Village, and Santuo Village. The detailed information recorded from the trip, combined with further combing and comparison of other relevant data, established that of the ten inspected artifacts carved with “Liangzhu patterns”, four may have come directly from the Taihu Lake region, five are likely Shixia imitations, and one remains to be confirmed pending additional excavation data.

The author also researched widely on the diffusion routes of Liangzhu-style objects as well as reasons behind the Guangdong imitations, by summarizing statistically the burial arrangements of these artifacts and consulting senior scholars, in the hope of helping shed some light on the diffusion issues of Neolithic cultures. With the discovery of the Shixia dragon-head bracelets, new archaeological evidence is now available to allow further analysis on two such items in the National Palace Museum’s collection for their origins, which have long been in some debate.

**Keywords:** Liangzhu-style carving patterns, Shixia culture, *Cong*, dragon-head bracelet