

THE CHINA SONG DYNASTY COIN

960 - 1279 A.D.



CHINA – CASH – ORDER CODE # CHINSUNGMX
OBVERSE: CHINESE CHARACTERS
REVERSE: BLANK
METAL: BRASS
SIZE: ‘RANGE’ 22 MM – 24 MM
‘IMAGE ENLARGED TO SHOW DETAIL’

This coin is a genuine ancient Chinese bronze coin minted nearly a thousand years ago. It is a genuine antiquity.

Unlike many ancient coins that were struck with dies to form the coin, Chinese Cash were laboriously hand made by casting, or molding from molten bronze. Several coins were cast simultaneously in a form that resembles a flattened tree. When the molten bronze was poured into the mold it flowed down a central shaft and out along several “branches” to fill the coin-shaped voids of the mold, thus creating the finished tree. After cooling the molds were opened and the coins were cut off of their “sprues”, and then were filed smooth to erase the cut area.

Chinese cash coins featuring a square hole were first minted circa 221 BC by Emperor Qin Shi Huang during the Qin Dynasty.

The Song (pronounced Soong) Dynasty sparked a remarkable period of intellectual and social change in China. Though gunpowder was first used militarily under the Songs, the military system itself gradually lost influence during their reign. General Sung T'ai Tsu, forced into power to unify China, established a national army under his direct command. His less competent successors' loss of military control led to the emergence of a central bureaucracy and a well-defined system of civil service positions: Elaborate highly competitive examination and selection systems replaced former networks of heredity and political appointment. Only 200 out of thousands of applicants secured the coveted jinshi degree. This highest credential, required for appointment to government posts, established Chinese civil servants as the envied elite.

From 1069 on, there was great internal turmoil in both Northern and Southern Sung areas. Conflicts about policies and laws resulted in alternation of power between reformers and anti-reformers until powerful nomadic barbarians overtook Northern China in 1126. Sung rule was confined to areas south of the Huai River until Mongolian occupation in 1279.

Despite the military decline, which led to their downfall, the Song dynasty is acclaimed for its technological, economic and cultural advancements. During the 11th century, the tz'u form of poetry and song reached its zenith and, by the following century, local

dialects were used innovatively in storytelling. The conservative Neo-Confucianism movement, begun during the Song Dynasty, ascended to dominance over Taoism and Buddhism.



ORDER CODE: SONGALB

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