

**Discussion on the Formation History and Artistic Style of Emperor
Huizong of Song Dynasty's "Lean Gold Style"—Reflections Based on the
Perspective of the Homology of Calligraphy and Painting**

FENG MENG¹, XIE GUOQUAN², QIN YU², XU HAORAN², LEE JAEWOO^{2*}

¹Hebei Academy of Fine Arts, College of Calligraphy, Shijiazhuang City, Hebei Province, China

²Kyonggi University, Graduate School of General Studies, Department of Global Fine Art, Suwon
City, Gyeonggi-do, Korea.

*Corresponding author email: 15738770170@163.com

Abstract: To delve deeper into the formation history and artistic style of "Lean Gold Style", and to more fully understand its cultural connotations and artistic value, providing new perspectives and ideas for the inheritance and development of calligraphy art, this paper, from the perspective of the homology of calligraphy and painting, clarifies the definition of "Lean Gold Style" and the connotation of the homology of calligraphy and painting, and conducts an in-depth analysis and interpretation of the formation background, process, and artistic style of "Lean Gold Style". The results indicate that the formation of "Lean Gold Style" is closely related to various factors such as the life experience of Emperor Huizong of Song Dynasty Zhao Ji, the political ecology of the Song Dynasty, and the traditional cultural background. Emperor Huizong's passion for painting art and profound attainments led him to make innovative attempts in the field of calligraphy, contributing to the birth of "Lean Gold Style". From its artistic style, its performance is very unique, which not only reflects the beauty of the calligraphy's bone strength but also incorporates the artistic agility and elegance of painting, fully demonstrating the profound foundation of the homology of calligraphy and painting. According to the research, as a unique calligraphy created by Emperor Huizong, "Lean Gold Style" not only enriches the expression of calligraphy art but also provides a more vivid case for the theoretical research on the homology of calligraphy and painting. Emperor Huizong's unique aesthetic concepts and innovative spirit provide internal motivation for the creation of

"Lean Gold Style", while the prosperous culture and arts of the Song Dynasty also created fertile soil for its formation. "Lean Gold Style" has a unique artistic style, borrowing from the use of lines and shape creation in painting, and paying more attention to space utilization and overall layout in structure, which makes the work present a harmonious and rhythmic visual effect. "Lean Gold Style" is not only Emperor Huizong's inheritance and innovation of traditional culture but also incorporates his innovative thinking based on absorbing the essence of predecessors' calligraphy, making "Lean Gold Style" unique in the history of calligraphy art. Based on this, we should further explore and study the artistic value and cultural connotation of "Lean Gold Style" from the perspective of the homology of calligraphy and painting, thereby providing new perspectives and ideas for the inheritance and development of calligraphy art.

Keywords: Emperor Huizong of Song Dynasty; Lean Gold Style; Formation History; Artistic Style; Homology of Calligraphy and Painting; History of Calligraphy Art

1 Introduction

Calligraphy, as a treasure of the Chinese nation, has attracted much attention (Zhang et al., 2008). Governments at all levels have also issued relevant policies aimed at inheriting and promoting calligraphy art, injecting vitality into cultural prosperity. Among the vast sea of Chinese calligraphy art, there are many calligraphy schools, and the "Lean Gold Style" is a unique and charming one. The "Lean Gold Style" created by Emperor Huizong of Song Dynasty, Zhao Ji, not only occupies a pivotal position in the history of calligraphy but also reflects the Chinese thought of "the homology of calligraphy and painting" (Lo and Wang, 2004). Zhao Ji was the 8th emperor of the Southern Song Dynasty. His life experience and the political ecology of the Song Dynasty formed a special environment for the "Lean Gold Style". He has loved art since childhood, especially calligraphy and painting, which gave him deep skills and unique insights in the field of art. The Song Dynasty was the heyday of traditional Chinese culture and art development, and its prosperity and artistic innovation created favorable conditions for the emergence of the "Lean Gold Style" (Wang, 2003). In the process of integrating calligraphy and painting, the Lean Gold Style emerged. Emperor Huizong

integrated pen and ink, endowing it with the charm of calligraphy's "bone strength" and "brushwork intention", forming a unique calligraphy style (Yu, 2007). Based on the homology of calligraphy and painting, studying the formation history and artistic style of the "Lean Gold Style" can provide a clearer understanding of its background and social environment, recognize the status of the "Lean Gold Style" in the history of calligraphy development, and reveal the cultural connotation behind it. With its unique artistic style, the "Lean Gold Style" is unique in the field of calligraphy. Through in-depth research, we can deeply analyze the artistic style of the "Lean Gold Style", including its structural processing and line application, accurately grasp its artistic essence, and provide new ideas for calligraphy art appreciation. As an important concept of traditional Chinese culture, the homology of calligraphy and painting emphasizes the mutual reference and deep integration of calligraphy and painting art in techniques and artistic conception (Shi, 1996). As a typical representative of the homology of calligraphy and painting, the formation and development of the "Lean Gold Style" help deepen the understanding of the homology of calligraphy and painting theory. The study of the calligraphy art of "Lean Gold Style" can provide new enlightenment for the innovative development of calligraphy art, and artistic essence can be drawn from it to inject vitality into contemporary calligraphy creation, thereby promoting better development of calligraphy art .

Regarding the exploration of the formation history and artistic style of Emperor Huizong of Song's "Lean Gold Style" from the perspective of the homology of calligraphy and painting, several domestic scholars have conducted research.① Homology of Calligraphy and Painting: Xu Buxue (2022) reconsidered the issue of "homology of calligraphy and painting" and believed that primitive pictures were used to record life and transmit information before the emergence of written language. These pictures gradually evolved from pictographic characters to a more mature form, moving away from mere illustration towards an independent artistic direction in painting. Liu Chengji (2017) studied the relationship between calligraphy and painting, suggesting that the integration of calligraphy and painting is based on artistic practices from the pre-Qin to the Han dynasties. Numerous works combine calligraphy and painting art, demonstrating continuity in the history of Chinese art and aesthetics. Zheng Yuchuan (2017)

argued that "homology of calligraphy and painting" and "integrating calligraphy into painting" are theories related to Chinese calligraphy and painting creation. By combining specific works, he conducted an in-depth analysis of the theory of "integrating calligraphy into painting" from both theoretical and practical perspectives, indicating a close relationship between painting and calligraphy. ② **Lean Gold Style and Painting Art:** Song Fangbin (2018) conducted an in-depth analysis of the technical characteristics of the Lean Gold Style, focusing on three aspects: dot and stroke, character structure, and composition. He also delved into the logic behind the Lean Gold Style and painting, suggesting that Emperor Huizong is a typical example of integrating painting into calligraphy. Chen Huanying et al. (2019) believed that the Lean Gold Style not only possesses strong calligraphic artistic features but also carries a profound artistic flavor of painting. By exploring the connection between Emperor Huizong's Lean Gold Style calligraphy and painting art, they discovered its characteristics of "integrating painting into calligraphy" and "incorporating calligraphy into painting," highlighting the intertextual symbiosis between the two.

Research on the formation history of "Lean Gold Style" typically focuses on sorting out historical events and collecting documentary evidence, while lacking in-depth analysis of Emperor Huizong Zhao Ji's life experiences, aesthetic concepts, and the cultural background of the Song Dynasty. Existing studies on the artistic style of "Lean Gold Style" have noted its homology with painting, but most of them remain at the level of superficial description and comparison, lacking an in-depth analysis of its internal mechanisms. As for the artistic value and cultural connotation of "Lean Gold Style," it is overly confined to traditional calligraphy aesthetic concepts, with few re-examinations and interpretations from a contemporary artistic perspective. Based on this, when exploring the formation history of "Lean Gold Style," this study pays more attention to the influence of various factors such as Emperor Huizong's life experiences, aesthetic concepts, and the cultural background of the Song Dynasty on the formation of this font, aiming for a more comprehensive understanding of its inherent driving forces. In the study of the artistic style of "Lean Gold Style," this research delves into how it combines the beauty of calligraphy's strength with the elegance and vivacity of painting from

the perspective of the homology of calligraphy and painting, revealing the uniqueness of its artistic style. Furthermore, this study attempts to interpret the artistic value of "Lean Gold Style" from the perspective of contemporary artistic value, aiming to fully understand its position and significance in contemporary art, thereby promoting its inheritance and development in local art.

2 Research Content

2.1 Research Framework

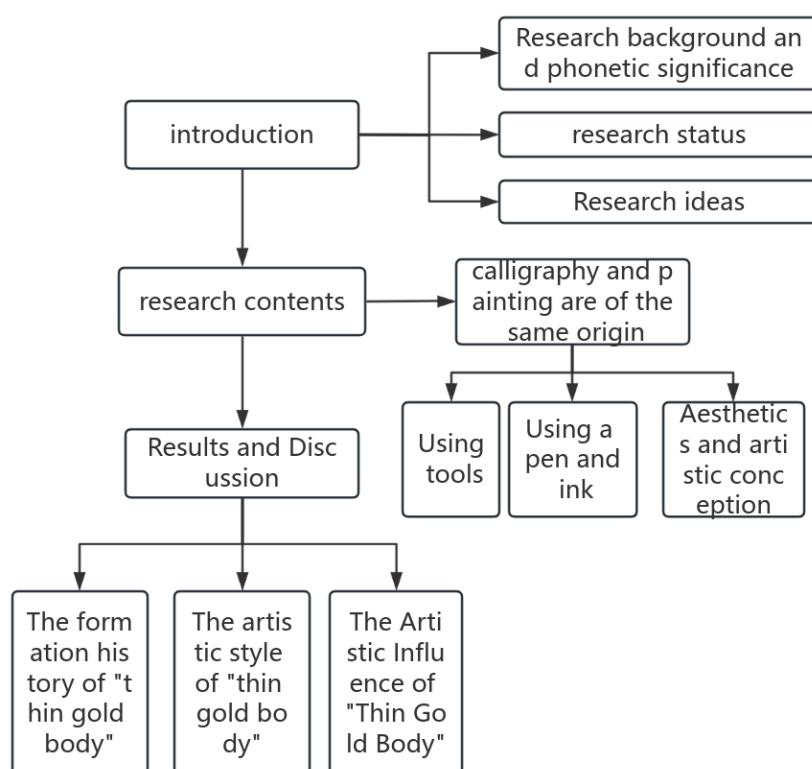


Figure 1 Research Framework

2.2 Research Methods

This study employs methods such as literature review, historical analysis, and artistic appreciation. By examining relevant documents from the Song Dynasty and later periods, including calligraphy, painting, and historical records, we collect accounts and discussions

related to Emperor Huizong and his "Lean Gold Style." These records encompass Song Dynasty calligraphy collections, painting manuals, and subsequent artistic critiques and calligraphy theories, laying a theoretical foundation for our research. Incorporating the political, cultural, and social backgrounds of the Song Dynasty, we analyze the historical conditions and influencing factors that shaped the "Lean Gold Style." Through the appreciation and analysis of Emperor Huizong's "Lean Gold Style" calligraphy works, we explore its artistic style and aesthetic value, focusing on aspects such as character structure, line usage, and composition layout. The content of this study draws from various sources, including historical documents and art classics, aiming for a more comprehensive understanding of the artistic style and value of Emperor Huizong's "Lean Gold Style."

2.3 Overview of the Theory of "Calligraphy and Painting Sharing the Same Origin"

"Chinese Calligraphy" and "Chinese Painting" are both the essence of Chinese tradition and art, sharing both similarities and differences (Murck and Fong, 1991, Wang et al., 2023). There is a long-held belief in the Chinese art circle that "calligraphy and painting share the same origin", which reflects the close connection and inheritance between Chinese calligraphy and Chinese painting, as well as their "sister arts" relationship. In his book "Records of Famous Paintings of Past Dynasties: Narrating the Origin and Development of Painting", Zhang Yanyuan of the Tang Dynasty once said: "Jie had four eyes and looked up at the sky. By observing the traces of birds and turtles, he determined the shape of written characters. Nature could not hide its secrets, so grains of millet rained from the sky; spirits and monsters could not conceal their forms, so ghosts cried at night (Zhang, 2024). At that time, calligraphy and painting were integrated and not yet separated, and the creation of images had just begun and was still rudimentary. Because there was no way to convey meaning, calligraphy was born; because there was no way to see forms, painting emerged." This is the original exposition on the concept of "calligraphy and painting sharing the same origin" (Da-Wei, 2012).

When exploring the two concepts of calligraphy and painting within the same artistic domain, one cannot simply investigate the meaning of the word "origin" from an archaeological

perspective. The word "origin" not only refers to the "beginning" but also signifies the connection between Chinese calligraphy and painting. Therefore, it is necessary to take a different approach and elaborate on the connection between them and Chinese painting. As shown in Figure 2, the following mainly elaborates on three aspects.

2.3.1 Tools Used

The most superficial manifestation of the common "origin" between Chinese painting and calligraphy is the use of tools (Li, 2010). The fundamental tools of Chinese calligraphy are the Four Treasures of the Study, namely brush, ink, paper, and inkstone, which are also essential for painting. The combination of brush, ink, and inkstone can create a unique form of painting in China.

Firstly, the brush is the most important creative tool. Due to the unique flexibility and ink-absorbing characteristics of the brush, it allows for a wide range of variations in lines and brushwork, making the expression of calligraphy and paintings more flexible and free (Starrs, 2008). Whether it is the dots and lines in calligraphy or the techniques of outlining, rubbing, scratching, and dyeing in painting, they are all related to the tool of the "brush".

Secondly, ink has a significant impact on calligraphy and painting. The variations in the shade, wetness and dryness, and thickness of the ink can present different levels of depth and three-dimensionality, enhancing the charm of the work (Frentiu, 2023). Calligraphy expresses the "spirit" of the characters through changes in ink color, while Chinese painting outlines the shape and texture of objects through the use of ink.

Thirdly, as an important carrier of calligraphy and painting, paper has a direct impact on the presentation of the work through its texture and ink absorption characteristics (Chen, 2023). Xuan paper, with good water absorption, very soft texture, and easy preservation, has been an important paper for ancient Chinese calligraphy and painting. Painting and writing on Xuan paper can fully express the charm of brush and ink.

Finally, the inkstone is a tool used for grinding ink. A good inkstone can produce smooth, bright, and black ink, and it has the characteristics of "being able to grind ink with a breath, not

damaging the brush, and not freezing in winter". The material and grinding method of the inkstone have a great influence on the quality and efficacy of the ink (Chi-Chên, 1930).

2.3.2 Use of Brush and Ink

Chinese calligraphy emphasizes momentum, rhythm, and artistic conception, which can be considered the "root" of "abstract art." Chinese painting, on the other hand, takes the understanding of brush and ink to its fullest extent, exploiting this mystery to the utmost. Brush and ink are the fundamental forms of lines in Chinese painting, without which it would be difficult to call it Chinese painting. Therefore, calligraphers inevitably influence painters, and calligraphy serves as the foundation for painters' brushwork (Pang, 2023). Wang Shizhen analyzes "painting bamboo with trunks like seal script, branches like cursive script, leaves like regular script, and joints like clerical script" in his "Art Garden Advice" and points out the artistic conception of cursive script from Guo Xi's "tree method" and Wen Tong's depiction of bamboo.

2.3.3 Aesthetics and Artistic Conception

The convergence of Chinese calligraphy and painting arts can be observed from the aesthetic and artistic conception perspectives, which constitutes the fundamental aspect of their so-called "common root and origin" (Zhou et al., 2013). The similarity between calligraphy and painting is not only manifested in their formal beauty but also lies in the implied beauty of artistic conception and spirit. In Chinese painting, the emphasis is on "spirit" rather than "form," as evidenced by the phrases "capturing the spirit through form" and "extracting the essence through appearance." The Chinese literati Su Dongpo once said, "Judging paintings solely by their resemblance to the real thing is a childish perspective." Similarly, in the creation of calligraphic art, artists often draw inspiration from physical objects, distilling their essence and form to construct strokes, structures, and compositions (Ho, 2005). This process leads to a state of "forgetting the form in the ecstasy of the moment," revealing the beauty of abstract art.

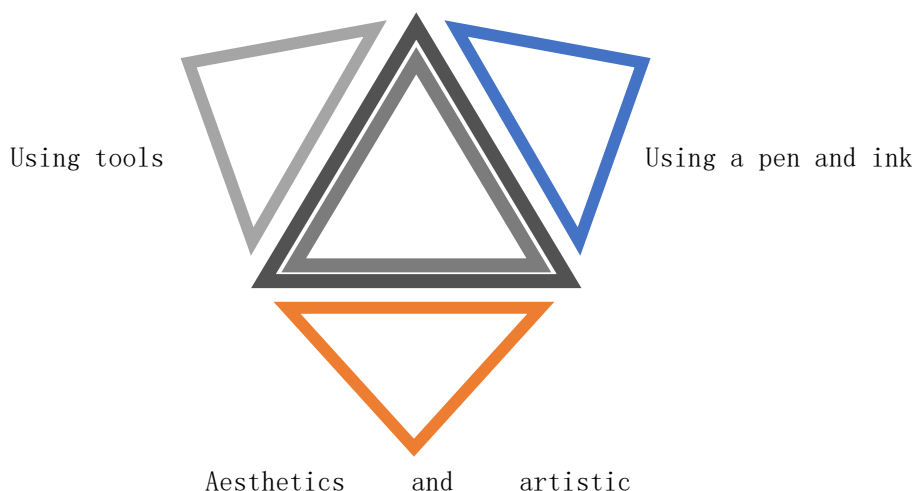


Figure 2 Research perspective on the homology of calligraphy and painting

3 Results and Discussion

The formation of Emperor Huizong of Song's "Slim Gold Script" was deeply influenced by the cultural background of his era and his personal artistic pursuits. This not only reflects the refinement and elegance of Song dynasty culture but also showcases Emperor Huizong's personal aesthetic taste (Zhirong, 2024). From the perspective of the homology between calligraphy and painting, the artistic style of "Slim Gold Script" bears distinct painting characteristics, drawing from the line usage and composition techniques in painting (He, 2013). This gives the script a smooth yet vigorous aesthetic. Emperor Huizong's "Slim Gold Script" holds a significant position in the history of calligraphy, not only enriching the expressive forms of calligraphic art but also providing valuable artistic references for later generations of calligraphers (Shi, 2017).

3.1 The Formation History of "Slim Gold Style" Calligraphy

3.1.1 Brief Introduction to Emperor Huizong Zhao Ji

Emperor Huizong of Song, also known as Zhao Ji, was born in Zhuoxian, Hebei Province. As the eighth emperor of the Northern Song Dynasty, he was also renowned as a master of

calligraphy and painting (Patton, 2013). Zhao Ji's life was marked by remarkable innovations and breakthroughs. Prior to ascending the throne, he held titles such as the Prince of Suining and the Prince of Duan, demonstrating a profound interest in calligraphy and painting, and achieving significant artistic accomplishments (Cai, 2004). He vigorously promoted the development of palace paintings, recruited numerous painters, founded the Xuanhe Painting Academy, and nurtured famous artists like Wang Ximeng. Zhao Ji not only significantly contributed to the prosperity of court paintings but also injected vitality into the Chinese art scene. He excelled in landscapes and portraits, with novel compositions, vivid colors, and a rich display of life's charm. As illustrated in Figure 3, his representative works, including "Hibiscus and Golden Pheasant Picture," "Picture of Red Polygonum and White Goose," and "Autumn Evening by the Pond Picture," have left invaluable historical materials for later art historical research.



Figure 3: Left: "Hibiscus and Golden Pheasant Picture"; Middle: "Picture of Red Polygonum and White Goose"; Right: "Autumn Evening by the Pond Picture"

Meanwhile, Zhao Ji achieved significant accomplishments in the field of calligraphy. He created a new style of regular script, which is known as the "Slim Gold Script" in later generations (Peng, 2020). This script, with its vigorous and powerful strokes and unique brushwork, is considered a treasure in the history of Chinese calligraphy. Zhao Ji initially

studied under Huang Tingjian and later learned from Chu Suiliang, Xue Ji, and Xue Yao, drawing from their strengths to create the distinctive "Slim Gold Script." This script conveys a sense of elegance and freedom, while also exhibiting a unique and resolute character. The mastery of the "Slim Gold Script" requires not only skill and cultivation in calligraphy but also a steady and calm mindset. Although many scholars have studied this script since, few have truly grasped its essence, highlighting the profound mastery of calligraphy by Zhao Ji.

However, Zhao Ji demonstrated evident folly in his governance of the court. Despite his remarkable contributions in the arts, those he trusted, such as Cai Jing, used the excuse of "Shaoshu Law" to perpetrate evil deeds and commit atrocities within the court. His excessive pursuit of extravagant lifestyles, including lavish purchases of "flower and stone outlines" and the construction of "Genyue," imposed heavy burdens on the common people. Under Zhao Ji's corrupt rule, farmers from various regions rose up in rebellion, putting the Northern Song regime in jeopardy. In the first year of Jingkang (1126), when the Jin army attacked, Zhao Ji abdicated to Zhao Huan. In March of the second year of Jingkang, he was captured along with Emperor Qinzong, Zhao Huan, by the Jin troops and later died in Wuguocheng.

In summary, while Zhao Ji made significant errors in politics, his artistic achievements cannot be ignored and have profoundly influenced Chinese calligraphy and painting arts, securing him a place in the history of Chinese art.

Table 1: Key Factors in the Formation of the Lean Gold Style

Factor	Description	Supporting Evidence
Personal Experiences	Emperor Huizong's artistic upbringing	Exposure to painting and calligraphy from childhood
Historical Context	Prosperity of Song Dynasty arts	Flourishing cultural and artistic innovations
Political Environment	Influence of court politics and Confucian ideals	Revival of Confucian values during Huizong's reign
Artistic Pursuits	Integration of painting and	Established the Xuanhe Painting

	calligraphy techniques	Academy
Emotional Expression	Use of calligraphy for personal and political emotions	Depicted feelings in "Slim Gold Script"

3.1.2 Historical Background

The "Slim Gold Script" is a unique font style of the Song Dynasty, emerging prominently in the field of calligraphy. It is named "Gold Script" because each character represents gold, all originating from the hand of the emperor, specifically Emperor Huizong of Song (Wang, 2024). Each character was like an imperial decree, hence the name "Slim Gold Script." The creation of the Slim Gold Script by Emperor Huizong was purely coincidental. (Murck, 2000). These emotions are not easily described in a few words. Thus, his Slim Gold Script was imbued with sadness and ambiguity from its inception. The formation of the Slim Gold Script is related to a past event in Emperor Huizong's life (Blanchard, 2018). The enemy of the Song Dynasty was the Liao Dynasty, yet Emperor Huizong had affections for a princess of the Liao (Zhu, 2022). The script became a way to express these feelings, but later evolved into a tool for venting his political emotions. During this period, Emperor Huizong extensively studied Confucian works from the Qin and Han dynasties, contributing to the revival of Confucianism. This had a certain guiding role for Zhu Xi's later proposition of "preserving heavenly principles and eliminating human desires." The creation of the Slim Gold Script was also influenced by the works of calligraphers from the Jin dynasties, incorporating their essence while adding unique elements (Ebrey, 2014). After Emperor Huizong invented the Slim Gold Script, it was primarily preserved in imperial edicts and notes, making it particularly rare in its early stages.

3.1.3 Aesthetic Concepts

The formation of the "Slim Gold Script" is closely related to Emperor Huizong's aesthetic concepts. As shown in Figure 4, the emergence of the Slim Gold Script was primarily influenced by three factors: Firstly, ancestral factors. The name "Slim Gold Script" vividly depicts its unique aesthetic characteristics. The characters are slender yet powerful, resembling the muscles and bones of the human body, earning it the nickname "Slim Tendon Script."

Simultaneously, due to its vigorous and elegant form, akin to a crane dancing in the sky, it is also elegantly known as the "Crane Script." Emperor Huizong was an outstanding calligrapher who combined the essence of various calligraphy styles. He first studied the calligraphy of Huang Tingjian and was deeply influenced by it. However, he was not satisfied with this and further widely imitated Chu's style, skillfully integrating various fonts such as running script, cursive script, and regular script to form his own unique calligraphy style . He had a special fondness for Wang Xizhi's calligraphy, preferring its unrestrained style (MCNAIR, 1989). Through continuous copying, learning, and innovation, he ultimately created the "Slim Gold Script." The "Slim Gold Script" is not only the crystallization of his personal artistic talent but also a dazzling pearl in the treasure trove of Chinese calligraphy art, providing endless inspiration and reference for later calligraphers.

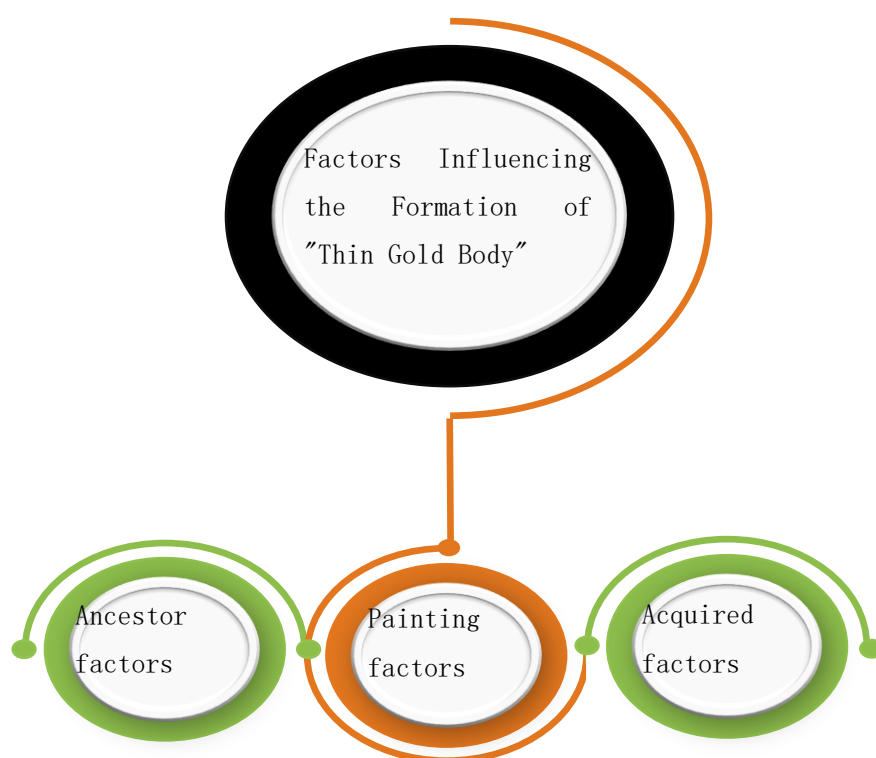


Figure 4 Factors Influencing the Formation of "Thin Gold Body"

The Second Factor: Painting Skills The second influencing factor is Emperor Huizong's profound passion for the art of painting, in which he excelled (Lee, 1994). His works, often executed in meticulous brushwork, are characterized by delicate strokes, smooth lines, and a harmonious palette rich in colors. As illustrated in Figure 5, his masterpieces, such as "Scholars' Gathering" and "Listening to the Qin," are widely celebrated by later generations. "Scholars' Gathering" depicts a scene of literary and elegant scholars gathered together, with each figure exhibiting unique postures and vivid expressions. On the other hand, "Listening to the Qin" stands as a pinnacle of meticulous brushwork. It skillfully employs lines and colors to create an elegant and serene scene of listening to the qin, an ancient Chinese stringed instrument. In the painting, the qin player performs with melodious tunes while the audience listens intently, some with closed eyes and others deeply immersed, each with distinct expressions and postures (Zhao, 2022).

Through his paintings, it becomes evident that Emperor Huizong possessed extraordinary control over his brush, masterfully bringing every detail to life with his exquisite strokes and clever compositions.



Figure 5: Left: "Scholars' Gathering"; Right: "Listening to the Qin"

The third factor is acquired influences. During the reign of Emperor Huizong of Song, the Imperial Art Academy, as the royal painting institution, housed countless precious calligraphy and painting works. Emperor Huizong, who had been exposed to art since childhood, possessed high artistic accomplishments and exceptional talent in appreciating excellent works from ancient and modern times (Bickford, 2006). However, his artistic accomplishments were not achieved overnight but gradually reached a high level through long-term accumulation and honing. Based on such artistic accomplishments, Emperor Huizong demonstrated remarkable talent and a unique style in his later creations. While inheriting the essence of traditional painting, he also incorporated his own innovations and reflections, making each of his works full of vitality and dynamism (Ebrey, 2011).

3.2 Artistic Style of "Slim Gold Script"

3.2.1 Structural Characteristics

The "Slim Gold Script" is a distinctive calligraphy font that exhibits unique characteristics in its structure. Specifically, it features a compact central portion with open spaces on all sides, and the center of gravity of the characters tends to be in the upper part, occupying approximately one-third of the character. The advantage of this character structure lies in its visually upward extension, giving a sense of elegance while maintaining a casual demeanor. As shown in Figure 6, there are six common methods for structuring characters in the "Slim Gold Script."

Table 2: Comparative Analysis of Lean Gold Style and Contemporary Calligraphy Styles

Feature	Lean Gold Style	Contemporary Calligraphy Styles
Line Style	Slender, graceful, yet powerful	Bolder, more fluid or rigid
Brush Techniques	Exposed brush tips, precise strokes	Hidden strokes, varied fluidity
Structural	Compact center, open edges	Balanced or expansive compositions

Composition		
Aesthetic Principles	Elegance and agility	Focused on boldness or expressive freedom

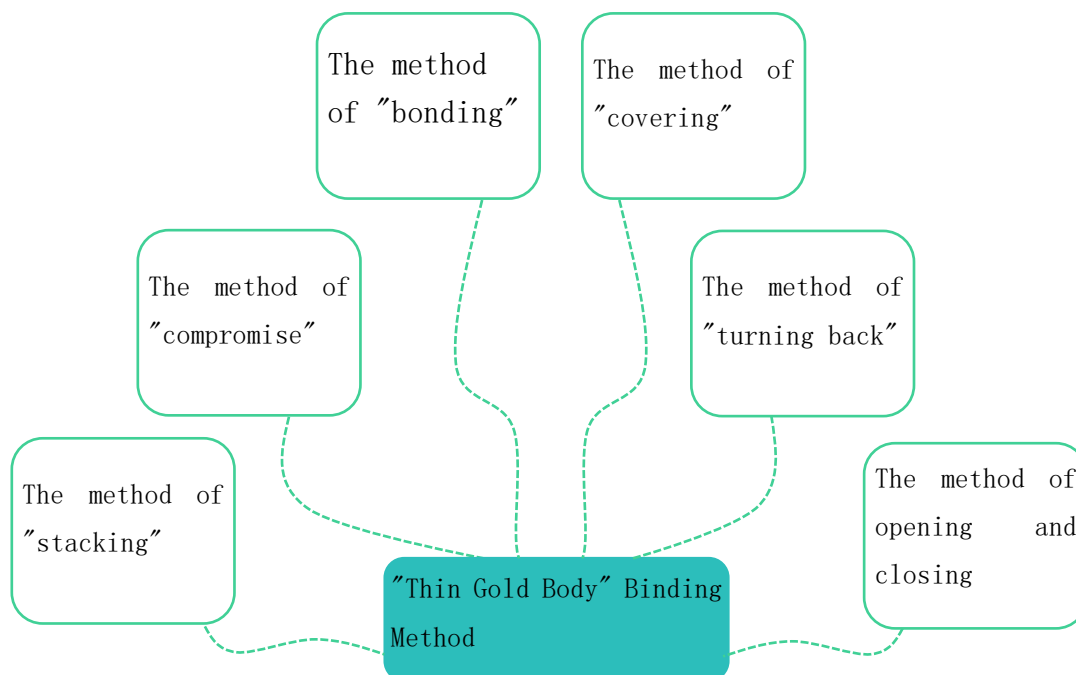


Figure 6 "Thin Gold Body" Binding Method

"Nongfang Poetry Scroll" is a representative work of Emperor Huizong's "Slender Gold Script" in the Song Dynasty. As shown in Figure 7, the character "xiang" (fragrant) in the line "Dancing butterflies are lost in the fragrant path," features a shorter "he" (grain) radical and a longer "ri" (sun) component. Due to the shorter vertical stroke of the "he" radical, the overall center of gravity shifts to the bottom of the "he" and the top of the "ri". The fourth stroke of the "he" radical extends to the left, while the fifth stroke employs a reverse press, suddenly changing direction after moving towards the right, displaying a robust and unrestrained style. This stroke balances the force pulling outwards to the left, fully showcasing the external characteristics of the character through the combination of these two strokes. Meanwhile, the second stroke of the "ri" component extends downward, creating a stark contrast with the first stroke, giving the

character "xiang" a more stable and dignified and graceful appearance, full of vitality. The artistic and historical value of "Nongfang Poetry Scroll" is immense, highlighting its status as a representative of the "Slender Gold Script". The meticulous depiction of key characters such as "xiang", "he", and "ri" not only showcases the artistic talent of Emperor Huizong but also embodies the unique charm of this artistic work.



Figure 7: The character "xiang" (fragrant) from "Nongfang Poetry Scroll"

As shown in Figure 8, taking the character "feng" (wind) from the sentence "Gracefully chasing the evening breeze" as an example, the first stroke, a leftward slash, extends naturally. Correspondingly, the right-side vertical curve also stretches maximally towards the lower right. In the middle section, it appears extremely full, with a majestic momentum contained within a confined space. Overall, its font is expansive, dignified, compact, and full of dynamism.

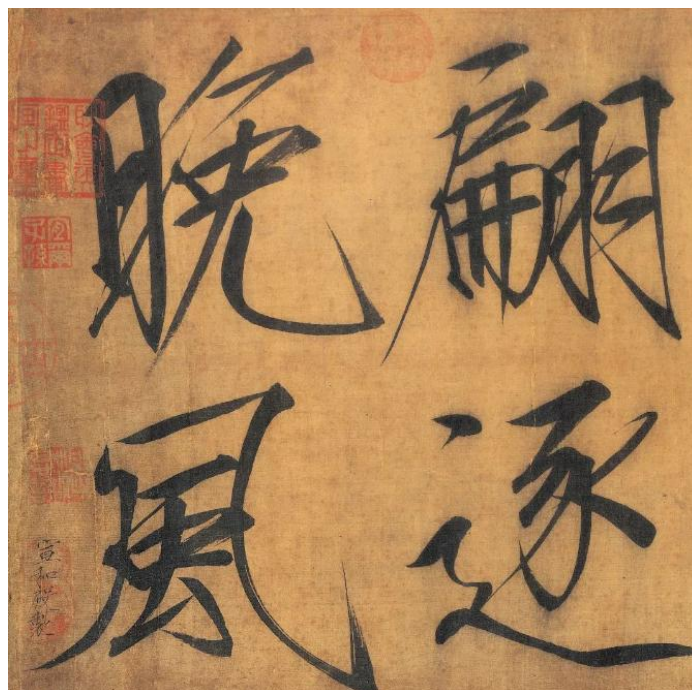


Figure 8: The character "feng" (wind) from "Nongfang Poetry Scroll"

3.2.2 Characteristics of Brushwork

The brushwork characteristics of the "Slim Gold Script" are particularly evident and mainly manifest in the following aspects: Firstly, the exposed tip of the brush during writing. As shown in Figure 9, taking the character "dan" (cinnabar) from the phrase "It is difficult to put brush to paper with vermilion and indigo" as an example, both the horizontal stroke and the left-slanting stroke start with an oblique tip, without concealing the tip through a reverse stroke. Especially at the end of the left-slanting stroke, instead of concealing the tip, it is outlined with a side tip, and there is a pause at the turning point of the second stroke, making the line more pronounced. At the end of the stroke, the side tip is also utilized. Thus, it can be seen that the exposed tip is generally manifested through the use of the side tip, revealing the traces of the brushwork with just a few strokes (Kraus, 1991).

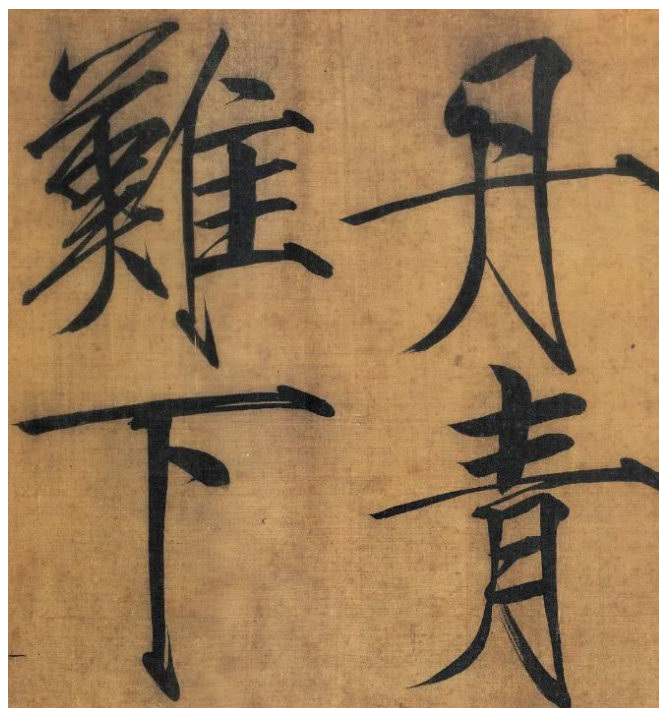


Figure 9: The character "dan" (cinnabar) from "Nongfang Poetry Scroll"

The second characteristic is the clear pauses in the strokes, which resemble a delicate silk thread with a slight pause at the end; some longer vertical lines have a noticeable pause at the end of the stroke, and a distinct pause at the upward hook. For instance, in the character "xing" (prosperity), the main horizontal stroke is delicate until it pauses at the end, adding a sense of power to the entire character. Similarly, in the character "zhong" (middle), the vertical line tapers from thick to thin, and at the end of the last horizontal stroke, there is a heavy pause towards the lower right corner, replacing the impending outward stroke. Additionally, in the character "yin" (because), the second stroke follows the oblique tip of the horizontal stroke, creating a distinct square corner, which is remarkably similar to the pause in the horizontal fold of the same character.

The third characteristic is the unique shape of the na jiao (the final part of a horizontal or oblique stroke in Chinese calligraphy), which differs significantly from the traditional regular script. As shown in Figure 10, comparing Emperor Huizong's "Ruihe Picture" with Yan Zhenqing's "Duobao Tower Stele," it is evident that the "Slim Gold Script" elongates the na jiao, resembling the shape of bamboo. In the "Ruihe Picture," the integration of the "Slim Gold

Script" with painting complements each other, seamlessly blending the script with the image of auspicious cranes. The arrangement and layout of the characters echo the flock of cranes in the painting, creating a harmonious and unified visual effect. This distinctive stroke feature of the "Slim Gold Script" reflects Du Fu's quote: "Rigid and slender, to achieve its spirit." For instance, in the characters "qiu" (autumn) and "ren" (person), when writing the na stroke, the side seam pushes out the na jiao, creating a smooth sensation and making the characters appear more stretched out.

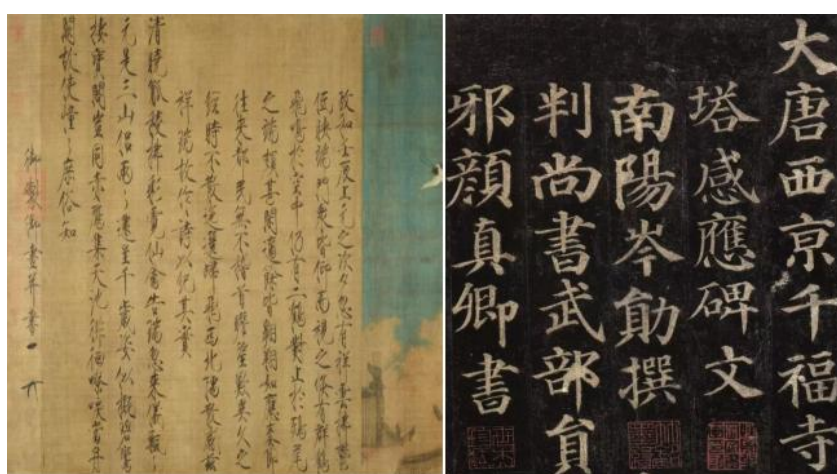


Figure 10 Left: Partial view of "Ruihe Picture" by Emperor Huizong of Song; Right: Partial view of "Duobao Tower Stele" by Yan Zhenqing

3.2.3 Cultural Connotation

The most significant difference between regular script and running script lies in the application of the silk-pulling technique, which, in simple terms, refers to the subtle relationship between each stroke. The "Slim Gold Script" bears the essence of running script, and its form closely resembles that of a crane, exuding an ethereal and otherworldly charm. This unique typeface imbues the Slim Gold Script with a distinct aesthetic, encompassing not only the beauty of strength but also fluidity and vivacity. Every stroke of this font reflects a tenacious and noble spirit. From a cultural perspective, the Slim Gold Script carries rich historical and cultural significance. This typeface represents not only Emperor Huizong's profound mastery in the art of calligraphy but also reflects the aesthetic trends and cultural atmosphere of the society at

that time. The creation of the Slim Gold Script was not accomplished overnight; it evolved through multiple stages, each reflecting Emperor Huizong's evolving understanding of calligraphy. Overall, the Slim Gold Script emphasizes humanistic connotation, is full of vivid interest, and possesses a majestic demeanor.

3.3 The Artistic Influence of "Slim Gold Script"

3.3.1 Status in Calligraphy Studies

Evaluations of Slim Gold Script are relatively scarce. Compared to contemporaries such as Su, Huang, Mi, and Cai, research on "Slim Gold Script" is considerably limited. This can be attributed to its close relationship with traditional Chinese aesthetic standards. This unique perspective on calligraphy aesthetics considers personal character, cultivation, knowledge, and even achievements and political performance as the main criteria for evaluation (JIWEI, 2020). Consequently, posterity's assessment of Emperor Huizong's "Slim Gold Script" has been somewhat unfair. Mr. Cao Baolin once remarked that if Emperor Huizong had not been born into royalty, he might have been recognized as a talented individual and would not have suffered such disgrace.

The earliest and most representative work of Emperor Huizong's "Slim Gold Script" that people see today is his "Regular Script Thousand Character Classic" written at the age of twenty-two. Had he not been an emperor, and considering his young age when he created his own style, he might not have been inferior to Su, Huang, Mi, and Cai.

Cao Baolin fully acknowledges Emperor Huizong's talents, believing that he excelled in both calligraphy and painting, and possessed considerable creative ability. Before ascending the throne, Emperor Huizong was already a talented and gifted individual. By the Song Dynasty, all calligraphy styles had already been established. It was challenging to form one's own unique style, let alone surpass masters of regular script like Ouyang Xun, Liu Gongquan, and Yan Zhenqing. Thus, the "Slim Gold Script" pioneered by Emperor Huizong enjoys high prestige in the calligraphy world. In contemporary calligraphy, the "Slim Gold Script" stands out for its slender and upright form, smooth and elegant lines, and rigorous yet varied composition,

providing valuable references for modern calligraphers in exploring new calligraphy styles and expressions (McNair, 1998).

3.3.3 Contemporary Value

Throughout history, few have studied the "Slim Gold Script." It was only in recent times that several artists skilled in landscape and bird-and-flower paintings transcribed it for their own use. Academic research on Emperor Huizong's calligraphy is scarce due to several reasons: Firstly, the belief that "a righteous person writes straightforwardly" has significantly influenced calligraphers' selection of his works. Secondly, due to the influence of Confucianism, the idea of moderation is deeply ingrained in people's minds, and the characteristics of Slim Gold Script do not align with the aesthetic requirement of "harmony." Thirdly, Emperor Huizong's imperial status made it difficult for the public in feudal times to evaluate him, let alone conduct in-depth research. Although few people can write in Slim Gold Script nowadays, it still provides valuable reference for most calligraphy enthusiasts (Bai, 2024). This concise and demanding script emphasizes the coordination of pen strokes and the unity of precision, spirit, and qi in research.

In various contemporary settings, the "Slim Gold Script" has garnered significant attention and widespread application due to its sleek and upright characteristics. As illustrated in Figure 11, its main applications include the following aspects: Firstly, advertising design. In modern business activities, advertising language is the soul. Slim Gold Script is often used for headlines or keywords. By leveraging its unique characteristics, advertising slogans become more prominent and attractive. Secondly, cover design. As the initial image of a book, the cover plays a crucial role in promoting it. Slim Gold Script, with its distinctive stylistic features and readability, is widely used in cover design. Utilizing its stroke characteristics to specially design book titles and slogans can add a sense of hierarchy and artistic flair to the cover. Thirdly, printing and publishing. Slim Gold Script, with its clear strokes and slender font, is suitable for text layout in newspapers, magazines, and books. It enhances the aesthetics and readability of printed materials, optimizing the reader's experience. Fourthly, brand image. Brands are the

core of a business or product, and trademark names are crucial. Slim Gold Script is extensively used in brand identity design, such as logos and standard fonts, giving them a distinct and recognizable character(Aderemi, 2024). Fifthly, digital media. In the digital media environment, Slim Gold Script has found widespread application in various digital product designs. For instance, in web design, it enhances the aesthetics and simplicity of web pages. Simultaneously, it can be applied to mobile designs, improving the user experience of the system. From the above aspects, it is evident that integrating this traditional cultural element into modern product creation and design through various methods truly achieves the inheritance and innovation of traditional culture, allowing it to radiate new vitality and dynamism in contemporary society.

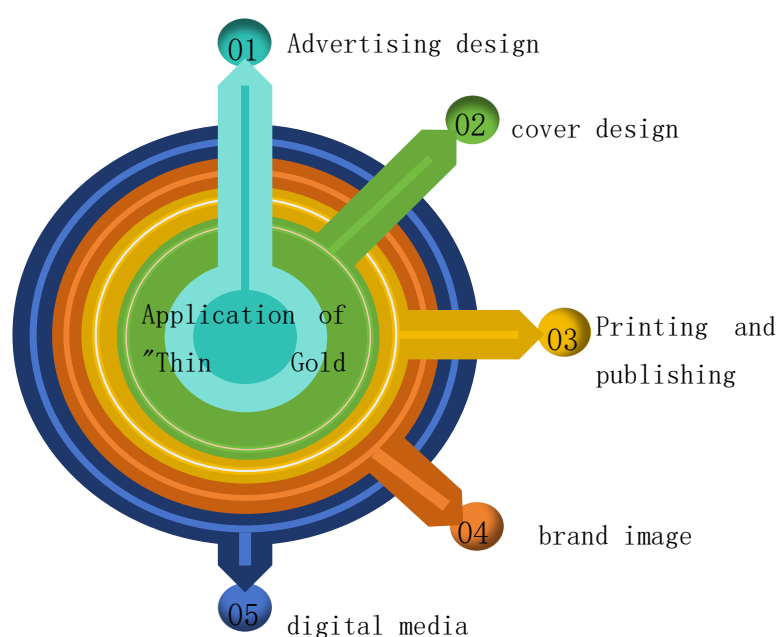


Figure 11 Application of "Thin Gold Body"

Table 3: Applications of the Lean Gold Style in Modern Design

Application Area	Description	Example
Advertising Design	Adds elegance and uniqueness to campaigns	Slogan designs for luxury brands
Cover Design	Enhances visual appeal of book covers	Historical novels with calligraphy art

Printing and Publishing	Improves aesthetics in text layout	Calligraphy-styled magazines
Brand Image	Offers distinctiveness in logos and trademarks	Corporate identity designs
Digital Media	Modern adaptation in websites and apps	Artistic fonts for web interfaces

4. Conclusion

This study aimed to delve deeply into the historical formation and unique artistic style of the "Slim Gold Script," particularly from the perspective of "the homology of calligraphy and painting," revealing the intrinsic connection and mutual influence between the Slim Gold Script and painting. Through the adoption of literature research and image analysis methods, documentary materials on the historical formation, artistic style of the Slim Gold Script, as well as the personal life and artistic achievements of Emperor Huizong, were collected and organized. Image analysis was conducted on representative works of the Slim Gold Script to observe its stroke, structure, layout, and other characteristics, deepening the understanding and comprehension of this script.

Through an in-depth exploration of the formation history and artistic style of the "Slim Gold Script," it was found that this calligraphy style embodies Emperor Huizong's personal artistic pursuit and innovative spirit, reflecting the concept of the homology of calligraphy and painting. The formation of the "Slim Gold Script" is not only a product of the cultural prosperity and artistic innovation of the Song Dynasty but also a crystallization of Emperor Huizong's personal life experiences and artistic aesthetics. The "Slim Gold Script" skillfully combines calligraphy with painting, introducing painting elements into calligraphy and creating a form of calligraphic art that is both traditional and innovative. The formation of this style not only reflects Emperor Huizong's profound understanding and practice of the concept of the homology of calligraphy and painting but also fully demonstrates the mutual learning and integration of artistic forms in traditional Chinese culture.

Existing research still has some limitations. For example, the exploration of the relationship between the Slim Gold Script and painting is not sufficiently deep and comprehensive. How to more specifically integrate the perspective of the homology of calligraphy and painting into the research remains a question that needs further exploration. Looking ahead, it is hoped that more scholars and calligraphy enthusiasts will continue to pay attention to and study the "Slim Gold Script," digging deeper into its artistic value and cultural connotation from different angles and levels. Simultaneously, it is expected that the "Slim Gold Script" will play a greater role in contemporary society, contributing to the inheritance and promotion of traditional Chinese culture.

References:

- ADEREMI, F. 2024. The Essential Graphic Design Handbook: A Modern Guide to Graphic Design in the Digital Age, Faith Aderemi.
- BAI, H. 2024. Contextualizing Decorated Paper and Its Artistic Values During the Song Dynasty. *Studies in Art and Architecture*, 3, 34-43.
- BICKFORD, M. 2006. Huizong's paintings: Art and the art of emperorship. *Emperor Huizong and Late Northern Song China*. Harvard University Asia Center.
- BLANCHARD, L. C. 2018. 3 Male Audience and Authorship: Projecting Desire and Longing onto the Female Figure. *Song Dynasty Figures of Longing and Desire*. Brill.
- CAI, Z.-Q. 2004. A historical overview of Six Dynasties aesthetics. V: Chinese Aesthetics. The Ordering of Literature, the Arts, and the Universe in the Six Dynasties, 1-28.
- CHEN, Z. Chinese Calligraphy: An Ancient Art in the Modern Era. SHS Web of Conferences, 2023. EDP Sciences, 02003.
- CHI-CHÊN, W. 1930. Notes on Chinese ink. *Metropolitan Museum Studies*, 3, 114-133.
- DA-WEI, K. 2012. Chinese Brushwork in Calligraphy and Painting: its history, aesthetics, and techniques, Courier Corporation.
- EBREY, P. 2011. Huizong and the Imperial Dragon: Exploring the Material Culture of Imperial Sovereignty. *清華學報*, 41, 39-71.

- EBREY, P. B. 2014. *Emperor Huizong*, Harvard University Press.
- FRENTIU, R. 2023. *Japanese Calligraphy as a Way to Make the Invisible Visible*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- HE, Y. 2013. *The materiality, style, and culture of calligraphy in the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127)*, Boston University.
- HO, W. P. 2005. The Chinese approach to learning: The paradigmatic case of Chinese calligraphy. *Spiritual education: Literary, empirical, and pedagogical approaches*, 154-174.
- JIWEI, Z. 2020. A STUDY ON THE CONSUMPTION TENDENCY OF CHINESE TRADITIONAL CALLIGRAPHY WORKS BY THAI-CHINESE. SIAM UNIVERSITY.
- KRAUS, R. C. 1991. *Brushes with power: Modern politics and the Chinese art of calligraphy*, Univ of California Press.
- LEE, H.-S. 1994. *The domain of Empress Yang (1162-1233): Art, gender and politics at the Southern Song court.*(Volumes I and II), Yale University.
- LI, W. 2010. *Chinese writing and calligraphy*, University of Hawaii Press.
- LO, A. & WANG, T. 2004. "The Earthworms Tame the Dragon": The Game of Xiangqi. *Asian Games, The Art of Contest*, edited by Asia Society.
- MCNAIR, A. 1998. *The Upright Brush: Yan Zhenqing's Calligraphy and Song Literati Politics*, University of Hawaii Press.
- MCNAIR, A. E. 1989. *The politics of calligraphic style in China: Yan Zhenging (709-785) and the Song literati*. The University of Chicago.
- MURCK, A. 2000. *Poetry and painting in song China: The subtle art of dissent*, Harvard Univ Asia Center.
- MURCK, A. & FONG, W. 1991. *Words and images: Chinese poetry, calligraphy, and painting*, Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- PANG, X. 2023. *Calligraphic Techniques in Painting: The Aesthetic Expression and Literary Significance of "Writing" in Ni Zan's Paintings*.
- PATTON, A. J. 2013. *"A Painter's Brush that also Makes Poems": Contemporary Painting After Northern Song Calligraphy*. The University of Western Ontario (Canada).

- PENG, Y. 2020. Chinese Characters. *Thirty Great Inventions of China: From Millet Agriculture to Artemisinin*, 63-97.
- SHI, M. 1996. *Poetry-calligraphy-painting: The Aesthetics of Xing in Zheng Xie (1693-1765) and Zhu Da (1626-1705)*, Indiana University.
- SHI, X. 2017. *The embodied art: an aesthetics of Chinese calligraphy*.
- STARRS, R. 2008. 1. *Ink Traces Of The Dancing Calligraphers: Zen-Ei Sho In Japan Today. Performing Japan*. Brill.
- WANG, P., SHEI, C. & WANG, B. 2023. *Calligraphy and Painting*. Routledge.
- WANG, R. 2003. *Images of women in Chinese thought and culture: Writings from the Pre-Qin period through the song dynasty*, Hackett Publishing.
- WANG, Y. 2024. *Standards and Norms for Calligraphy and Painting: Fenggu in Calligraphy. Aesthetics from Ancient China: Aspects of Fenggu*. Springer.
- YU, H.-C. 2007. *The Intersection of Past and Present: The Qianlong Emperor and His Ancient Bronzes*. Princeton University.
- ZHANG, J., TANG, W., SHI, C., LIU, Z. & WANG, X. 2008. Chinese calligraphy and tourism: From cultural heritage to landscape symbol and media of the tourism industry. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 11, 529-548.
- ZHANG, Z. 2024. *Chinese Culture Through Legends and Fiction: A Guided Reader*, Taylor & Francis.
- ZHAO, M. 2022. *Roaming, Gazing, Halting: Human Presence and Sensory Impression in Song Landscape*. The University of Chicago.
- ZHIRONG, Z. 2024. On Refinement and Popularity. *A Survey of Chinese Literature*. Springer.
- ZHOU, Q. B., ZHANG, J. & EDELHEIM, J. R. 2013. Rethinking traditional Chinese culture: A consumer-based model regarding the authenticity of Chinese calligraphic landscape. *Tourism Management*, 36, 99-112.
- ZHU, C. M. 2022. *Born in a Golden Light: Omens, Art, and Succession in the Southern Song (1127–1279)*, Columbia University.