

## Jade

41.3

Chinese, ~~14th-12th century B.C.~~Shang dynasty, late, ~~12th-11th century B.C.~~ 13th-11th c. B. C.

Ceremonial weapon:

Short, broad blade of mottled warm gray and gray-green

nephrite; weapon type; one conical perforation pierced from both sides.

26.6 cm 10.5 cm  
~~26.6~~ x ~~10.5~~ over all. (10-1/2" x 4-1/8")

Neg. Nos.

S3472 AE

1. Bought from C. T. Loo & Company, New York. For price, see Freer Gallery of Art Purchase List after 1920.

2. (J.E.L., 1941). Although this blade is relatively broad, somewhat spatulate and perfectly symmetrical, it is, no doubt, derived from the 戈 kō type of weapon in its earliest known form, --- as seen, e.g., in early bronze inscriptions where it commonly appears more sharply pointed, indeed, but still relatively broad, perfectly symmetrical, and mounted at right angles to its shaft. Jades of this sort are not recognizable among those described in the Chou Li, nor is anything of the kind illustrated by 吳大澂 Wu Ta-ch'êng in his Ku yü t'u k'ao. One similar blade has, however, been reproduced by 黃濬 Huang Chün in his Ku yü t'u lu ch'u chi (Vol. I, p. 14 verso); but evidently the type is now rare. When ours was first shown to me, there was a good deal of



dried mud and cinnabar on it which brushed off quite easily. The dealer said, moreover, that he believed the blade was found at An-yang, and this could be true, no doubt. To me, in any case, the form and the exquisite finish of the blade suggest a date as early as Shang. In this connection, compare 17.396, 19.17, 39.19, 39.20.

3. Sp. G. is 2.958. Extensive surface alteration due to decomposition prevents a higher calculation for nephrite.

4. (Julia Murray, 1980) From the exhibition label: The blade known as ko, based on the shape of the metal dagger-axe, is first found at the early Shang site at Erh-Li-t'ou, Honan. A ko consists of a long blade beveled to a sharp edge on the sides, usually with a median crest; a projecting cross-piece with a perforation at the base of the blade and a narrower butt, or tang, which may be plain or ribbed. Ko blades display great variations in size, from miniature to enormous. This variety of size is understandable in view of the fact that the jade blades were intended only for ceremonial and symbolic purposes, rather than the practical use. Small ko blades are occasionally mounted in bronze handles, usually adorned with inlaid turquoise. Some blades have a finely incised linear pattern at the back and just in front of the perforation.

5. (Julia K. Murray, 1982). For a general discussion of jade ko, see folder sheet 17.396.

A jade ko very similar in size and shape was found in the tomb of Fu-hao at Anyang (late 13th-early 12th c. B. C.); reproduced in Yin-hsü Fu-hao mu (Peking, 1980), pl. 113/2 upper (924). Like the ko 41.3, the excavated

ko also has a median ridge that runs from the tip of the blade only to the hole, and a distinct ridge of material remains on the wall of the perforation.