

Jade
(Nephrite)

16.244

S.I.641

Chinese,

~~Shang dynasty. Western Chou, ca. 1027-771 B.C.~~
Late Shang

Ceremonial implement; blade form of irregular, quadrilateral shape; short ends oblique; cutting edge sharp and slightly curved; three conical perforations near upper straight edge; black with traces of dark olive brown; profuse granular pittings; high luster. (Edge chipped.) Box.

26.6 cm
~~26.6~~ in length. (10-1/2")
8.4 cm
~~0.84~~ greatest width. (3-5/16")

Neg. No.
H376B1

1. Bought from A. W. Bahr, London. For price, see Original Miscellaneous List, p. 157.

2. Original attribution: Han, or earlier. See further, S.I.641, Appendix VII.

3. (C.W.B., 1922) Perhaps on whole more likely to be Chou than Han. Laufer, Jade, p. 116, follows Wu Ta-ch'eng in identifying this type with the imperial writing tablet known as hu, but certainly its original purpose was otherwise. Laufer, loc. cit., says difficult

to see purpose of perforations. Doubtful if these actually functional; more probably vestigial, representing method of lashing handle or grip along back in original stone knife; such knives found in prehistoric Chinese deposits and also a well-known form among various existing primitive peoples, as, e.g., the Eskimo. Cf. Laufer, op. cit., Pl. VIII and Fig. 40.

4. (A.G.Wenley, 1946) Shang dynasty.
5. (T.Lawton, 1978) Western Chou. Late Shang.
6. (Julia K. Murray, 1982). The asymmetrical shape of this horizontal knife is a bit unusual, compared to other examples. Since the polish on the narrow end is somewhat more matte than elsewhere on the blade, it seems possible that it could have been broken and refinished. Both sides of the wide end show a faint straight cut-mark.

For a further discussion see 17.24 .