

35.7....1
I ~~FF-6~~
GG-31

Jade
(Nephrite)

35.7ab

Chinese

Late Shang Dynasty, ~~ca. 1523-ca. 1028 B.C.~~
12th-11th century B.C.

Ceremonial implement:

~~A badge of rank;~~ one complete perforation and
a partial perforation on each side.

Color: deep cream and soft light brown,
with a few streaks of darker brown.

17.5 cm (length) 4.0 cm (greatest width) 1.2 cm (thickness)
~~.175 x .040 (gr. width) x .012~~

Neg.No.
5390B

(6-7/8" x 1-19/32" x 15/32")

1. Purchased from C. T. Loo, New York. For price, see Freer Gallery of Art Purchase List after 1920.
2. (J.E.Lodge, 1941) Early Chou dynasty or earlier.
3. (A.G.Wenley, 1946) Shang dynasty.
4. (Julia Murray, 1980) Attribution changed from Shang, ca. 1523-ca.-1028 B.C. to Late Shang, 12th-11th century B.C. From the exhibition label: Based on a Neolithic stone tool whose blade is sharpened at the top, early jade chisels were ceremonial rather than utilitarian. The shape was retained in the jade repertoire in the Shang and Chou periods.

The simple, elegant shape of a chisel is subtly embellished by smoothly ground edges, which are shown to advantage by the lustrous polish of the entire surface. Most chisels have a single perforation, often drilled from one side only, resulting in a hole whose diameter is larger on one side of the piece. A second hole which was only partially drilled from both sides appears on this chisel. The shape of the incomplete hole indicates the use of a hollow tubular drill, perhaps a section of bone or bamboo.

5. (Julia Murray, 1982). For a general discussion of chisel-shaped jades, see folder sheet 17.31 . In its thick proportions and slightly tapered shape, chisel 35.7 resembles an example excavated from the 12th c. B. C. tomb of Fu-hao; see Yin-hsü Fu-hao mu 殷墟婦好墓 Peking, 1980, color plate 20/I (460). The archaistic 17.28 resembles 35.7 in also having a partially drilled hole on each side of the blade.