

1983.3

Chinese

Late Shang - Early Western Chou

Trapezoidal blade, hu 笏

Fashioned of tannish-green stone with irregularly shaped, multicolored flecks throughout, the blade is highly polished on both surfaces. The blade, which has been reworked at the upper left corner, has an otherwise straight back. Both of the oblique, shorter edges are straight. The curved cutting edge is beveled on both sides and is marked by irregular indentations that appear to have resulted from hard wear. Four large conical perforations appear along the upper edge of the blade. A fifth hole, also conical and drilled from the same side as the other four, is still visible in the reworked portion in the upper left corner. A sixth, smaller conical perforation, drilled from the opposite side, occurs on the horizontal axis at the right portion of the blade.

H: 16.5 cm (6 1/2")

L: 49.5 cm (19 1/2")

1. Received as a gift from Mrs. Pare Lorentz, Armonk, New York, when exhibited.

2. (T. Lawton, 1983). The blade has a fitted wooden box of traditional Chinese design. Carved into the cover of the box are Chinese characters that identify the jade piece as a ta-chang 大璋 ("large sceptre"), and date it to the Chou dynasty. Four smaller characters state that the blade was in the collection of T'ao-chai 陶齋, the studio of the late Ch'ing dynasty official and collector, Tuan-fang 端方 (1861-1911). At the beginning of the 20th century the blade was acquired by Mrs. Agnes E. Meyer, presumably from a dealer in New York City. Mrs. Meyer, the mother of the present donor, purchased a number of important Chinese objects that formerly were owned by Tuan-fang. There is no reason to question the authenticity of the statement regarding T'ao-chai's ownership that appears on the cover of the wooden box, although the jade blade is not included in Tuan-fang's catalogue, T'ao-chai ku-yü t'u 陶齋古玉圖.

3. For discussion of this type of jade blade, see folder sheet for 17.24 .