

ANCIENT CHINESE
BRONZES



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ORIENTAL ART



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J. J. LALLY & CO.

O R I E N T A L A R T

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中國朝代

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

新石器時代	NEOLITHIC PERIOD	circa 7000–1600 B.C.
商	SHANG DYNASTY	circa 1600–1027
周	ZHOU DYNASTY	1027–221
西周	Western Zhou	1027–771
東周	Eastern Zhou	770–221
春秋	Spring and Autumn Period	770–476
戰國	Warring States Period	475–221
秦	QIN DYNASTY	221–206
漢	HAN DYNASTY	206 B.C. – A.D. 220
西漢	Western Han	206 B.C. – A.D. 8
新 (王莽)	Xin (Wang Mang)	A.D. 9–23
東漢	Eastern Han	24–220

CATALOGUE

1. AN ARCHAIC BRONZE RITUAL WINE GOBLET (*JIAO*)

Shang Dynasty, Anyang Phase, 11th Century B.C.

the deep egg-shaped cup raised on three splayed blade-shaped legs, decorated with a broad frieze of two *taotie* masks dissolved in scroll motifs, each with round protruding eyes, divided on one side by a plain vertical flange surmounted by a horned monster head cast in relief, and on the other side by a vertical panel cast with a pictogram and bridged by a loop handle emerging from a stylized bovine head, the wide mouth of the vessel rising to two high flaring points on opposite sides, cast on the underside with twin blades filled with dragonheads and scroll motifs, and with a plain groove encircling the base of the neck, piercing through the jaw of the relief monster head on one side and continuing under the top of the handle on the other side, the surface with an attractive cuprite red and lightly encrusted malachite green patina, with a trident-shape pictogram cast under the handle, probably a clan sign.

Height $8\frac{7}{8}$ inches (22.5 cm)

A bronze *jiao* of very similar profile and similarly decorated with *taotie* masks and scroll motifs in the Shanghai Museum is illustrated by Chen in *Xia Shang Zhou qingtongqi yanjiu: Xia and Shang, xia* (Study of Bronzes from the Xia, Shang, and Zhou Dynasties: Xia and Shang, II), Shanghai, 2004, pp. 202–203, no. 98. Another similar bronze *jiao* also in the collection of the Shanghai Museum, shown in the special exhibition held at Musée Cernuschi in 1998, is illustrated in the exhibition catalogue, *Rites et festins de la Chine antique: Bronzes du musée de Shanghai*, Paris, 1998, pp. 88–89, no. 18, attributed to the end of Shang to early Western Zhou. Compare also the bronze *jiao* of this form, from the Wilhelmina Tenney Memorial Collection and now in the Honolulu Academy of Arts, illustrated in *Academy Album: A Pictorial Selection of Works of Art in the Collections*, Honolulu, 1968, p. 90, attributed to the 11th century B.C.

Another bronze *jiao* of very similar form with horned *taotie* decoration and thick flanges is illustrated by Bagley in *Shang Ritual Bronzes in the Arthur M. Sackler Collections*, Washington D.C., 1987, pp. 208–214, where the author confirms the 11th century B.C. date by citing an inscribed bronze *jiao* in the Sumitomo Collection dated to the twentieth reign year of one of the last two Anyang kings, *op. cit.*, fig. 24.6.

商 安陽時期 饕餮紋銅角 高 22.5 厘米



2. AN ARCHAIC BRONZE RITUAL FOOD VESSEL (*FANG DING*)

Early Western Zhou Dynasty, *circa* 10th Century B.C.

the deep squared bowl of rectangular section, cast on all four sides with pairs of crested birds in relief on squared-spiral *leiwen* grounds and confronted on dissolved *taotie* motifs filling horizontal bands above and below a central frieze of convex vertical flutes, the corners of the bowl embellished with thick toothed flanges above the four columnar legs issuing from the jaws of *taotie* masks with bulging eyes on either side of thick central flanges, the flat rim with projecting edge and surmounted by a pair of small upright loop handles, the surface with bright malachite green and azurite blue patina lightly encrusted all over, with an inscription of nine characters cast on the interior of one side of the vessel.

Height 8½ inches (21.5 cm)

The inscription may be read as: *Ming zuo jue wen kao Jigong zun ding* (命作厥文考己公尊鼎), which may be translated as “Ming made [this] *zun ding*, for his honored father Jigong.”

An early Western Zhou *fang ding* decorated with similar bird motifs and vertical flutes unearthed in 1969 from Changwu county, Shaanxi province, is illustrated in *Shaanxi chutu Shang Zhou qingtongqi* (Shang and Zhou Bronzes Unearthed in Shaanxi Province), Vol. I, Beijing, 1979, p. 135, no. 154.

Compare the early Western Zhou *fang ding* decorated with similar toothed flanges and with *taotie* masks on the legs, in the collection of the Shanghai Museum, illustrated by Chen in *Xia Shang Zhou qingtongqi yanjiu: Xi Zhou, shang* (Study of Bronzes from the Xia, Shang, and Zhou Dynasties: Western Zhou, I), Shanghai, 2004, pp. 2–3, no. 194.

西周早期 命銅方鼎 高 21.5 厘米



3. AN ARCHAIC BRONZE RITUAL FOOD VESSEL (*GUI*)

Early Western Zhou Dynasty, late 11th–10th Century B.C.

with deep rounded sides finely cast in varied relief with two pairs of addorsed exotic birds shown in silhouette with heads turned over their backs, each with prominent round eye and large hooked beak ending in a tight volute, and with wide flaring tail-feathers filling the frame on either side, all embellished on the surface with intaglio linear scroll motifs detailed with hooks and spurs throughout and reserved on *leiwen* grounds, the waisted foot of the bowl cast with a narrow running band of 'classic scroll' motif, the tall quadrangular pedestal base decorated with four more matching pairs of addorsed birds, the spandrels on the corners of the upper base filled with confronted pairs of bodiless *kui* dragons, the wide flaring mouth with galleried rim left undecorated above a pair of tabbed loop handles issuing from monster heads with high curled horns, the surface very well preserved with lightly encrusted areas of bright malachite green corrosion widely scattered over the pale golden-tan lustrous metal, with an inscription of seven characters cast in the center of the interior of the bowl.

Width over handles 11 inches (28 cm)

The inscription may be read as: *Ruigong wei qi gong bao gui* (芮公為旂宮寶簋) and may be translated as "Ruigong made this precious *gui* vessel for the Qi palace."

A Western Zhou bronze *gui* and cover of very similar form and decoration, inscribed *Ruibo zuo qi gong ri bao gui*, is illustrated in the exhibition catalogue *Ancient Chinese Bronzes from the Shouyang Studio: The Katherine and George Fan Collection*, Shanghai, 2008, pp. 100–103, no. 34.

Another very similarly decorated bronze *gui* and cover, inscribed *Ruigongshu zuo qi gong bao gui*, unearthed in 1980 from a Western Zhou tomb at Zhuangtou village, Huang county, Shandong province, is illustrated in the excavation report in *Wenwu*, 1986, No. 8, pp. 70–72, where the scholars attributed the tomb to early Western Zhou dynasty.

Compare also the bronze *gui* excavated in 1961 from a Western Zhou hoard at Zhangjiapo, Chang'an, Shaanxi province, and now in the Shaanxi History Museum, illustrated in *Zhongguo qingtongqi quanji: Xi Zhou, I* (Compendium of Chinese Bronzes: Western Zhou, I), Vol. 5, Beijing, 1996, p. 57, no. 60, with description and further details on p. 18 and with a rubbing of the long inscription inside the bowl on p. 64. The inscription mentions historical figures and events which indicate that the *gui* should be dated to the reign of the early Western Zhou King Mu (r. 1001–947 B.C.).

For a comprehensive discussion of this important Zhou dynasty ritual vessel form, see "A Study of the Western Zhou Bronze *Gui* with a Square Pedestal" by Zhang, *Kaogu*, 1999, No. 12, pp. 69–76.

西周早期 芮公銅簋 寬 28 厘米





4. AN ARCHAIC BRONZE RITUAL VESSEL (*ZUN*)

Early Western Zhou Dynasty, 11th–10th Century B.C.

of cylindrical form with wide flaring mouth and splayed foot, decorated with two large *taotie* masks with angular horns in graduated relief above bulging oval eyes, ridged nose and wide upper jaw defined by hooked fangs framed by elongated quill-like elements emerging at either side, rising to hooked scrolls beside the horns and curving down to end in claws, suggesting the split bodies of the monsters, in turn flanked by profile heads of bottle-horn dragons with slender hooked-scroll bodies filling the raised frieze encircling the vessel between pairs of horizontal ‘bowstring’ bands, with smooth dark patina and lightly encrusted with wide areas of malachite green unevenly distributed over the surface, a seven-character inscription cast on the interior of the side of the high foot.

Height 9 inches (22.7 cm)

The inscription may be read as *Ya Er zuo Zuding zun yi* (亞耳作祖丁尊彝) and may be translated as “Ya Er made this *zun* vessel for Zuding.” The first character *Ya* indicates an officer of the court, possibly a post in command of military functions and rituals.

From the collection of Mrs. Pauline Murat, Paris

Published Hayashi. *In Shū jidai seidōki no kenkyū* (Study of the Yin and Zhou Bronze Vessels), Vol. I, Tokyo, 1984, p. 230, no. 80, photo of the present example and an image of rubbing, where Hayashi cited the source of illustration as Chen and Matsumaru (eds.), *Yin Zhou qingtongqi fenlei tulu* (Illustrated Classification of Shang and Zhou Bronzes), Tokyo, 1977.

Barnard and Cheung. *Zhong Ri Ou Mei Ao Niu suojian suotuo suomo jinwen huibian* (Rubblings and Hand Copies of Bronze Inscriptions in Chinese, Japanese, European, American, and Australasian Collections), Taipei, 1978, Vol. 6, p. 553, no. 616, where the authors recorded that this particular inscription was previously published in the following compilations of ancient Chinese bronze inscriptions:

Wu, Shifen (1796–1856). *Jungu lu jinwen*, ~1850, 2.1.5

Zhu, Shanqi (~1800–1855). *Jingwuxinshi yiqi kuanshi*, ~1854, *shang*, 44

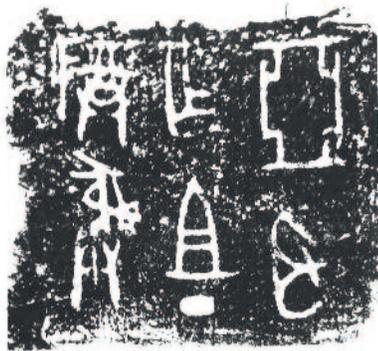
Wu, Dacheng (1835–1902). *Kezhai jigulu*, 1896, 13.6

Luo, Zhenyu (1866–1940). *Yinwen cun*, 1917, *shang*, 17

Liu, Tizhi (1879–1963). *Xiaojiao jingge jinshi taben*, 1935, 7.32.3

Luo, Zhenyu (1866–1940). *Sandai jijin wencun*, 1936, 11.23.8

西周早期 亞耳銅尊 高 22.7 厘米



After Luo, *Yinwen cun*, 1917



5. AN ARCHAIC BRONZE RITUAL TRIPOD FOOD VESSEL (*LI DING*)

Middle Western Zhou Dynasty, 9th Century B.C.

with wide flaring plain rim, the body divided into three wide lobes tapering down to slender columnar legs, cast with densely packed narrow slanting ridges all around the sides, highlighted by a black ground between the ridges, and with a thick wedge-shaped vertical flange projecting above each leg, the surface showing lightly encrusted malachite green patina over a reddish cuprite underlayer and with charcoal-black encrustation on the base.

Height $6\frac{3}{8}$ inches (16.2 cm)

A bronze *li* tripod vessel of very similar form and design in the collection of National Palace Museum, Taipei, is illustrated by Hayashi in *In Shū jidai seidōki no kenkyū* (Study of the Yin and Zhou Bronze Vessels), Vol. I, Tokyo, 1984, p. 64, no. 33.

An archaic bronze *li* of related shape, formerly in the collection of Mrs. Christian Holmes, New York, and now in the Freer and Sackler Galleries, Washington D.C., is illustrated by Rawson in *Western Zhou Ritual Bronzes from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections*, Vol. IIB, Cambridge, 1990, pp. 320–323, no. 27, together with a Western Zhou pottery *li* tripod of similar design in the British Museum, *ibid*, p. 322, fig. 27.3. Rawson suggests that bronze *li* tripods of this kind were based on Western Zhou pottery prototypes.

Another bronze *li* tripod of related form, with twin upright loop handles on the rim, is illustrated by Wang in *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, London, 2009, pp. 93–94, no. 94.

西周中期 銅鬲鼎 高 16.2 厘米



6. AN ARCHAIC BRONZE RITUAL COVERED TRIPOD POURING VESSEL (*YI DING*)
Late Western Zhou Dynasty, 8th–7th Century B.C.

the rounded sides cast in flat relief with two bands of 'U'-shaped motifs below a collar of 'D'-shaped motifs under a flat flanged rim interrupted by a short spout in the form of a tiger head and flanked by a pair of upright loop handles echoing the designs around the sides, all raised on three short sturdy legs and with black-inlaid backgrounds highlighting the decoration, the flat cover cast in relief with a pair of symmetrically entwined serpent-dragons with stylized feline heads emerging at opposite sides near the rim, and surmounted by a small handle in the form of a standing tiger in the center and with two crouching monkeys near the rim, flanking the tiger, the underside of the cover with three small feline masks in relief to serve as stops to hold the cover in place, the surface with lightly encrusted malachite green patination.

Width $4\frac{7}{8}$ inches (12.4 cm)

From the Collection of Walter Hochstadter (1914–2007)

A bronze covered *yi ding* of very similar form and decoration, but lacking the tiger handle on the lid, unearthed in 1989 in Shangguo village, Wenxi county, Shanxi province, now in the collection of the Shanxi Institute of Archeology, is illustrated in *Shanxi wenwu guancang zhenpin: qingtong qi* (Selected Cultural Relics from Local Museums in Shanxi: Bronzes), Taiyuan, p. 53, no. 81, with description on p. 129.

A slightly smaller covered bronze *yi ding* of this type in the collection of the Shanghai Museum is illustrated by Rawson in the catalogue of the exhibition at the British Museum, *Treasures from Shanghai: Ancient Chinese Bronzes and Jades*, London, 2009, p. 102, no. 36.; the same *yi ding* is also illustrated by Chen in *Xia Shang Zhou qingtongqi yanjiu: Dong Zhou, shang* (Study of Bronzes from the Xia, Shang, and Zhou Dynasties: Eastern Zhou I), Shanghai, 2004, pp. 32–33, no. 445.

Another similar example of this rare form of spouted *ding* with cover was excavated at Houma, Shanxi province in 1961 and is illustrated in *Historical Relics Unearthed in New China*, Beijing, 1972, no. 65; in *Zhongguo diaosushi tulu* (Historical Record of Chinese Sculpture), Vol. I, Shanghai, 1983, no. 82; in *Zhongguo qingtongqi quanji: Dong Zhou, II* (Compendium of Chinese Bronzes: Eastern Zhou, II), Vol. 8, Beijing, 1995, p. 12, no. 13; and again in *Zhongguo gu qingtongqi xuan* (Selections of Ancient Chinese Bronzes), Beijing, 1976, no. 49, where it is described as possibly a vessel for mixing sauce.

西周晚期 重環紋銅匝鼎 寬 12.4 厘米





7. AN ARCHAIC BRONZE RITUAL COVERED TRIPOD WINE VESSEL (*HE*)
Warring States Period (475–221 B.C.)

of kettle shape, the plain body of compressed spherical form with a raised angular band around the center and resting on three cabriole legs, the short concave neck with wide everted rim, the close-fitting domed cover joined by a chain of three loose rings to the arched swing handle with faceted sides and terminals in the form of tiger heads each holding in its jaws a thick ring joined to a larger loop on the shoulder of the vessel, and with a projecting spout in the form of a mythical bird emerging at one side with wings displayed and beak wide open, the smooth surface with scattered bright green patination and wide areas of silvery tone showing through uncorroded.

Height 8¼ inches (20.9 cm)

Width 8 inches (20.3 cm)

A very similar Warring States bronze covered *he* unearthed in 1977 at Pingshan, Hebei province and now in the collection of the Hebei Provincial Cultural Relics Bureau is illustrated in *Zhongguo qingtongqi quanji: Dong Zhou, III* (Compendium of Chinese Bronzes: Eastern Zhou, III), Vol. 9, Beijing, 1997, pl. 160, with description on p. 56.

Three similar bronze covered *he* unearthed in 1974–1978 at Sanjixiang, Pingshan county, Hebei province, from the tomb of King Cuo are illustrated in the excavation report *Cuo mu: Zhanguo Zhongshan guo guowang zhi mu* (Tomb of Cuo: The King of the Zhongshan State in the Warring States Period), Vol.s I–II, Beijing, 1995, as line drawings on p. 128, pl. 44 in Vol. I and in col. pl. XI, no. 1 and pl. LXXXVI, nos. 1–3 in Vol. II.

Compare also the Warring States bronze covered *he* of similar form in the collection of Idemitsu Museum of Arts, illustrated in *Ancient Chinese Arts in the Idemitsu Collection*, Tokyo, 1989, col. pl. 187, with description on p. 215; and a Warring States bronze covered *he* of related form illustrated by Wang in *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, London, 2009, pp. 52–53, no. 24.

戰國 鳳首提梁銅盃 高 20.9 厘米 寬 20.3 厘米



8. AN ARCHAIC BRONZE VASE WITH INCISED DECORATION

Han Dynasty, *circa* 1st Century B.C.–A.D. 1st Century

finely decorated all over the bulbous body and tall slender neck with a continuous magical landscape of small rounded peaks with wispy foliage inhabited by tigers, bears, wolves, deer, mountain goats, rabbits, wild boar, immortal 'sprites' and fantastic beasts including winged horses, surrounded by elaborate scrolling foliage populated by a wide variety of different birds including geese, cranes and owls, in two wide bands around the neck and filling the rounded sides of the vase, all drawn in a fine linear style with stippled details throughout, between narrow borders of linked scroll motifs framing the decoration on the neck, and with running bands of linked 'S' scrolls similar to Vitruvian scroll motif on the fluted shoulders, the flared foot engraved with a different border of twinned scroll motifs and the rounded lip rim left plain, the smooth surface of the bronze with an attractive olive green patina overall and with widely scattered areas of lightly encrusted red and green corrosion and spots of iron-rust encrustation from burial.

Height 11¼ inches (28.6 cm)

The magical rocky landscape populated with a host of animals, birds, fantastic beasts and immortals depicted on this vase corresponds to the description of the mystic realm of the sacred mountains found in the *Shanhaijing* (Classic of Mountains and Seas), a text of great philosophical influence during the Western Han dynasty.

Compare the Western Han bronze vase of almost identical form, also incised with birds and animals, excavated in 1956 at Bailixi, Nanyang city, Henan province and now in the collection of the Nanyang City Museum, illustrated in *Zhongguo wenwu jinghua daquan: qingtongjuan* (Compendium of Chinese Archaeological Treasures: Bronzes), Hong Kong, 1994, p. 301, no. 1083.

A vase of similar form but with more deeply carved decoration is illustrated by Fontein and Wu in *Unearthing China's Past*, Boston, 1973, p. 119, no. 52, with a detailed discussion of this type of Han bronze with carved and incised decoration including illustrations of related vessels in museum collections and references to Chinese excavation reports documenting the Southern Chinese provenance of the group on pages 118–124.

漢 朱雀獸紋銅壺 高 28.6 厘米



9. A LARGE ARCHAIC BRONZE COVERED VESSEL (*ZUN*)

Han Dynasty, *circa* 1st Century B.C.–A.D. 1st Century

of Southern type, boldly decorated with striding dragons amidst swirling clouds freely engraved in a flowing linear style around the straight cylindrical sides and on the domed mountain-shaped cover, with rows of engraved diamond-shaped designs above and below a half-round band on a wide belt around the center of the vessel, interrupted by a pair of engraved *taotie* mask and loose-ring handles, and with the same diamond motifs repeated around the edge of the base which is supported on three walking tigers cast in relief with heads turned out, engraved on their flanks with stripes and whorls and showing long claws on their feet, the cover cast with three rows of raised mountain peaks filled with leaping and striding dragons, tigers, birds and wildmen amidst flames and cloud motifs, all freely engraved and with fine stippled and combed details to create a magical setting, the central peak surmounted by a separate finial cast in the form of a peacock standing with wings folded and large fan-shaped tail proudly displayed, the surface with attractive light green patination shading to azurite blue in some areas and showing rust brown on the top of the cover.

Height 11¾ inches (30 cm)

An archaic bronze covered vessel of very similar form with engraved decoration of dragons and birds, resting on bear-form tripod supports, excavated during an archaeological survey of the Guangzhou area between 1953–1960 and now in the Guangzhou City Museum, is illustrated in *Zhongguo qingtongqi quanji: Qin Han* (Compendium of Chinese Bronzes: Qin and Han), Vol. 12, Beijing, 1998, no. 45, with description on p. 13. The same vessel is also illustrated in the excavation report *Guangzhou Han mu* (Excavation of the Han Tombs at Guangzhou), Beijing, 1981, pl. CLXIV–2, with a line drawing on p. 435, fig. 270–5. Compare also bronze *zun* of this type with a dish-shaped cover decorated with three finials, resting on feline tripod supports similar to the present example, also unearthed from the Guangzhou area and illustrated in the excavation report *Guangzhou Han mu* (Excavation of the Han Tombs at Guangzhou), *op. cit.*, pl. CLXV–1 and 2, with a line drawing on p. 435, fig. 270–4.

Another bronze *zun* of closely related form and with similar incised decoration but lacking the cover and resting on bear-form tripod supports is in the Palace Museum, Beijing, illustrated in *The Complete Collection of Treasures of the Palace Museum: Bronze Articles for Daily Use*, Hong Kong, 2007, p. 76, no. 66, described as a vessel for wine. Compare also the bronze *zun* of this type unearthed in 1988 from Chashanxiang, Pingqiao, Xingyang city, Henan province, illustrated in the catalogue of the special exhibition at the Tokyo National Museum, *The Birth of Chinese Civilization*, Tokyo, 2010, pp. 122–123, no. 94.

Research on this special group of archaic bronzes with elaborate pictorial decoration incised after casting which were produced in Southern China during the Han dynasty is summarized by Fontein and Wu, *Unearthing China's Past*, Boston, 1973, pp. 118–124, with illustrations of examples in museums and American private collections as well as archaeological evidence from Chinese excavation reports.

漢 鳳鈕禽紋博山銅樽 高 30 厘米





10. A BRONZE TRIPOD VESSEL AND COVER WITH INCISED DECORATION
Han Dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 220)

of compressed spherical form raised on three short splayed supports ending in hoof-shaped feet, finely decorated with a triple band of stylized 'feather tips' forming a broad frieze around the steeply rounded sides below a narrow band of dotted diamond lattice pattern, in turn surmounted by a raised plain band set with a pair of pierced flange handles supporting loose rings, the sloping shoulders engraved with a collar of slender 'leaf tips,' repeated as a border around the flat top of the cover enclosing a medallion of three elegantly drawn running deer filling a circle around the pierced flange knob, the flat vertical edge of the cover fitting precisely over the lip of the jar and engraved on the exterior with a band of concentric diamond motifs, the steel gray surface with attractive blue and green lightly encrusted patina overall, and showing traces of buff earth from burial.

Width 4 inches (10.2 cm)

The highly skilled artistic use of chiseling and incising techniques to ornament this vessel are characteristic of a special group of ancient metalwork produced in southern China which was centered around the areas now designated as Guizhou and Guangxi.

For a detailed discussion of this rare group of Han bronzes, including illustrations of examples from American private collections and museums as well as a summary of archaeological evidence from Chinese excavation reports, see the catalogue of the special exhibition mounted at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in 1973 by Fontein and Wu, *Unearthing China's Past*, Boston, 1973, pp. 118–124. The authors illustrate a small tripod covered vessel similar to the present example, from the collection of Dr. Paul Singer, as no. 54 on p. 120, and a line drawing of a covered *hu* engraved with the distinctive 'feather tips' motif in a frieze around the neck which was discovered in 1970 in a Han tomb at Hofuxian in Guangxi province is illustrated on p. 122.

Compare also the Han dynasty bronze tripod vessel of closely related form similarly decorated with incised diamond motifs and mythical animals, illustrated in *Ancient Chinese Arts in the Idemitsu Collection*, Tokyo, 1989, no. 185.

漢 羽紋三足銅罐 寬 10.2 厘米



11. AN ARCHAIC BRONZE TAOTIE MASK

Early Western Zhou Dynasty, 10th–9th Century B.C.

cast with stylized bovine horns curving up to sharp points above the large round bulging eyes flanked by small flat ears, the wide upper jaw defined by a pair of hooked fangs, with smooth dark green surface patina and widely scattered reddish cuprite encrustation.

Width 9 inches (22.9 cm)

Private collection, Geneva, since the 1950's

Compare the very similar bronze *taotie* mask of slightly larger size described as a “Bronze Horse Mask with Animal-Mask Design” (*ma guan*), in the collection of the Palace Museum, Beijing, illustrated in *The Complete Collection of Treasures of the Palace Museum: Bronze Articles for Daily Use*, Hong Kong, 2007, p. 9, no. 7, recorded as from the Qing Court collection and attributed to the Western Zhou dynasty. The author goes on to note the discovery of similar bronze masks in a Western Zhou burial with chariots and horses at Zhangjiapo, Xi'an, demonstrating that this type of mask was made for use as a chanfron or decorative frontlet mounted on the forehead of a horse.

A bronze *taotie* mask of smaller size unearthed from a Shang dynasty site in Huangbo district, a suburb of Wuhan city, Hubei province, is illustrated in the excavation report entitled *Panlongcheng* (The Panlongcheng Site: Report of Archaeological Excavation from 1963–1994), Vol.s I–II, Beijing, 2001, p. 428, pl. 314, nos. 3–4 in Vol. I; and col. pl. XLVII, no. 3 and pl. CXL, no. 5 in Vol. II. Another smaller *taotie* mask described as late Shang dynasty in the collection of the Shaanxi Provincial Museum is illustrated in *Shaanxi chutu Shang Zhou qingtongqi* (Shang and Zhou Bronzes Unearthed in Shaanxi Province), Vol. I, Beijing, 1979, no. 39.

A bronze *taotie* mask of this type excavated in 1976 from a Western Zhou site at Zhuyuangou, Baoji city, now in the collection of Baoji City Museum, is illustrated in the catalogue of the special exhibition shown at the International Museum of the Horse, Lexington, Kentucky, entitled *Imperial China: The Art of the Horse in Chinese History*, Prospect, 2000, p. 74, no. 1, together with line drawings illustrating the way in which the mask was mounted on the horse's head. The same bronze mask is illustrated by Li (ed.) in *Shaanxi qingtongqi* (The Shaanxi Bronzes), Xi'an, 1994, p. 325, no. 285; and in the excavation report published in *Wenwu*, 1978, No. 5, pl. 2, no. 3.

Other bronze horse masks in museum and private collections are illustrated by Owyong in *Ancient Chinese Bronzes in the Saint Louis Art Museum*, St. Louis, 1997, pp. 124–125, no. 34; by Wang in *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, London, 2009, pp. 137–138, nos. 137–138; and by Kelley and Ch'en in *Chinese Bronzes from the Buckingham Collection*, The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, 1946, pls. XL–XLI, pp. 72–75.

西周早期 饕餮面銅馬冠 寬 22.9 厘米



12. A PAIR OF ARCHAIC BRONZE HORSE BRIDLE ORNAMENTS

Middle Western Zhou Dynasty, *circa* 8th Century B.C.

each cheek piece cast in an elaborate openwork 'C'-shape with volutes and curls and incorporating circular 'eyes', channelled on the reverse and cast with loops for attachment, the bronze surface with bright green patination overall and traces of encrusted earth from burial.

Length 5 1/8 inches (13 cm) each

Exhibited Honolulu Academy of Arts, *Asian Orientations: Treasures from Honolulu's Oriental Art Society*, July 11–August 25, 1985

Published Link (ed.). *Asian Orientations: Treasures from Honolulu's Oriental Art Society*, Honolulu, 1985, p. 89, no. 1, with description on p. 35

Compare two pairs of Western Zhou bronze cheek pieces discovered in Fufeng county, Shaanxi province, now in the collection of Shaanxi Provincial Zhouyan Museum, illustrated in the catalogue of the special exhibition shown at the International Museum of the Horse in Lexington, Kentucky, entitled *Imperial China: The Art of the Horse in Chinese History*, Prospect, 2000, p. 88, no. 38.

西周中期 銅馬鑣一對 各寬 13 厘米

13. AN ARCHAIC BRONZE LADLE (*SHAO*)

Late Shang–Early Western Zhou Dynasty, 11th–10th Century B.C.

with long flat serpentine handle curving down to a fan-shaped terminal, joined to the barrel-shaped bowl by a stylized bird and monster-mask motif with two pairs of short wings filled with angular scroll motifs in thread relief, the bowl with steely-gray patina showing scattered green corrosion, the handle lightly encrusted with green corrosion.

Length 7 1/8 inches (18.1 cm)

Bronze ladles of this form were made for use with ritual wine vessels such as *gong*, *you*, *zun*, or *lei*. The bends of the handle allowed the ladle to rest over the side of the vessel with the bowl inside.

Compare the bronze ladle and *gong* in the Shanghai Museum, illustrated in *Zhongguo qingtongqi quanji: Xi Zhou, I* (Compendium of Chinese Bronzes: Western Zhou, I), Vol. 5, Beijing, 1996, p. 94, no. 99, with description on p. 31.

Similar early Western Zhou bronze ladles in museum and private collections are illustrated by Wang, *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, London, 2009, pp. 78–79, no. 32; in the collection of the National Palace Museum, Taipei, illustrated in *Catalogue of the Special Exhibition of Shang and Chou Dynasty Bronze Wine Vessels*, Taipei, 1989, p. 155, no. 47; and in the collection of Shaanxi Provincial Museum, illustrated in *Shaanxi chutu Shang Zhou qingtongqi* (Shang and Zhou Bronzes Unearthed in Shaanxi Province), Vol. I, Beijing, 1979, p. 132, no. 151 with description on p. 23 noting that the ladle was inside a *you* vessel when excavated. Two other archaic bronze ladles of similar form were shown at the *International Exhibition of Chinese Art*, London, 1935–36, catalogue no. 237, from the Stoclet Collection, Brussels, and no. 319, from the Duan Fang altar set now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

晚商至西周早期 銅勺 長 18.1 厘米



14. AN INSCRIBED ARCHAIC BRONZE LAMP (*DOU*)

Han Dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 220)

with tall baluster standard rising from a high flaring foot of circular form, supporting a wide circular pan with straight, narrow sides and with a short pricket at the center to anchor the candle, the surface showing a smooth darkly mottled patina with widely scattered malachite green encrustation, with an inscription of eleven characters incised along the exterior edge of the base.

Height $9\frac{3}{16}$ inches (23.2 cm)

The inscription may be read as *Xiangcheng jia tong zhu dou zhong shi jin si liang* (襄城家銅燭豆重十斤四兩) and may be translated as “Xiangcheng family bronze candle lamp, weight ten *jin* four *liang*.”

A bronze lamp of very similar form and size but without inscription, unearthed in 1975 from a Western Han tomb in Maquan, Xianyang city, Shaanxi province, is illustrated in the excavation report in *Kaogu*, 1979, No. 2, pl. 10, with a line drawing on p. 129, pl. 5, no. 6.

An inscribed bronze lamp of this form excavated in 1968 from the Western Han tomb of prince Liu Sheng (d. 113 B.C.) at Mancheng, Lingshan, Hebei province, is illustrated in *Treasures from Hebei Provincial Museum*, Beijing, 1999, no. 28.

Compare also the larger bronze lamp of similar form dated by inscription to the 4th year of Yuanyan reign of Western Han dynasty (9 B.C.), in the Nanjing University Museum, illustrated in *Treasures from Nanjing University*, Beijing, 2002, no. 43, p. 26.

Another bronze lamp of similar form with a two-character inscription which may be read as *gong miao* and may be translated as “official temple,” indicating it was made for ceremonial use, excavated in 1985 from Xingjiang district in Jiangsu province, is illustrated in the catalogue *Yangzhou guancang wenwu jinghua* (Masterpieces from the Yangzhou Museum), Nanjing, 2001, p. 20, no. 24.

For a thorough discussion of bronze lamps in ancient China based on archaeological finds, see the article by Ye entitled “*Zhanguo Qin Han de deng ji youguan wenti*” (Issues Regarding Lamps of the Warring States, Qin and Han), *Wenwu*, 1983, No. 7, pp.78–86.

漢 襄城家銅燭豆 高 23.2 厘米



15. AN ARCHAIC BRONZE HILL CENSER (*BOSHANLU*)

Han Dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 220)

the pierced cover elaborately cast in the form of a mountain with groves of trees and numerous figures and animals in relief, the stylized cliffs rising to a central peak, with apertures behind the cliffs to allow the incense smoke to emerge, the figures and animals including a monkey, a mountain-sprite thrusting his spear at a rearing tiger, a man hunting with bow and arrow, a phoenix, a traveler with a donkey cart, a tiger attacking a unicorn, another mountain-sprite confronting a tiger, and a hound pursuing several deer, the edge of the cover fitted over the raised inner rim of the bowl-form censer, on a short cylindrical standard with spreading circular foot decorated with three stylized dragons in relief, the surface with scattered green and red patination overall.

Height 7½ inches (19 cm)

The *boshanlu* was an innovation of the Western Han. The elaborate imagery of the cover is a depiction of the 'sacred mountains', which were regarded in Han cosmology as an intermediary realm between heaven and earth. The high peaks of the 'sacred mountains' were a magic place where men encountered spirits and mythical beasts amidst the clouds.

The term *boshanlu* can be traced back to the 4th century or earlier, but no particular Bo mountain can be identified in Chinese literature or geography, and the specific origins of the term remain a mystery. One traditional Chinese explanation is that the censer represents Mount Hua. It is said that the King Zhao of Qin challenged the heavenly spirits to a game of *liubo* on Mount Hua, and so in honor of this event, the mountain was given the name of Bo Mountain (*shan*). Berthold Laufer suggested that the mountain represents Penglai, the magical realm of the Daoist Immortals. It has also been suggested that the mountain represents Kunlun, the cosmic mountain of China which was said to exist in a range of mystical mountains northwest of the Chinese frontier.

A Western Han bronze *boshanlu* of similar form and design in the Harold and Arlene Schnitzer Collection is illustrated by Jenkins, *Mysterious Spirits, Strange Beasts, Earthly Delights*, Portland Art Museum, Oregon, 2005, pp. 26-27.

For a detailed discussion of the imagery and cosmology embodied in this type of censer, see *Sacred Mountains in Chinese Art* by Munakata, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1991, where the author illustrates a Han bronze mountain-form censer lid of very similar design from the Chicago Field Museum of Natural History, p. 73, no. 18, and refers to two other more elaborate versions of closely related design, one excavated in 1968 from the tomb of princess Dou Wan of Zhongshan in Mancheng, Hebei, dated to 118–104 B.C., and the other in the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. The author goes on to say that the shared iconography and quality of casting indicates that these censers "... were made in the imperial workshop or in the workshops closely related to it."

漢 銅博山爐 高 19 厘米



16. A SET OF FOUR PAINTED BRONZE MAT WEIGHTS
IN THE FORM OF *LIUBO* PLAYERS

Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 8)

each figure compactly cast in the round, the men shown in various seated poses and with different facial expressions, playing or watching the game, all wearing long robes and with hair pulled back into a tight bun at the back, with extensive original painted decoration in red, blue, green, white, and black pigments extraordinarily well preserved, the interior of each hollow figure filled with lead.

Heights $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches– $3\frac{3}{8}$ inches (7 cm–8.6 cm)

Exhibited *Asian Games: The Art of Contest*

Asia Society Museum, New York, October 14, 2004–January 16, 2005

Freer and Sackler Galleries, Washington D.C., February 26–May 15, 2005

Middlebury College Museum of Art, Vermont, September 17–December 11, 2005

A Bronze Menagerie: Mat Weights of Early China

Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, October 5, 2006–January 14, 2007

Published Mackenzie and Finkel (eds.), *Asian Games: The Art of Contest*, New York, 2004,
p. 43, no. 2:8 a–b

Wang, *A Bronze Menagerie: Mat Weights of Early China*, Boston, 2006, pp. 110–111, no. 12

In his caption for the illustration of this set of figural bronze weights in *Asian Games: The Art of Contest*, Mackenzie writes: "Weights were used in ancient China to hold mats in place. Larger weights were used for seating mats, but smaller ones such as this group may have been used to hold *liubo* throwing mats. . . . These weights probably represent players engaged in a drinking game that involves hand gestures. As is usual with such weights, one figure seems almost comatose, no doubt having been drunk under the table by his companions."

Compare the set of four figural weights excavated from tomb no. 1 at Fujiagou, Lingtai county, Gansu province, now in the Lingtai County Cultural Center, illustrated in *Zhongguo meishu quanji: diaosubian* (Compendium of Chinese Works of Art: Sculpture), Vol. 2, Beijing, 1988, no. 75, where the figures are identified as dice players and the scene is described as follows: ". . . almost forgetting how to behave themselves, the dice thrower and his partner seem to be shouting at the top of their voices. When the thrower is ready to drop the dice, his partner is raising his left hand to boost his morale. Their opponents keep their mouths shut and are watching the act with bated breath." The same set of bronze figural weights is also illustrated in *Zhongguo qingtongqi quanji: Qin Han* (Compendium of Chinese Bronzes: Qin and Han), Vol. 12, Beijing, 1998, no. 134, with description on p. 44. Compare also a group of four player-form bronze weights excavated in 1971 from Xi'an, Shaanxi province, now in the collection of the Xi'an City Historical Park, included in the special exhibition at the Empress Place, Singapore, and illustrated in the catalogue entitled *Treasures from the Han*, Singapore, 1990, p. 59.

Similar sets of bronze *liubo* player-form weights in museum and private collections are illustrated by Wang in *Chinese Bronzes from the Meiyintang Collection*, London, 2009, pp. 294–295, no. 149; in the collection of the Idemitsu Museum of Arts, illustrated in *Ancient Chinese Arts in the Idemitsu Collection*, Tokyo, 1989, pl. 253; and in the collection of Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Brussels, illustrated by Deydier in *Chinese Bronzes*, Fribourg, Switzerland, 1980, p. 133, pl. 102.

西漢 彩繪四人博戲銅俑 高 7 至 8.6 厘米



17. A BRONZE RAM-FORM LAMP (YANG DENG)

Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 8)

well cast in the form of plump recumbent ram with slender legs tucked under and held close at the sides, shown facing straight ahead, with long ribbed horns curled behind pointed ears and a stylized goatee extending from the chin to the rounded chest, the domed back separately made and attached to the body by a flanged hinge at the back of the head, allowing the hollowed underside of the back to serve as a container to hold lamp-oil and a wick when swung open to rest above the ram's head, the ram's pointed tail at the back also serving as a small handle, the exterior surface decorated all over with incised bands of different linear designs, crosshatching and stippling, with a smooth dark patina mottled in reddish-brown.

Length 5½ inches (14 cm)

From the Collection of Lord Cunliffe (1899–1963), no. A51

A very similar bronze ram-form lamp, also with finely incised surface decoration, in the collection of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, is illustrated by Fontein and Wu in *Unearthing China's Past*, Boston, 1973, pp. 108–109. Another similar lamp with engraved surface designs is in the collection of the Musée Guimet, illustrated by Delacour in *De bronze, d'or et d'argent: Arts somptuaires de la Chine*, Paris, 2001, pp. 92–93; and a ram-form lamp of this type in the collection of the Museum Rietberg is illustrated by Brinker in *Bronzen aus dem alten China*, Zurich, 1975, pp. 110–111, no. 60.

A large bronze ram-form lamp without engraved decoration excavated in 1968 at Mancheng, Hebei province, from the tomb of prince Liu Sheng who was king of Zhongshan from 154 B.C. and died in 113 B.C., was included in the exhibition of archaeological finds from the People's Republic of China at the Royal Academy, London, and illustrated in the exhibition catalogue entitled *The Genius of China*, London, 1973, p. 106, no. 164. The same lamp is illustrated again by Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens in *The Han Dynasty*, New York, 1982, p. 106, no. 63; by Yang (ed.) in *The Golden Age of Chinese Archaeology*, Washington, D.C., 1999, pp. 404–405, no. 135; and in the excavation report *Mancheng Han mu fajue baogao* (Excavation of the Han Tombs at Man-ch'eng), Vol.s I–II, Beijing, 1980, in a line drawing on p. 68, no. 47 in Vol. I, and pl. XXXIV in Vol. II.

Other bronze ram-form lamps in museum and private collections are illustrated in *Royal Ontario Museum: The T. T. Tsui Galleries of Chinese Art*, Toronto, 1996, no. 33; in the China Institute exhibition catalogue by Schloss, *Art of the Han*, New York, 1979, p. 58, no. 34, from the collection of Paul Singer; in *Guangxi wenwu zhengping* (Gems of Cultural Relics in Guangxi), Nanning, 2002, p. 81, no. 94, with a note indicating that the lamp was excavated in 1982 from Xinghua county, Long'an, Chashan and currently is in the Yulin City Museum; by Michaelson in *Gilded Dragons: Buried Treasures from China's Golden Ages*, British Museum, London, 1999, p. 58, no. 29, excavated in 1984 at Baoji, Fengxiang county, Shaanxi province and currently in the collection of the Xi'an City Cultural Relics Storehouse.

西漢 銅羊燈 長 14 厘米



18. AN INLAID GILT BRONZE BEAR

Han Dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 220)

vigorously modelled in a tense, crouching pose, leaning forward and snarling with jaws open wide, all four paws with long sharp claws and with a wide ruff of fur framing the head, the surface elaborately incised all over with short wavy lines to suggest fur and with tiered wings or flame motifs curling back from the haunches and shoulders and incised with small ring motifs, the straight backbone also with small ring motifs and with short, curled fur or flames incised above the stubby tail, the eyes deeply hollowed for inlays now lost, and showing cinnabar red in the recesses, the forehead and raised ears with turquoise inlays, and the arms, legs and belly all with deep circular recesses showing cinnabar remaining inside, the body hollow-cast and the top of the head with a wide opening, the surface richly gilded and the gilding very well preserved, with some small areas of bright green corrosion around the arms and feet.

Height $2\frac{7}{8}$ inches (7.2 cm)

Compare the smaller gilt bronze bears supporting a *hu* wine container inscribed with a Han date corresponding to A.D. 45, in the Palace Museum, Beijing, illustrated by Weng and Yang in *The Palace Museum: Peking: Treasures of the Forbidden City*, New York, 1982, p. 143, pl. 76.

Other similar Han gilt bronze bears in various sizes, all hollow-cast as vessel supports and with provision for inlays, are published by Brinker, *Bronzen aus dem alten China*, Zurich, 1975, p. 153, no. 125, in the collection of the Rietberg Museum; by Ayers in the catalogue of the exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum entitled *The Mount Trust Collection of Chinese Art*, London, 1970, no. 12; in the catalogue entitled *Ancient Chinese Arts in the Idemitsu Collection*, Tokyo, 1989, no. 256; and by Delacour in the catalogue published by the Musée Guimet entitled *De bronze, d'or et d'argent: Arts somptuaires de la Chine*, Paris, 2001, p. 292, fig. 5.

漢 鑲金嵌松石熊形銅足 高 7.2 厘米



19. A GILT BRONZE RAM-FORM WEIGHT

Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 8)

the recumbent animal well modelled in a quiet pose with head turned to the left and slightly raised, with three legs held in close to the body and one hind leg modelled in the round, the muscular body smoothly contoured and the small, stylized tail curled down at the rump, the large horns powerfully curved and deeply ribbed, the richly gilded surface showing natural wear exposing the bronze beneath, with some light green encrustation and warm reddish-brown patination, the interior filled with lead amalgam.

Length $3\frac{3}{8}$ inches (8.6 cm)

In Han China people customarily sat on woven mats on the floor. Sculpted weights were placed at the corners of the floor mat as a luxurious decoration and a display of rank. The image of a ram is symbolic of good fortune in China because the pronunciation of the word for “ram” (*yang*) closely mimics the pronunciation of the word for “auspicious” (*xiang*); and the ram has been a popular image in Chinese art since antiquity.

Compare the similarly modelled bronze ram-form weight excavated from a Western Han tomb in Hebei, illustrated in a line drawing by Sun, “*Han zhen yishu*” (Notes on the Design and Manufacture of Weights in the Han Dynasty), *Wenwu*, 1983, No. 6, p. 70, fig. 7. Another similar bronze ram-form weight excavated from a Chu State tomb in Jiangling, Hubei is illustrated in *Kaogu*, 1980, No. 5, pl. 5:1.

For a discussion of the forms of ancient Chinese weights and their function, see the catalogue of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum exhibition by Wang, *A Bronze Menagerie: Mat Weights of Early China*, Boston, 2006.

西漢 鑲金銅羊鎮 長 8.6 厘米



20. A GILT BRONZE FIGURE OF A PHOENIX

Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 8)

solid cast and with finely engraved linear detailing, the mythical bird shown standing with wings folded and head erect, holding a 'pearl' in its beak, its large tail cast as six plumes arrayed symmetrically and fanned out above six shorter tail feathers curled down in matching groups of three on each side, and with a pointed tuft of feathers in front extending down from the rounded chest, the head with feather-tufts sweeping back on each side behind the large staring eyes which are surmounted by curling eyebrows, and with a small circular recess on top of the head, the powerful legs ending in large talons and the surface embellished with incised stylized feather markings and other linear detailing including numerous small circles and scroll motifs, the gilding well preserved and with widely scattered bright green and red surface patination.

Height 4¹¹/₁₆ inches (11.9 cm)

Han gilt bronze animal sculptures are extremely rare. A free-standing small gilt bronze bird with high plumed tail and similar engraved details is illustrated by Lefebvre d'Argencé, (ed.) in *Chinese, Korean and Japanese Sculpture: The Avery Brundage Collection, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco*, Tokyo, 1974, pp. 60–61, no. 16, where the author cites another example unearthed from a Han dynasty tomb in Ding county, Hebei province, published in *Wenwu*, 1964, No. 12, pl. 1–3.

A less elaborately detailed gilt bronze phoenix-finial excavated in 1980 at Lintong county, Shaanxi province, less than one kilometer north of the tomb of Qin Shihuangdi, was included in the traveling exhibition which toured Japan in 1994–95 and is illustrated in the Setagaya Museum of Art catalogue, *Shin no Shik tei to sono jidaiten* (Exhibition of the Archaeological Relics of the Emperor Qin Shihuang), Tokyo, 1994, no. 115. The same gilt bronze phoenix is illustrated by Li in *Eternal China: Splendors from the First Dynasties*, Dayton, 1998, pp. 66–67, no. 5.

A gilt bronze vessel made in the form of two cups joined by a phoenix was discovered in 1968 at Mancheng, Hebei province, in the tomb of princess Dou Wan, the wife of prince Liu Sheng (d. 113 B.C.), ruler of the Western Han kingdom of Zhongshan and a son of the emperor, and a phoenix-form bronze lamp was found in the same tomb. See the excavation report entitled *Mancheng Han mu fajue baogao* (Excavation of the Han Tombs at Man-ch'eng), Beijing 1980, Vol. II, col. pls. XXIV and XXV. Both of those Han phoenix-bird objects have been widely published and exhibited since their discovery and can be found in many different publications in English and Chinese.

Compare also the group of four small gilt bronze animals discovered in 1974 in a Han dynasty tomb at Yanshi county, Henan, and now in the Henan Provincial Museum, illustrated in the catalogue of the special exhibition shown at the Empress Place, Singapore, 1990–91, *Treasures from the Han*, Singapore, 1990, p. 69.

西漢 鑲金銅鳳凰 高 11.9 厘米



21. A PAINTED BRONZE MIRROR

Han Dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 220)

decorated with figures, animals and sparse elements of landscape in a wide band enclosed by the plain silvery-bronze outer border with upturned rim and a narrow concave inner band enclosing a recessed ground cast in flat relief with a eight-point stellate collar surrounding the pierced central knob rising from a small inset medallion painted in bright red; the main decoration in the outer band painted in white, black and green over a vermilion ground with various scenes including three figures in a chariot drawn by white horses following a rider on a galloping horse, small groups of standing figures and seated figures, thin trees and horses, all partially visible and interspersed with traces of roundels surrounded by stylized green clouds separating the scenes and with line borders and dotted motifs in white at the edges of the red field, the plain reverse polished for use as a reflecting surface, showing extensive bright malachite green corrosion.

Diameter 9 inches (23 cm)

A bronze mirror with similar painted decoration on a vermilion ground discovered in 1963 at Hongmiaopo in Xi'an, Shaanxi province and now in the Shaanxi History Museum is illustrated in *Zhongguo qingtongqi quanji: tongjing* (Compendium of Chinese Bronzes: Bronze Mirrors), Vol. 16, Beijing, 1998, pp. 43–44, no. 44. The same mirror also is published in several other catalogues including *Zhongguo wenwu jinghua* (Gems of China's Cultural Relics), Beijing, 1992, pl. 116; and in the catalogue of special exhibition organized by the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington, Kentucky, *Imperial China: The Art of the Horse in Chinese History*, Prospect, 2000, p. 141, no. 124.

Another example of this very rare type of painted bronze mirror, in the Harvard University Art Museums, donated by Grenville L. Winthrop in 1934, is illustrated in *Grenville L. Winthrop: Retrospective for a Collector*, Cambridge, 1969, pp. 58–59, no. 56. Compare also the painted bronze mirror of this type illustrated by Liu *et. al.* in *Recarving China's Past: Art, Archaeology, and Architecture of the "Wu Family Shrines,"* Princeton, 2005, pp. 380–383, no. 39.

漢 彩繪人物車馬銅鏡 徑 23 厘米



22. AN ARCHAIC BRONZE OPENWORK ORNAMENTAL PLAQUE
Eastern Zhou Dynasty (770–256 B.C.)

of trapezoidal shape with concave lateral flanks flaring towards the top, framed by a continuous border of round bosses, and with a slightly tapered pin emerging from a stylized animal head at the center of the flat base, the openwork panel decorated in shallow relief on one side with four rows of different animals separated by rows of bosses; the uppermost row with eleven slender long-horned sheep or antelope running from left to right above a band of small bosses; the second row cast with five bovine beasts with hooked horns, shaggy bodies and long bushy tails walking from left to right above a band of five larger bosses each decorated with intaglio whirl motifs around a central nipple; the third row with three long-tailed feline beasts, with beaded and striped designs on their sides, pacing from right to left above a row of five plain bosses surrounded by multiple concentric rings, the bottom row with four serpents with pointed heads, their flattened bodies decorated with beaded 'scales', arranged in pairs and oriented to the center; the decoration all conjoined by numerous short struts, the reverse plain and with a pair of small loops for attachment, with smooth reddish-brown patina overall.

Width 5½ inches (14 cm)

Length 5⅞ inches (15 cm)

Compare the similar bronze openwork plaque unearthed in the Aba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous District of Western Sichuan province at Moutuo village, Maoxian, illustrated in color on the cover of *Wenwu*, 1994, No. 3, and in a line drawing on p. 30; illustrated again in *Zhongguo qingtongqi quanji: Bashu* (Compendium of Chinese Bronzes: Sichuan), Vol. 13, Beijing, 1994, pl. 65. The Moutuo excavation was a single tomb or cenotaph and three caches, all apparently buried within a short time span, found to contain more than 100 bronze objects of widely different types, styles, and geographical origins.

The Moutuo plaque is discussed at length by von Falkenhausen in an article entitled "The Moutuo Bronzes: New Perspectives on the late Bronze Age in Sichuan," published in *Arts Asiatiques*, tome 51, 1996, pp. 29–59, where the group of bronzes found at the site is described as "... the most startlingly heterogenous archaeological assemblage [excavated] in East Asia to-date" and the plaque is referred to as "... easily the most enigmatic object in the Moutuo assemblage..." In the course of discussion, von Falkenhausen points out that "The intricate openwork animal decoration of the Moutuo 'plaque ornament' might ... suggest connections with the Dian culture." He further notes that "similarities to northerly areas—the Zhou cultural area as well as the Eurasian Steppes should also be noted." In summarizing his thoughts about the Moutuo plaque, von Falkenhausen proposes that "stylistically and iconographically, the Moutuo 'plaque ornament' seems, thus, to constitute a bridge between the bronze-casting tradition of the Eurasian Steppes and Southeast Asia (including Dian)."

東周 動物紋鏤空銅牌飾 寬 14 厘米 長 15 厘米



23. A BRONZE KNIFE WITH HANDLE IN THE FORM OF A MYTHICAL BEAST
Western Zhou Dynasty (1027–771 B.C.)

the slender curving blade with sharp cutting edge rounded up to a point at the tip, the thick squared back of the blade widening toward the handle which is cast in the form of a fabulous animal with feline body and large grotesque head surmounted by long ribbed horns curled behind 'C'-shaped ears, the body and head of the beast with swirling and curling linear motifs and large round eyes on the matching flattened sides separated by a deep slot extending from the top of the head down to the center of the body, the wide opening at the edges bridged by struts, and with smaller apertures pierced through the forepaws, between the tail and the hind legs and at the widest part of the blade; the surface with a glossy black 'water patina' showing areas of lightly encrusted green malachite corrosion on one side.

Length 7½ inches (19 cm)

Compare the cast bronze dagger with double-edged blade similarly decorated with a mythical beast on the handle, unearthed in 1983 from a late Western Zhou tomb at Yu village, Ning county, Gansu province, illustrated in the excavation report in *Kaogu*, 1985, No. 4, pl. 5-2, with an image of a rubbing on p. 350, pl. 3-1.

Compare also the archaic bronze handle cast in a very similar style with a standing mythical beast with large grotesque head and flattened body, from the Collection of H. M. Gustaf VI Adolf, now in the Museum of Far East Antiquities, Stockholm, illustrated by Gyllensvärd and Pope in the catalogue of the travelling exhibition entitled *Chinese Art from the Collection of H. M. King Gustaf VI Adolf of Sweden*, Asia House, New York, 1966, p. 34, no. 31. The same bronze handle was previously illustrated in the *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities*, No. 6, Stockholm, 1934, pl. XXV, described on pp. 112-113; and was illustrated more recently by Li and Allan in *Ouzhou suocang Zhongguo qingtongqi yizhu* (Chinese Bronzes: A Selection from European Collections), Beijing, 1995, no. 104A-B, attributed by the authors to early Western Zhou.

西周 獸紋柄銅刀 長 19 厘米



24. AN INSCRIBED ARCHAIC BRONZE DAGGER-AXE WITH GOLD INLAY (*Ji*)
Eastern Zhou Dynasty, *circa* 5th Century B.C.

the slender double-edged blade of 'willow leaf' shape with rounded medial ridge on both sides, finely inlaid in gold in bird script on one side with three characters running horizontally along the upper edge of the blade and three characters running vertically near the inner edge of the blade extending down the *hu* which is pierced with two elongated rectangular slots along the raised border of the narrow hafting flange below the flat projecting *nei* pierced with a matching rectangular slot and inlaid in gold on both sides with double-line borders and twin hooked scroll motifs toward the rounded end, the smooth surface of the bronze with mottled gray-green patination, showing widely scattered lightly encrusted corrosion.

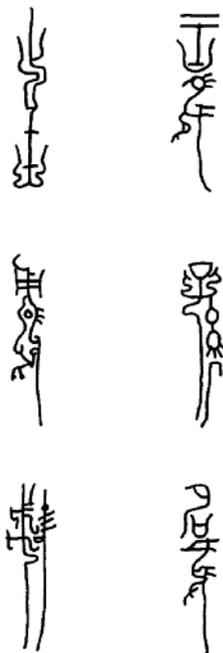
Length 10³/₈ inches (26.2 cm)

The bird script characters inlaid in gold on this dagger-axe may be read as *wang sun ming zhi yong ji* (王孫名之用戟) and may be translated as "ji for the use of Wang Sun Ming."

The name Wang Sun Ming is referred to by Ma (ed.) in *Shang Zhou qingtongqi mingwen xuan* (Selected Bronze Inscriptions from the Shang and Zhou), Vol. 4, Beijing, 1990, p. 428, footnote no. 1, as a person from the state of Chu. According to Zhang in the short essay discussing gold-inlaid bird script "Study on Gold Inlaid Bird Script Bronze *Ge* Daggers Unearthed from Wanrong" published in *Wenwu*, 1962, Nos. 4-5, this type of very decorative inscription is first seen on bronze weapons made in Southern China during the late Spring and Autumn period.

Very similar bronze *ji* daggers decorated with gold-inlaid bird script were unearthed in 1978 from the tomb of the Marquis Yi of Zeng (*circa* 433-400 B.C.) in Leigudun, Suizhou, Hubei province. According to the excavation report, a *ji* dagger with a projecting *nei* like the present example was typically mounted at the top of a set of three on a long wooden shaft. Compare the set of bronze *ji* daggers unearthed from the Marquis Yi of Zeng tomb illustrated in the excavation report *Zeng Hou Yi mu* (Tomb of Marquis Yi of State Zeng), Vol.s I-II, Beijing, 1989, p. 267, no. 157 in Vol. I, and pl. XCI in Vol. II. The same set of *ji* daggers is again illustrated in *Zhongguo qingtongqi quanji: Dong Zhou, IV* (Compendium of Chinese Bronzes: Eastern Zhou, IV), Vol. 10, Beijing, 1998, no. 170, with description on p. 58.

東周 錯金鳥篆王孫名銅戟 長 26.2 厘米





25. A RARE GOLD- AND SILVER-INLAID BRONZE DIE

Han Dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 220)

of almost spherical form, with eighteen flat sides of circular outline each inlaid with a single Chinese character in seal script, including the characters *jiu lai* (“wine comes to you”) inlaid in silver and *jiao* (possibly meaning “leader” or “win”) inlaid in gold, filling the small medallions at the two opposite pole positions and the numerals 1–16 in silver within gold-edged medallions symmetrically arranged over the surface, further embellished with turquoise, agate and rock crystal inlays surrounded by gold and silver cloud scroll motifs filling the interstices between the faces, the exposed bronze with reddish-brown patination and traces of malachite green corrosion from burial.

Width 1⅜ inches (3.5 cm)

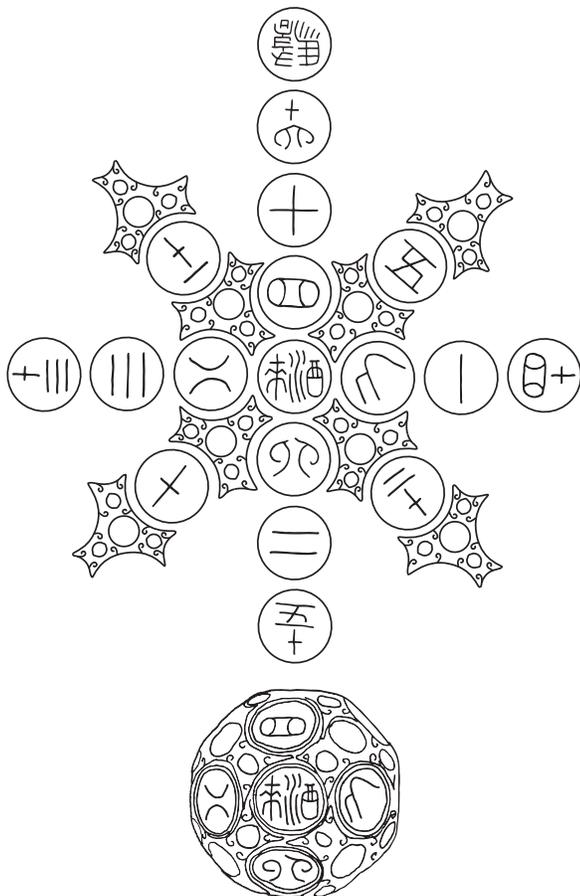
Exhibited *Asian Games: The Art of Contest*

Asia Society Museum, New York, October 14, 2004–January 16, 2005

Freer and Sackler Galleries, Washington D.C., February 26–May 15, 2005

Middlebury College Museum of Art, Vermont, September 17–December 11, 2005

Published Mackenzie and Finkel (eds.). *Asian Games: The Art of Contest*, New York, 2004, p. 43, no. 2:8 a–b, and on the back cover



A similarly decorated eighteen-sided bronze die inlaid with gold, silver, turquoise, agate, and rock crystal, unearthed in 1968 from the tomb of princess Dou Wan at Mancheng in Hebei province, is illustrated in *Mancheng Han mu fajue baogao* (Excavation of the Han Tombs at Man-ch'eng), Vol.s I–II, Beijing, 1980, as a line drawing on p. 274 in Vol. I and as pl. CLXXXVI, no. 2 in Vol. II. The Mancheng die was unearthed together with a set of 40 bronze coins cast with 20 rhymes and numbers 1 to 20, possibly made for a drinking game.

Similarly inscribed wood and lacquered die of this form, excavated in 1973 from the Western Han tomb in Fenghuangshan, Jiangling county, Hubei province, are illustrated in the excavation report in *Wenwu*, 1974, No. 6, p. 59, no. 37; and another wood die excavated in 1973 from a Han dynasty tomb at Mawangdui in Changsha, Hunan province, together with a lacquered wood *liubo* game set, is illustrated in the excavation report in *Changsha Mawangdui er, san hao Han mu* (Tombs 2 and 3 from the Han Dynasty at Mawangdui, Changsha: Report on Excavation), Vol. I, Beijing, 2004, col. pl. XXXVI, no. 3.

This complex multifaceted piece is an example of the earliest known form of Chinese die. In a chapter entitled “*Liubo: The Five-Hundred-Year Craze*” in *Asian Games: The Art of Contest*, New York, 2004, pp. 113–125, Mackenzie discusses the possible use of this type of die for the board game *liubo*. In the caption below the illustration of this particular die, *op. cit.* p. 43, however, he notes that the characters *jiu lai* indicate that it might have been used for a drinking game.

漢 錯金銀鑲嵌銅骰 寬 3.5 厘米



26. ELEMENTS FROM A SET OF INLAID BRONZE CHARIOT FITTINGS
AND HORSE TRAPPINGS

Early Western Han Dynasty, late 3rd–2nd Century B.C.

a slender shield-shaped horse frontlet (*danglu*) inlaid in gold with knobbed swirling cloud scroll motifs in a symmetrical arrangement and embellished with agate and turquoise inlays throughout, the reverse with loops for attachment.

a dragonhead-form open-ended terminal with tubular core and slender rising half-round back piece, inlaid in gold with scroll, spiral and flame motifs and embellished with agate and turquoise inlays throughout.

a dragonhead-form terminal with slender rising half-round back piece, inlaid in gold with scroll, spiral and flame motifs and embellished with agate and turquoise inlays throughout.

a pair of arched 'U'-shaped rein-guides inlaid in gold and silver with interlaced cloud scroll motifs.

a pair of wide rings, each rounded on one side and inlaid in gold with cloud scroll motifs surrounding turquoise and agate bosses, the flattened reverse inlaid in gold with interlaced cloud scroll motifs.

a pair of small oval half-round ornaments inlaid with gold cloud scroll motifs surrounding turquoise and agate bosses, the reverse with loops for attachment.

a group of four finials from a chariot canopy, each of slender tubular form tapered slightly to a rounded terminal above a short curved spike projecting at one side, inlaid in gold with scroll motifs and with turquoise and agate bosses within gold-inlaid zigzag lines on the knobs.

a pair of snaffle bits each with a twist-fluted shaft to be held in the horse's teeth and with twin oval terminals inlaid in gold with cloud scroll motifs surrounding turquoise and agate bosses.

a pair of slender 'S'-shaped cheek-pieces for a bridle, each pierced with two slots to receive the straps and with wing-shaped flanges on opposite sides of either end, inlaid in gold with interlaced cloud scroll motifs on both sides, and embellished with turquoise and agate inlays on one side.

Frontlet (*danglu*) Length $10\frac{7}{8}$ inches (27.6 cm); Terminal Length $4\frac{7}{8}$ inches (12.5 cm); Terminal Length 5 inches (12.7 cm); Rein Guides Width $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches (8.3 cm) each; Rings Diameter $1\frac{15}{16}$ inches (4.8 cm) each; Oval Ornaments Length $1\frac{1}{8}$ inches (2.8 cm) each; Finials Length $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches (7 cm) each; Snaffle Bits Length $8\frac{3}{4}$ inches (22.1 cm) and $8\frac{3}{8}$ inches (21.2 cm); Cheek-Pieces Length 9 inches (22.8 cm) each

Similar inlaid bronze chariot fittings and horse trappings with turquoise and agate embellishments discovered in the tomb of prince Liu Sheng (d. 113 B.C.) at Lingshan, Mancheng, Hebei province are illustrated in the excavation report, *Mancheng Han mu fajue baogao* (Excavation of the Han Tombs at Man-ch'eng), Vol.s I and II, Beijing, 1980; see Vol. II: pls. 124, 125, 129, 133, 139, 141, 143, 223, and 228; and line drawings in Vol. I: fig.s 129, 131, 132, 136, 137, and 219.

For a detailed description and illustrations of a Western Han chariot with inlaid bronze fittings discovered in Changqing county, Shandong province, see article "Reconstruction and Study of the Horse-drawn Carriage No. 1 from Han Tomb No. 1 on Shuangru Hill" by Cui in *Kaogu*, 1997, No. 3, pp. 16–25 and pl. 4.

A reconstructed version of the Western Han dynasty chariot excavated in 1992 at Maoling, Shaanxi province with original inlaid bronze fittings was shown in the special exhibition organized by the Kentucky Horse Park and published in the catalogue entitled *Imperial China: The Art of the Horse in Chinese History*, Prospect, 2000, pp. 130–131, no. 111.

西漢早期 錯金銀鑲嵌銅車馬具 當顛 長 27.6 厘米；衡帽 長 12.5 厘米；衡帽 長 12.7 厘米；
轆一對 各寬 8.3 厘米；環一對 各徑 4.8 厘米；泡一對 各長 2.8 厘米；蓋弓帽四只 各長 7 厘米；
銜二只 長 22.1 及 21.2 厘米；鑣一對 各長 22.8 厘米



27. A GOLD- AND SILVER-INLAID BRONZE 'PHOENIX' FINIAL
Warring States Period (475–221 B.C.)

the mythical bird with crested head held high, decorated with gold scroll motifs on the hooked beak and on the sides of the head around raised silver bosses, the circular eyes inlaid in gold and with a gold collar around the top of the neck, the underside of the body, neck, and tail elaborately decorated with thick and thin interlaced scroll motifs joined by oblique double-lines, the design observing strict bilateral symmetry throughout and continuing over the slender legs of the bird with talons extended on either side of the cylindrical socket, grasping the raised circular band around the holes for the mounting-pins, the back of the plump ovoid body of the bird paved with gold and silver segments in recessed channels on the overlapping wings and with silver scale pattern at the center of the back, the long tail decorated with silver 'eyes' in gold stylized feathers on either side of silver-inlaid 'D'-shaped motifs in a repeating pattern, the bronze with smooth dark patination showing strong contrast with the precious metal inlays, the surface with widely scattered malachite green corrosion.

Length 6½ inches (16.5 cm)

Compare the silver-inlaid bronze 'phoenix' finial of smaller size in the collection of the Palace Museum, Beijing, illustrated in *The Complete Collection of Treasures of the Palace Museum: Bronze Articles for Daily Use*, Hong Kong, 2007, p. 35, no. 31.

Compare also the silver-inlaid bronze 'phoenix' finial illustrated by Rawson and Bunker in the special exhibition and catalogue organized by the Oriental Ceramic Society of Hong Kong, *Ancient Chinese and Ordos Bronzes*, Hong Kong, 1990, no. 81.

戰國 錯金銀鳳鳥銅杖首 長 16.5 厘米



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