A399-Asia- China-Liangzhu-Three Prong Crown Ornament-Feather Headdress-Jade–Mid Liangzhu-3400-2800 BCE







Figs. 1-3. China-Liangzhu-Three Prong Crown Ornament-Feather Headdress-Jade–Mid Liangzhu-3400-2800 BCE

Case no.: 5

Accession Number: A400

Formal Label: China-Liangzhu-Three Prong Crown Ornament-Feather Headdress-Jade–Mid Liangzhu-3400-2800 BCE

Display Description:

The Liangzhu Culture Three Prong Crown Ornament (良渚三爪皇冠装饰品)is generally a flat thick jade body with one perforation in the central spoke that continues through to the bottom. This Jade Three Prong Crown Ornament is engraved both on the recto and the obverse. Each side has a bas-relief that is suggestive of the so-called “taotie” mask. The taotie is a bi-laterally symmetrical animal mask. In this example the “taotie” mask is surmounted by a feather headdress which is engraved on the upper spokes. Since there is no Animal Master engraving, the entire “taotie” mask and the feather headdress is suggestive of a shaman who has transformed himself into his animal spirit, which is emphasized by the fact that this image is engraved on both sides of the Three Prong Crown Ornament. This iconography undoubtedly harkens back to a pre-Neolithic period when shamanic imagery was the symbolism of hunter-gatherers and was the animal imagery that was inscribed on petroglyph panels.

The encrustation on this example may be due to the penetration of hematic fluids of the deceased.

The middle Liangzhu phase (3000–2600 BCE) mortuary artifacts are from the following sites: Fanshan, Gaochengdun 高 城 墩 (Figure 28.1 C: 1; Nanjing and Jiangyin 2009 ), Yaoshan, Zhaolingshan burial M77, Shaoqingshan 少 卿 山 (Figure 28.1 C: 3; Suzhou Museum 1988 ), and Guangfulin 广 富 林 (Figure 28.1 C: 4; Shanghai Archaeology 2008 ).

**LC Classification:** NK5750.2.A1

**Date or Time Horizon:** Liangzhu culture, lower Yangzi River Valley, middle Liangzhu phase (3000–2600 BCE)

**Geographical Area:** Liangzhu culture, lower Yangzi River Valley

Map:



Fig. 4. Location of Liangzhu site proper. Source: Google Earth



Fig. 5. Detail of Major Middle Liangzhu sites. After Zhou Ying 2007.

1, Gaochengdun 高 城 墩; 2, Zhaolingshan 赵 陵 山; 3, Shaoqingshan 少 卿 山; 4, Guangfulin 广 富 林; 5, Pingqiudun 平 丘 墩; 6, Daimudun 戴 母 墩; 7, Xindili 新 地 里; 8, Pu ’ anqiao 普 安 桥; 9, Zhangjiabang, 赵 家 浜, Xujiabang 徐 家 浜; 10, Heyedi 荷 叶 地; 11, Xubuqiao 徐 步 桥; 12, Miaoqian 庙 前; 13–18, Yaoshan 瑶 山, Fanshan 反 山, Huiguanshan 汇 观 山, Boyishan 钵 衣 山, Shangkoushan 上 口 山, Mojiaoshan 莫 角 山; 19, Yangjiabu 杨 家 埠; 20, Yannan 堰 南.



Fig. 6. Detail of Liangzhu site complex. After Zhou Ying 2007.

(A) Yaoshan 瑶 山 site: plan of burials. (After Zhejiang 2003 : 6, Figure 4.)

(B) Fanshan 反 山 site: plan of burials. (After Zhejiang 2005a : 9, Figure 2; 12, Figure 4.)

(C) Liangzhu site complex 良 渚 古 城 : wall plan. (After Zhejiang 2008 : 5, Figure 1.)

(D) Yaojiadun 姚 家 墩 and Tangshan 塘 山 sites. (After Zhejiang 2005b : 106, Figure 21.)

**GPS coordinates:**

Northeast corner: N 30°24'48", E 120°00'17"

Northwest corner: N 30°24'41", E 119°58'58"

Southeast corner: N 30°23'20", E 120 00'19"

Southwest corner: N 30°22'55", E 119°58'28"

**Cultural Affiliation**: Liangzhu culture, lower Yangzi River Valley, 3300-2250 BCE

**Medium:** Jade

**Dimensions:**

**Weight:**

**Condition:** original

**Provenance:** Yuhang County, Zhejiang Province

**Discussion:**

The Liangzhu Culture (3400–2250 BCE) in Yuhang County, Zhejiang Province, became a highly stratified society in the latter Liangzhu Period, ca 2800-2250 BCE, when élites began to control a sphere of influence that extended north to Shanxi and south to Guangdong. Jade and other expensive wares (such as silk, lacquerware, and ivory) characterized the social symbolism of Liangzhu élites which they used in ritual performances and dances as well as in grave goods. In this period the previous rôle of the shaman was curtailed in its psychological component and elevated in its rational component as astronomer.

DNA from Liangzhu culture sites around Taihu Lake the Yangtze River exhibit high frequencies of Haplogroup O1 which was absent in other archaeological sites that were sampled inland of the Liangzhu complex. Haplogroup O1 is common to modern Austronesians and Taiwanese Aborigines/Taiwanese Austronesians (TAN) (O1) probably came from those Liangzhu Austronesians (LAN) who had been displaced from the mouth of the Yangtze River delta by an economic crash of the LAN ca 4500 BCE induced by a meteor that struck at the present location of Taihu Lake, a meteoric crater. Recent studies show that special micro-fractures in quartzite were formed during the unloading process after the compression at the peak of an impact event (Wang, Wan, Xu 2002). LAN culture sites that existed around Taihu Lake and the mouth of the Yangtze River succumbed by ca 4200 BP LAN to a series extreme floods from diversions of the Yangtze River that interrupted the cultural layers with intrusions of mud and sand. It took 800 years, from 4200 BCE until 3400 BCE, for the Liangzhu culture on the mainland to recover. At the end of this time-horizon, Taiwanese migrants began to sail east to the Buka Strait in the Solomon Islands which became a staging area for the populating of Polynesia ca 2500 BCE.

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