A407-Asia-China-Liangzhu-Cong-four tier-Taotie-Early – Mid Liangzhu-3400-2800 BCE

SHAPE \\* MERGEFORMAT 

Figs. 1-2. China-Liangzhu-Cong-four tier-Taotie-Early – Mid Liangzhu-3400-2800 BCE

Case no.: 5

Accession Number: A407

Formal Label: China-Liangzhu-Cong-four tier-Taotie-Early – Mid Liangzhu-3400-2800 BCE

**Display Description:**

White jade cong-shaped bead with four tiers of masks and with pink patches. A long tube with a square cross-section and a central perforation which has been drilled from both sides . There is a circular rim at each end. There are four tiers of two anthropomorphic masks and two animal masks, but one of the animal masks is turned at a right angle to the rest. The surface has a highly polished patina indicative of long use.

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

Date or Time Horizon: Liangzhu culture, lower Yangzi River Valley, early Liangzhu Period, ca. 3200 BCE Geographical Area: Liangzhu culture, lower Yangzi River Valley

**Map:**



Fig. 3. Locastion of Liangzhu site proper.Source: Google Earth



Fig. 4. Detail of Liangzhu site complex surrounding Taihu. After Zhou Ying 2007.



**Fig. 5.** Detail of Liangzhu site proper. After Zhou Ying 2007.

**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

Cultural Affiliation: Liangzhu

Medium: jade

Dimensions:

Weight:

Condition: original

Provenance:

**Discussion:**

A comparable example is from Yaoshan that was excavated in June, 1987 (Lu Wenbao 1998: no. 54, pp. 98).

Liangzhu (3400–2250 BCE) in Yuhang County, Zhejiang, 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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