

ANCIENT BRONZES

FROM CHINA, ORDOS AND THE STEPPES

BEN JANSSENS ORIENTAL ART
RUPERT WACE ANCIENT ART

FOREWORD

It is both exciting and a pleasure to be able to offer this collection of ancient bronzes from Ordos and the Steppes as a joint venture between Ben Janssens and Rupert Wace Ancient Art. The collection was formed over a period of many years and some of the pieces come from well known collections and were purchased either privately or at auctions in Europe and America.

It seems appropriate that a specialist dealer in Chinese and Far Eastern art should combine forces with a specialist dealer in antiquities from the ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern civilizations, and jointly purchase the collection as a single entity, when the subject matter encompasses material from little known cultures geographically and artistically somewhere between the two areas normally represented by these dealers.

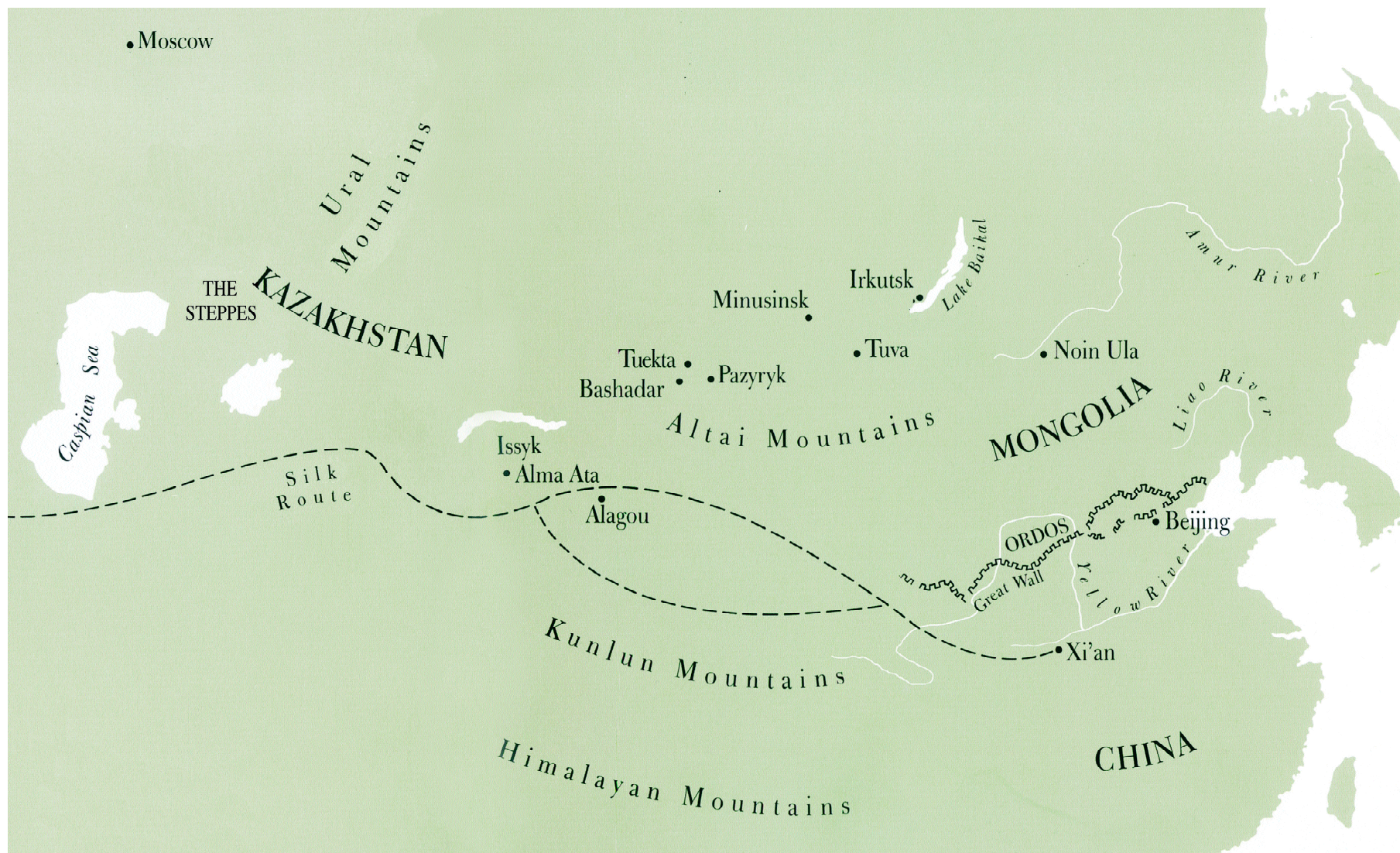
During the first millennium BC, the Ordos area, located in northwestern China, was populated by nomads belonging to the cultural regions of Central Asia which extended far to the west along the Steppes. The "Ordos bronzes" consist mostly of decorative plaques which were sewn onto garments and horse's bridles. They are nearly always decorated with animal motifs and this art is frequently referred to as 'Animal Style'. The plaques are skilful documents of the life of the nomad people for whom they were produced and help in the understanding of the art objects' precious significance within the context of a herdsman's life.

The peoples that created these bronzes were master metalworkers and created images of animals and geometric designs that were meant to fuse the functional nature of the artefact with an appreciation for intrinsic beauty. Due to the nomadic lifestyle of these people the art they produced was influenced both by Chinese art on the eastern side of their travels and by the arts of civilizations like those of the Scythian and Achaemenid cultures in the west and the influences of this 'Animal Style' also, in turn, strongly influenced these more western art styles.

These beautiful bronze objects were treasured and created by a society who travelled with them. Most were made for either their own adornment or for their horse's adornment and were affixed as embellishments to leather or cloth. Some are more prosaic and act as buckles and others also have functional purposes but retain a symbolic resonance.

They all combine a beauty and simplicity of line and form that appeals to the modern eye as much as it did to the nomadic peoples who created them thousands of years ago.

We gratefully acknowledge the advice of Emma C. Bunker.



In the form of a feline striding to the left, head lowered, its tail forming a hook.

CHINA, 6TH - 5TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 2.5 x 8.1 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK



BRONZE GARMENT HOOK

In the form of a crouching tiger with its head raised, an animal-headed hook projects from its breast.

CHINA, EASTERN ZHOU DYNASTY
WARRING STATES PERIOD, 4TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 2.3 x 6.5 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

A similar example is in the collection of Eugene Thaw, see:
Emma C. Bunker with James C. Y. Watt and Zhixin Sun,
*Nomadic Art of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes. The Eugene V.
Thaw and Other New York Collections*, New York 2002, no. 118
p. 143.

TINNED BRONZE BELT PLAQUE

In the form of two conjoined open-mouthed wolves with their heads twisted at 180 degrees from each other. Two loops on the reverse.

NORTHWEST CHINA, 4TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 4.8 x 8 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK,
ACQUIRED 1989

For a similar bell plaque see: Mayke Wagner and Herbert Butz, *Nomadenkunst, Ordosbronzen der Ostasiatischen Kunstsammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin*, Berlin 2007, no. 26, p.35



BRONZE BELT PLAQUE

In the form of two conjoined open-mouthed wolves with their heads twisted at 180 degrees from each other. There is a loop at the top and a small hook to one wolf's neck.

NORTHWEST CHINA, 4TH - 3RD CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 5 x 6.4 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

For a similar example see: Jean Paul Barbier, *Art des Steppes. Ornaments et pièces de mobilier funéraire scytho-sibérien dans les collections du Musée Barbier-Mueller*, Geneva 1996, no. 41, pp. 41-42. Compare also the tinned bronze belt plaque (no 3) with the same subject.

BRONZE GARMENT HOOK

Two symmetrical pairs of serpents with pebbled bodies at the shield-shaped lower edges. The button on the reverse cast with similar serpents.

CHINA, EASTERN ZHOU DYNASTY,
WARRING STATES PERIOD, 4TH - 3RD CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 4.4 x 2.4 CM

PROVENANCE:
PAN ASIAN COLLECTION, NEW YORK
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK, ACQUIRED 1982

**BRONZE BELT HOOK**

The body in the form of a fish swallowing the shaft of the hook, an animal head at the end.

CHINA, EASTERN HAN DYNASTY
2ND - 1ST CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: .7 x 12.6 CM

PROVENANCE:
GAZE COOPER COLLECTION, UK



BRONZE GARMENT PLAQUE

In the form of a feline in profile to the right.

ORDOS, 6TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 1.9 x 3.2 cm

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

A similar example is in the Sackler collection, see:
Emma C. Bunker, *Ancient Bronzes of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes*, New York 1997, no. 176B, p. 228

**BRONZE BELT PLAQUE**

In the form of a backward facing dragon with a feline head, its body pebbled and accented with scrolls in relief, further serpent and animal heads between its coils. At the left side is a hook and on the reverse a vertical loop.

ORDOS, 4TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 3.5 x 5.4 cm

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK



IRON GARMENT HOOK

Inlaid with gold in a pattern of hooked scrolls. The back is covered by a silver sheet. The stud at the back shows the partial remains of fabric.

CHINA, EASTERN ZHOU DYNASTY
WARRING STATES PERIOD, 5TH - 4TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 2.6 x 13.3 cm

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

**BRONZE GARMENT HOOK**

With faceted body, the hook in the form of a feline head. The stud at the back is of octagonal form.

CHINA, EASTERN ZHOU DYNASTY
WARRING STATES PERIOD
5TH - 4TH CENTURY BC
LENGTH: 11 cm

PROVENANCE:
PAN ASIAN COLLECTION, NEW YORK
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK, ACQUIRED 1982



BRONZE GARMENT HOOK

In the form of a backwards-facing tiger with a smaller tiger perched on its back. The body decorated with scrolled lines in relief. A long hook to the right terminates in an animal head.

CHINA, 6TH - 5TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 9.5 x 3.8 cm

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

A belt hook with chain, representing a tigress with two small cubs, is in the Sackler collection, see: *Emma C. Bunker, Ancient Bronzes of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes*, New York 1997, no. 161, pp. 220-1

**BRONZE GARMENT HOOK**

In the form of a tiger attacking a doe, an animal headed hook to the right.

ORDOS, 3RD CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 2 x 6 cm

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK



BRONZE GARMENT HOOK

The fluted body terminating in a *taotie* mask. The hook in the form of a feline head. The upper side of the hook is encased in sheet silver.

CHINA, EASTERN ZHOU DYNASTY

WARRING STATES PERIOD

5TH - 4TH CENTURY BC

DIMENSIONS: 1.5 x 9.4 CM

PROVENANCE:

PAN ASIAN COLLECTION, NEW YORK

PRIVATE COLLECTION UK, ACQUIRED 1982

**BRONZE GARMENT HOOK**

Inlaid in silver and gold with swirling patterns and stylised flowers.

CHINA, EASTERN ZHOU DYNASTY

WARRING STATES PERIOD

5TH - 4TH CENTURY BC

DIMENSIONS: 1 x 8.5 CM

PROVENANCE:

PAN ASIAN COLLECTION, NEW YORK

PRIVATE COLLECTION UK,

ACQUIRED 1982



TINNED BRONZE BELT PLAQUE

Depicting a recumbent horse facing left, its body marked by comma and teardrop holes and bands of striations.

NORTHWEST CHINA, 4TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 5.5 x 11.1 CM

PROVENANCE:
SORGATO COLLECTION VENICE,
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

A virtually identical plaque from the collection of Therese and Erwin Harris is illustrated in Jenny F. So and Emma C. Bunker, *Traders and Raiders on China's Northern Frontier*, Seattle and London, 1995, no. 57, p. 138-9. The authors relate this plaque to a similar example in bone, excavated from a nomadic tomb in western Tuva in southern Siberia. They also state that the particular horse represented in this plaque is the - once almost extinct - Prezwalski's horse.



BRONZE BELT PLAQUE

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In the form of a wolf grasping an ibex whose hindquarters are turned at 180 degrees. The animals' bodies decorated by striated serpentine panels. A vertical loop on the reverse.

ORDOS, 6TH - 5TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 4.1 x 6.9 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

A similar example in the George Ortiz collection, though differing in some stylistic points, is catalogued as from Inner Mongolia and dated to the Warring States Period 481-221 BC, see: E. C. Bunker, C. Bruce Chatwin, Ann R. Farkas, *"Animal Style" Art from East to West*, New York 1970, no. 112, p. 129. An example from Northwest China with a wolf devouring a deer - part of a set of 16 belt ornaments - can be seen in Emma C. Bunker with James C.Y. Watt and Zhixin Sun, *Nomadic Art of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes. The Eugene V. Thaw and Other New York Collections*, New York 2002, no.63, p. 98-99

IRON AND BRONZE GARMENT HOOK

The body inset with four square jade panels carved with a spiral pattern and with five gilt bronze repoussé plaques each formed as a dragon with frontal head, their bodies with pebbled surfaces and raised scrolls. A silver sheet at the back.

CHINA, EASTERN ZHOU DYNASTY
WARRING STATES PERIOD, 5TH - 4TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 4.3 x 22.8 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK,
ACQUIRED 1990



BRONZE BELT PLAQUE

In the form of a Bactrian camel, its legs folded beneath its body, facing to the right, head slightly raised and with two sharply triangular humps on the back.

ORDOS, 3RD -1ST CENTURY BC

DIMENSIONS: 4.2 X 3.8 CM

PROVENANCE:

PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

A kneeling camel with rider in a stylistically comparable belt plaque in the collection of Eugene Thaw has similar pointed humps; see: Emma C. Bunker with James C.Y. Watt and Zhixin Sun, *Nomadic Art of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes. The Eugene V. Thaw and Other New York Collections*, New York 2002, no. 92, pp. 120-1

**BRONZE BELT BUCKLE**

The rectangular frame enclosing a Bactrian camel in profile striding to the left, flanked on the frame with a protruding duck's head on one side and a stud on the other.

ORDOS, 2ND - 1ST CENTURY BC

DIMENSIONS: 5.4 X 7.7 CM

PROVENANCE:

PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

For a similar example featuring a recumbent camel, classified as possibly from Iran, 2nd century BC, see: Jean Paul Barbier, *Art des Steppes. Ornaments et pièces de mobilier funéraire scytho-sibérien dans les collections du Musée Barbier-Mueller*, Geneva 1996, p. no. 81, p. 67



BRONZE BELT PLAQUE

In the form of a kneeling Bactrian camel, facing right with its legs folded beneath its body, head raised and surrounded by stalks and oval leaves of stylised vegetation set within a B-shaped frame.

ORDOS, 2ND - 1ST CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 7.1 x 11.1 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

A similarly shaped belt plaque, depicting a combat scene between a tiger and a camel, is in the Sackler collection, see: Emma C. Bunker, *Ancient Bronzes of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes*, New York 1997, no. 223, pp. 260-1

**BRONZE BELT PLAQUE**

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In the form of a grazing ibex, facing left with its head lowered and long ribbed arched horn connected to its back, its beard touching its foot. Pierced through the back below the tip of the horn and through the tail.

NORTH CHINA OR SOUTH INNER MONGOLIA
2ND CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 2.7 x 3.9 CM

PROVENANCE:
OLIVIER LE CORNEUR COLLECTION, PARIS
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK, ACQUIRED 1986

A practically identical plaque was exhibited at the Hong Kong Museum of Art in 1990 and illustrated by Jessica Rawson and Emma Bunker in *Ancient Chinese and Ordos Bronzes*, Hong Kong 1990, no. 223, pp. 344-5. A gold plaque of a grazing ibex, virtually identical in all respects but facing the other way and catalogued as 'Eastern Siberian and Mongolian', is in the collection of Eugene Thaw, see: Emma C. Bunker with James C.Y. Watt and Zhixin Sun, *Nomadic Art of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes. The Eugene V. Thaw and Other New York Collections*, New York 2002, no. 110, p. 137.

BRONZE FINIAL

In the form of a hedgehog, hollow cast with each spine individually applied. The animal stands with its back arched, its four feet held closely together, its head lowered and its large ears clearly indicated.

CHINA, EASTERN ZHOU DYNASTY
WARRING STATES PERIOD, 4TH - 3RD CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 2.7 x 2.7 CM

PROVENANCE:
ERNEST ERICKSON COLLECTION
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK, ACQUIRED 1989

A larger finial in the form of a hedgehog is in the Buffalo Museum of Science and illustrated in: Jenny F. So and Emma C. Bunker, *Traders and Raiders on China's Northern Frontier*, Seattle and London, 1995, no. 7, p. 94. A more crudely cast example of a hedgehog surmounting the pommel of the hilt of a knife is in the collection of Eugene Thaw, see: Emma C. Bunker with James C.Y. Watt and Zhixin Sun, *Nomadic Art of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes. The Eugene V. Thaw and Other New York Collections*, New York 2002, p. no. 52, p. 87



BRONZE BELT PLAQUE

In the form of a feline grasping a doe by the neck, the doe's head with large ears, turned to face forward. The scene is set in a rectangular frame outlined with oval depressions representing leaves. A hook projects from the left side.

ORDOS, 2ND - 1ST CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 5.6 x 11 CM

PROVENANCE: PRIVATE COLLECTION UK
ACQUIRED 1986

For a similar example dated 4th - 2nd century BC see, Jean Paul Barbier, *Art des Steppes*.

Ornements et pièces de mobilier funéraire scytho-sibérien dans les collections du Musée Barbier-Mueller, Geneva 1996, p. no. 47, p. 52



BRONZE OPENWORK BELT PLAQUE

Formed of a latticework pattern, the intersections marked by raised bosses. A hook protrudes from one side.

ORDOS, 2ND CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 5.6 x 9.3 cm

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

For a similar example dated to the 4th - 1st century BC see: Jean Paul Barbier, *Art des Steppes. Ornaments et pièces de mobilier funéraire scytho-sibérien dans les collections du Musée Barbier-Mueller*, Geneva 1996, p. no. 65, p. 61. Another example is in the Sackler collection, see: Emma C. Bunker, *Ancient Bronzes of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes*, New York 1997, no. 235A, p. 268



BRONZE BELT PLAQUE WITH HANGING CHAINS

The upper section in the form of one large and two small felines, their paws, eyes and hip sockets marked by oval and circular holes or depressions. Two chains of three hanging rings each, linked by bars are suspended from two loops.

ORDOS, 6TH - 5TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 15.6 x 5.1 cm

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK



BRONZE HARNESS DISTRIBUTOR

In the form of a recumbent stag with small quadrupeds at its chest and below its legs with a bird in between.

MONGOLIAN, MID 1ST MILLENNIUM BC
DIMENSIONS: 2 x 2.4 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

**BRONZE GARMENT PLAQUE**

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In the form of three stylised stags set within a rectangular openwork frame. The stags face to the left, their heads turned backwards, and their antlers merge with the foliage behind in a delicate tracery of circles.

ORDOS, 1ST CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 3.9 x 6 CM

PROVENANCE:
OLIVIER LE CORNEUR COLLECTION, PARIS
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK, ACQUIRED 1986

A virtually identical plaque is in the Sackler collection, see: Emma C. Bunker, *Ancient Bronzes of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes*, New York 1997, no. 250C, p. 282. A similar, though somewhat cruder example wrapped in gold sheet is in the collection of Eugene Thaw, see Emma C. Bunker with James C.Y. Watt and Zhixin Sun, *Nomadic Art of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes. The Eugene V. Thaw and Other New York Collections*, New York 2002, no. 154, p. 169. For another similar plaque see: Mayke Wagner and Herbert Butz, *Nomadenkunst, Ordosbronzen der Ostasiatischen Kunstsammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin*, Berlin 2007, no. 11, p. 16

A BRONZE BELT PLAQUE

In the form of a recumbent feline with ring paws, its body marked by pierced circles and zigzag patterned relief bands.

ORDOS, 6TH - 5TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 2.3 x 3.7 CM

PROVENANCE:
ALICE & NASLI HEERAMANECK COLLECTION

For a similar plaque see: Mayke Wagner and Herbert Butz, *Nomadenkunst, Ordosbronzen der Ostasiatischen Kunstsammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin*, Berlin 2007, no. 33, p. 43



BRONZE PLAQUE

In the form of a standing ibex. The remains of a horizontal loop are visible on the back.

ORDOS, 5TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 3 x 3.8 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK



BRONZE BELT PLAQUE

In the form of a running stag facing to the right with its legs folded beneath the body. Its long antlers, held parallel close to its back are treated as four curls. A horizontal loop is attached to the reverse.

ORDOS, 6TH - 5TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 2 X 3.6 CM

PROVENANCE:
OLIVIER LE CORNEUR COLLECTION, PARIS
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK, ACQUIRED 1986

A closely related plaque is in the Sackler collection, see: Emma C. Bunker, *Ancient Bronzes of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes*, New York 1997, no. 82, p. 171. Five similar examples with more pronounced horns, catalogued as Inner Mongolian, are illustrated in E. C. Bunker, C Bruce Chatwin, Ann R Farkas, *"Animal Style"* *Art from East to West*, New York 1970, no. 129, p. 138

**BRONZE BELT PLAQUE**

In the form of a running stag facing left, its legs tucked beneath its body, the head crowned with triple branched antlers. Pierced through the eye and the body.

ORDOS, 5TH - 4TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 3.6 X 3.6 CM

PROVENANCE:
OLIVIER LE CORNEUR COLLECTION, PARIS
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK, ACQUIRED 1986



BRONZE APPLIQUÉ

In the form of a bovine head with curved crescent shaped horns, shown frontally with narrow muzzle and large ears. Pierced at the forehead, suggesting eyes.

ORDOS, 4TH - 2ND CENTURY BC

DIMENSIONS: 4 x 3.4 CM

PROVENANCE:

OLIVIER LE CORNEUR COLLECTION, PARIS

PRIVATE COLLECTION UK, ACQUIRED 1986

Three similar appliqués are in the Sackler collection, see: Emma C. Bunker, *Ancient Bronzes of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes*, New York 1997, no. 266, p. 291. A similar example formerly in the D. David-Weill collection was sold by Ader Picard Tajan, Hotel Drouot, 28-29 June 1972, lot 1.



BRONZE OPENWORK HOOK BUCKLE

In the form of two confronting stylised animals with a bird's head hook.

ORDOS, 6TH - 4TH CENTURY BC

DIMENSIONS: 3.9 x 2.5 CM

PROVENANCE:

PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

For a similar example see: Emma C. Bunker with James C.Y. Watt and Zhixin Sun, *Nomadic Art of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes. The Eugene V. Thaw and Other New York Collections*, New York 2002, no. 61, p. 95. Another example is in the Sackler collection, see: Emma C. Bunker, *Ancient Bronzes of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes*, New York 1997, no. 235A, p. 268

GILT BRONZE TWO-PART BELT BUCKLE

Each plaque in the form of a bull and driver, the bulls with their heads facing downwards and the drivers visible behind their backs. Each plaque is framed within a decorative rope border. One plaque has a loop to the right, both with vertical loops on the reverse.

NORTHWEST CHINA, 3RD - 2ND CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 4 x 5.5 AND 4 x 5.8 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

A very similar two-part buckle from the collection of Leon Levy and Shelby White is illustrated by Jenny F. So and Emma C. Bunker in *Traders and Raiders on China's Northern Frontier*, Seattle and London, 1995, no. 6, p. 93-4. A buckle cast with a similar bull, without the rider but with a similar rope border, is in the Sackler collection, see: Emma C. Bunker, *Ancient Bronzes of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes*, New York 1997, no. 218, p. 257. Another similar example is in the collection of Eugene Thaw, see: Emma C. Bunker with James C.Y. Watt and Zhixin Sun, *Nomadic Art of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes. The Eugene V. Thaw and Other New York Collections*, New York 2002, no. 66, pp. 99 - 100



GILT BRONZE OPENWORK BELT PLAQUE

With two Bactrian camels confronting each other to either side of a stylised Asian elm tree, its branches and cluster of leaves looped across the camels' bodies and forming a backdrop to the scene. Two vertical loops to the back.

ORDOS, 2ND CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 5.4 x 11.1 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

For a similar example see: Emma C. Bunker with James C.Y. Watt and Zhixin Sun, *Nomadic Art of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes. The Eugene V. Thaw and Other New York Collections*, New York 2002, no. 79, pp. 109 - 110



GILT BRONZE BELT PLAQUE

Of rectangular form with a recumbent wolf in profile, his body overlaid with two rams with twisted hindquarters. Above them a row of horned gazelle heads surmounted by a further row of eared raptor heads. Two vertical loops on the reverse.

NORTH CHINA, 3RD - 2ND CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 4.3 x 9 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK, ACQUIRED 1989

A virtually identical belt plaque, together with its companion piece is illustrated in Emma C. Bunker with James C.Y. Watt and Zhixin Sun, *Nomadic Art of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes. The Eugene V. Thaw and Other New York Collections*, New York 2002, no. 67, p. 100



GILT BRONZE RECTANGULAR BELT PLAQUE

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With two confronting mythical beaked ungulates, their ribbed horns terminating in creatures similar to themselves. Behind their backs are two feline heads. The plaque is patterned all over by striated designs. At the side is an oval aperture.

CHINA, HEBEI PROVINCE, 3RD CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 9.8 x 5.8 CM

PROVENANCE:
C.T. LOO COLLECTION, BY REPUTE
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

A closely comparable example, acquired in Yulinfu, Ordos, is in the British Museum. It is catalogued as Mongolian and dated to the 4th - 3rd century BC by E. C. Bunker, C. Bruce Chatwin, Ann R. Farkas in *"Animal Style" Art from East to West*, New York 1970, no. 109, p. 128. A similar plaque in gold was excavated in Xinhuangtuo, Yi Xian, Hebei Province and is illustrated in Jenny F. So and Emma C. Bunker, *Traders and Raiders on China's Northern Frontier*, Seattle and London, 1995, fig. 24, p. 59. For another similar example see: Mayke Wagner and Herbert Butz, *Nomadenkunst, Ordosbronzen der Ostasiatischen Kunstsammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin*, Berlin 2007, no. 51, p. 68-9

BRONZE BELT PLAQUE

In the form of a coiled zoomorph with the head of a wolf and a tail in the form of an eared bird or griffin. A wavy crest runs down the edge of its back.

ORDOS, 6TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 5.4 X 4.4 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK, ACQUIRED 1993

For a similar example from the George Ortiz collection, reputed to have come from Minusinsk, Central Siberia and dated 5th - 4th century BC, see: E. C. Bunker, C. Bruce Chatwin, Ann R. Farkas, *"Animal Style" Art from East to West*, New York 1970, no. 48, p. 75

**BRONZE PLAQUE**

39

The flat ring cast with a flattened wolf-headed dragon.

ORDOS, 5TH - 4TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 4.5 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK, ACQUIRED 1993

BRONZE ZITHER TURNING KEY

Cast in the form of a downward facing tiger-headed dragon, its jaws opened over the shaft, its haunches highlighted with scrolls and its wing proud along its back. Angular patterns decorate the surface.

CHINA, EASTERN ZHOU DYNASTY,
WARRING STATES PERIOD, 4TH - 3RD CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 3.3 x 7.2 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK,
ACQUIRED 1993

Long thought to represent a kind of finial, small sculptural bronzes such as this example and no. 41, have recently been identified as tuning keys for a Chinese qin, a plucked string instrument.



BRONZE ZITHER TUNING KEY

In the form of a bear standing atop a dragon. The bear's fur worked in relief and the dragon's body decorated with scrolls.

CHINA, EASTERN ZHOU DYNASTY
WARRING STATES PERIOD
4TH - 3RD CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 9.3 x 3.2 CM

PROVENANCE:
ERNEST ERICKSON COLLECTION
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK, ACQUIRED 1989

For an example of a tuning key depicting a bear atop a tall squared shaft see Emma C. Bunker with James C.Y. Watt and Zhixin Sun, *Nomadic Art of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes. The Eugene V. Thaw and Other New York Collections*, New York 2002, no. 178, pp. 187-8



BRONZE CIRCULAR BELT PLAQUE

In the form of a coiled, three-clawed dragon, its head at the top and claws below. The body defined by raised scrolls and pebbled patterns. A hook and button on the reverse.

CHINA, EASTERN ZHOU DYNASTY
WARRING STATES PERIOD, 475-221 BC
DIMENSION: 7 CM

PROVENANCE:
FREDERICK M. MAYER COLLECTION
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK, ACQUIRED 1974

Exhibited: *The Art of Late Eastern Chou*, China House, New York, 1952, no. 4, fig. 3
The Art of Eastern Chou, Asia House, New York, 1962, no. 74

Published: Garner and Medley, *China Art*, vol. 1, reel 30, no. 7

**BRONZE FINIAL**

In the form of a mythical bird, its prominent beak turned over to rest on its back. The feathers are finely detailed and the neck is cast with scrolls and depressions.

CHINA, EASTERN ZHOU DYNASTY
5TH - 4TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 3.5 x 4.4 CM

PROVENANCE:
ERNEST ERICKSON COLLECTION
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK, ACQUIRED 1989



BRONZE CHEEK PIECE

With ribbed body and a dragonhead terminal. There are two attachment loops on the reverse.

CHINA, EASTERN ZHOU DYNASTY,
SPRING AND AUTUMN PERIOD, 770 – 476 BC
DIMENSIONS: 2.4 x 11.5 CM

PROVENANCE:
PAN ASIAN COLLECTION, NEW YORK
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK, ACQUIRED 1982

A number of similar cheek pieces with dragonhead terminals are illustrated in: Bill Cooke (ed.) *Imperial China, The Art of the Horse in Chinese History*, Kentucky 2000, nos. 86 – 88, pp. 114 - 5



BRONZE FIGURE OF HORSE

45

Standing foursquare with long, arched neck, looking straight ahead with ears pricked.

CHINA, HAN DYNASTY, 206 BC – 220 AD
DIMENSIONS: 5.1 x 7 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK, ACQUIRED 1975

BRONZE BOW-SHAPED FITTING

The upper surface of the arched arms cast with quatrefoil depressions, the open mouths of the animal terminals fitted with balls to function as jingles.

CHINA, SHANG TO WESTERN ZHOU DYNASTIES
13TH – 11TH CENTURIES BC
DIMENSIONS: 8 X 39.6 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

The original purpose of this type of bow-shaped fitting is unclear. Examples have been found in chariot burials, and it is possible that they were used in connection with archery. A similar fitting shape, the top inlaid in turquoise, is in the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, Canada and illustrated in D. Dohrenwend et al, *Homage to Heaven, Homage to Earth, Chinese Treasures of the Royal Ontario Museum*, Toronto 1992, no. 57, p. 106



TWO BRONZE CHEEK PIECES

Each of elongated comma-shape with stylised angular tiger heads at the end, a central hole for the bit sections and two loops at the bottom.

CHINA, WESTERN ZHOU DYNASTY
11TH - 8TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 4.5 x 12.6 CM

PROVENANCE:
PAN ASIAN COLLECTION, NEW YORK
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK, ACQUIRED 1982



PAIR OF BRONZE CHEEK PIECES

Of comma-shape with twisted ribbed shanks, and with rings for the bit. Two loops to the reverse.

CHINA, WESTERN ZHOU DYNASTY
11TH - 8TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 11.1 x 5.8 CM

PROVENANCE:
ERNEST ERICKSON COLLECTION
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK, ACQUIRED 1989

A pair of bronze cheek pieces of similar form but with different decoration are in the Shaanxi Provincial Zhouyan Museum, see: Bill Cooke (ed.) *Imperial China, The Art of the Horse in Chinese History*, Kentucky 2000, no. 38, p. 88



TWO HORSE BITS

The rigid shaft with oval loops at both ends and with flat finials.

CHINA, *CIRCA* 2ND CENTURY
DIMENSIONS: 2.8 x 15 CM

PROVENANCE:
PAN ASIAN COLLECTION, NEW YORK
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK,
ACQUIRED 1982

**TWO MINIATURE SNAFFLE BITS**

Composed of two key-shaped sections linked by a third section with 'knotted' centre.

CHINA, *CIRCA* 2ND CENTURY
DIMENSIONS: 3 x 11.4 CM

PROVENANCE:
PAN ASIAN COLLECTION, NEW YORK
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK, ACQUIRED 1982



In the form of a domed cap with a frontal crouching bear. The reverse with two vertical loops.

CHINA, WESTERN HAN,
3RD - 2ND CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 1.5 X 1.7 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

For similar examples see: Emma C. Bunker with James C.Y. Watt and Zhixin Sun, *Nomadic Art of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes. The Eugene V. Thaw and Other New York Collections*, New York 2002, no. 18-20, pp. 53-4. A further example is in the Sackler collection, see: Emma C. Bunker, *Ancient Bronzes of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes*, New York 1997, no. 228, p. 263



In the form of a domed cap with a frontal crouching bear.

CHINA, WESTERN HAN, 3RD - 2ND CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 2.3.X 2.6 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

For similar examples see: Emma C. Bunker with James C.Y. Watt and Zhixin Sun, *Nomadic Art of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes. The Eugene V. Thaw and Other New York Collections*, New York 2002, no. 18-20, pp. 53-4. A further example is in the Sackler collection, see: Emma C. Bunker, *Ancient Bronzes of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes*, New York 1997, no. 228, p. 263



BRONZE SPEARHEAD

With ribbed blade, the shaft cast with the twisted bodies of two snakes coiled around it, their heads emerging on the blade, holding frogs in their mouths.

CHINA, POSSIBLY FROM YUNNAN OR SICHUAN, 6TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 8.5 x 2.3 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK,
ACQUIRED 1993

**BRONZE KNIFE**

With integrally cast blade and handle. The handle engraved with three running does on one side and three stags on the other. Two addorsed bird's heads form a squared-off loop at the top.

ORDOS, 7TH - 6TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 1.9 x 21 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

A similar knife is in the Sackler collection,
see: Emma C. Bunker, *Ancient Bronzes
of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes*,
New York 1997, no. 55, pp. 156-7



BRONZE GARMENT HOOK

The body formed of interlacing dragons.

CHINA, EASTERN ZHOU DYNASTY,
WARRING STATES PERIOD, 4TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 2.7 x 4.5 cm

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

**BRONZE AND GOLD-FOIL
HARNESS FITTING**

In the form of two addorsed ungulates, possibly bearded rams, their heads placed along the sides and their legs folded in the centre. Between the two rams are two bovine heads. Open at both ends with a large loop at the bottom.

CHINA, 2ND-1ST CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 4.5 x 5 cm

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK



FOUR BRONZE OPENWORK GARMENT PLAQUES

Of rectangular form, each with two pairs of backwards facing kneeling wild asses, their eyes and ears pierced.

ORDOS, 6TH - 5TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 5 X 2.9 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

A similar example, is in the Sackler collection, see: Emma C. Bunker, *Ancient Bronzes of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes*, New York 1997, no. 131, p. 198. Another similar example is in the collection of Eugene Thaw, see: Emma C. Bunker with James C. Y. Watt and Zhixin Sun, *Nomadic Art of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes. The Eugene V. Thaw and Other New York Collections*, New York 2002, no. 139, p. 161. Three other examples dated to the 4th - 2nd century BC are in the Museum Barbier-Mueller in Geneva, see Jean Paul Barbier, *Art des Steppes. Ornaments et pièces de mobilier funéraire scytho-sibérien dans les collections du Musée Barbier-Mueller*, Geneva 1996, no. 31-33, pp. 46-47



FOUR TINNED BRONZE BRIDLE FITTINGS

In the form of horses with backward facing heads, their eyes and haunches marked with circular depressions. Two vertical loops on each reverse.

ORDOS, 6TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 1.8 X 1.9 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

For a set of 10 bridle fittings in the form of a horse's head see: Mayke Wagner and Herbert Butz, *Nomadenkunst, Ordosbronzen der Ostasiatischen Kunstsammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin*, Berlin 2007, no. 4a-j, p. 7



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TWO BRONZE GARMENT PLAQUES

Of S-shape with addorsed felines, holding doe heads in their mouths. At the juncture between their bodies are wild boars in profile. Vertical loops on the reverse.

ORDOS, 5TH - 4TH CENTURY BC
HEIGHT: 1.7 x 4.5 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

Two garment plaques of closely related form are in the Sackler collection, see: Emma C. Bunker, *Ancient Bronzes of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes*, New York 1997, no. 175, p. 227. A further example is in the collection of Eugene Thaw, see Emma C. Bunker with James C.Y. Watt and Zhixin Sun, *Nomadic Art of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes. The Eugene V. Thaw and Other New York Collections*, New York 2002, no. 149, p. 166. For another similar example see: Mayke Wagner and Herbert Butz, *Nomadenkunst, Ordosbronzen der Ostasiatischen Kunstsammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin*, Berlin 2007, no. 54, p. 74.

Of S-shape with addorsed felines.

ORDOS, 5TH - 4TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 1.3 x 5 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

A similar example is in the Sackler collection, see: Emma C. Bunker, *Ancient Bronzes of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes*, New York 1997, no. 176A, p. 228. For other similar examples see: Jean Paul Barbier, *Art des Steppes. Ornaments et pièces de mobilier funéraire scytho-sibérien dans les collections du Musée Barbier-Mueller*, Geneva 1996, no. 23, p. 44 and Mayke Wagner and Herbert Butz, *Nomadenkunst, Ordosbronzen der Ostasiatischen Kunstsammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin*, Berlin 2007, no. 41, p. 51.



TWO TINNED BRONZE PLAQUES

In the form of coiled felines with concentric circles marking their haunches.

ORDOS, 6TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 3.2 X 3.3 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

A similar plaque in bronze was exhibited at the Hong Kong Museum of Art in 1990 and illustrated by Jessica Rawson and Emma Bunker in *Ancient Chinese and Ordos Bronzes*, Hong Kong 1990, no. 192, pp. 310-11. For another similar example see: Mayke Wagner and Herbert Butz, *Nomadenkunst, Ordosbronzen der Ostasiatischen Kunstsammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin*, Berlin 2007, no. 36, p. 46.



PAIR OF SILVERED BRONZE HARNESS ORNAMENTS

In the form of domed bosses with loops behind and two eared bird's head terminal, their bodies pebbled.

NORTH WESTERN CHINA, 4TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 4.9 X 4 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

For a nearly identical example see: Emma C. Bunker with James C.Y. Watt and Zhixin Sun, *Nomadic Art of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes. The Eugene V. Thaw and Other New York Collections*, New York 2002, no. 11, p. 48.



BRONZE GARMENT PLAQUE

Of rectangular form, in two registers each of two felines with s-shaped bodies and backward facing heads holding doe heads in their mouths.

ORDOS, 5TH CENTURY BC

DIMENSIONS: 3 X 5 CM

PROVENANCE:

PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

An almost identical example is in the Sackler collection, see: Emma C. Bunker, *Ancient Bronzes of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes*, New York 1997, no. 130, pp. 196-7



TWO PAIRS OF BRONZE OPENWORK PLAQUES

Of rectangular form, each cast with two addorsed stylised felines with s-shaped bodies and holding doe heads in their backward facing mouths. Two examples preserve horizontal loops across either end of the back.

ORDOS, 6TH - 5TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 1.5 X 5 TO 1.6 X 5.2 CM

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

An almost identical example is in the Sackler collection, see: Emma C. Bunker, *Ancient Bronzes of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes*, New York 1997, no. 130, pp. 196-7
For a similar plaque see: Mayke Wagner and Herbert Butz, *Nomadenkunst, Ordosbronzen der Ostasiatischen Kunstsammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin*, Berlin 2007, no. 53, p. 72-3

BRONZE RECTANGULAR BELL

Addorsed horned animal heads form the handle. Inside are the remains of a suspension loop for a clapper.

EASTERN SIBERIAN OR CAUCASIAN
1ST MILLENIUM BC
DIMENSIONS: 8 x 5.8 cm

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

A closely related example was sold at Christie's New York, 8th June 2007, lot 63, as property from a Swiss private collection. It was described as 'Caucasian' and dated to the 1st Millennium BC

**BRONZE FINIAL**

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in the form of a doe with long legs, its overlarge ears cast with deep depressions and a series of parallel curved grooves indicating its ribs. The head gazes downwards with a slightly open mouth and a dot and ring eye.

ORDOS, 6TH - 5TH CENTURY BC
DIMENSIONS: 4.9 x 4.3 cm

PROVENANCE:
PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

BRONZE AMULET

In the form of a monkey riding a horse

CHINA, MING DYNASTY, 1368 - 1644

DIMENSIONS: 4.7 x 4.5 cm

PROVENANCE:

PRIVATE COLLECTION UK

According to Emma Bunker a near-identical amulet in the Sackler collection is '...one of numerous examples collected throughout Mongolia and northwestern China. The monkey on a horse represents the rebus *Mashang fenghou* ("may you immediately be elevated to the rank of a marquis"), an expression of hope for prompt promotion and wealth. See: Emma C. Bunker, *Ancient Bronzes of the Eastern Eurasian Steppes*, New York 1997, no. 277, p. 298

**BRONZE PLAQUE**

In the form of a mounted rider

CHINA, YUAN OR MING DYNASTIES,

13TH – 16TH CENTURIES

DIMENSIONS: 3.5 x 3.9 cm

PROVENANCE:

PRIVATE COLLECTION UK



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