

It is in about the same period as the discoveries at Ischimka that we should place the metal plaques found in the region of Perm in the Ural (28). A piece unearthened near Uchta shows us an owl as protector of man. The head has the usual characteristics, but the wings have become small bars and the body a narrow band. Here the man is drawn in a rudimentary fashion, but there can be no doubt as to the representation. The figure seems to be surrounded by the totem animal. The fact that the owl is reproduced in this way in the central and eastern sections, but not in the southwest, the Scytho-Sarmatian region of the Steppes, shows that here we are concerned with a native motive. With Siberian examples before us, it seems probable that the owl, seen full-face, may have been inspired in China from northern Asia. It is always possible that the meaning has changed and that it has been adapted to Chinese myths (29).

We sometimes find in Chinese art an obvious connection between man and beast, for the study of which we must return to Hentze's classification (30). According to this writer it is the ancestor animal and the first man, an idea, therefore, that closely approaches totemism and concerning which there are numerous documents in the Eurasiatic Steppes (31). Hentze adds that the combination of animal and man is a Pacific basin phenomenon. This permits the hypothesis that the origin of these mythological conceptions may be found in a region from which, according to the latest scientific theories, the first inhabitants of America migrated, that is from north Asia.

The group of Chinese documents belonging to the Pacific basin mythology is completed by two bronzes in the Loo collection (Pl. II, nos. 3 & 4). Because of their shape they may both be dated indisputably as Chou. They are terminals, the use of which is unknown. The base of the smaller piece (Pl. II, no. 3) is formed of a harpy. Above her is crouched a man who holds a hen in his two hands. His head is gripped in the mouth of a tiger clinging to his back. The tiger in no way differs from the usual representations of this animal in the Chou dynasty. More surprising still than these parallels from the Ural and its eastern slopes, is the example from the valley of the Amazone reproduced by Hentze (32). The larger object takes us back to more general and nearly world-wide mythological origins. The figuration differs from the preceding example in that the human being appears grotesque and that he bears a serpent on his head. Here we should remember a neolithic vase from Kan-su which also shows man crowned with a serpent (33). For the meaning we must once more turn to Hentze who interprets the serpent as a phallic and lunar symbol (34). We cannot here enter into details concerning the mythological meaning; the fact is enough that we are finding more and more examples of Chou art, the symbolism of which connects them with Eurasia and America. We must therefore bear in mind the connection between these parts of the world, a connection of which the importance has until now escaped us.