

by Willy Baruch. He believes that its meaning is approximately "may the ancients not forget each other".

n) Tassel-holders and lids.

It is difficult to decide upon the use of the two objects placed under the above heading. The disk decorated with the head of a bird was probably placed so that the head looked down. It was then for the purpose of holding a tassel. This would explain the hole in the middle of the head. Schmidt has classified similar objects (66). In our chronological arrangement the animal-form on this piece places it about the year 1000.

The position of the animal on Plate XVII no. 16 makes its use as a lid seem likely. We know of lids from the Caucasus with sculptured handles in animal-form, probably of a pre-Scythian period (67). Here, above an arched disk, is an ibex with perforated eyes of the usual Minussinsk type. Horns and body lack vitality, although some understanding of nature is still apparent. This piece, certainly very charming artistically, is therefore of about the end of the T'ang period.

3) Belt-hook-clasps.

Scythian artistic documents have been classified several times according to period by Rostovtzeff (68). He points out that in the second period of this art, limited to southern Russia, there appeared entirely new forms of which the belt-hook is one. We are not here concerned with the question of whether it was from the Near East or from Greece that it was brought to the west of the Steppe circle. The most important finds of this type are those of Alexandropol on the Dnieper and those of Mastiugino at the middle of the Don (69).

a) Horizontal clasps.

At Alexandropol the clasp is made up of a hook having at the larger end an animal in the shape of a flat plaque. At Mastiugino we find another form that has a modeled animal-head at one extremity that is, however, no larger. It is the latter type that the Scythians passed on to the upper valley of the Volga called, after a village situated there, Ananino (70). There a loop sometimes takes the place of the button-shaped protuberance placed behind the wider part (71). The belt-clasp reappears once more in the Ural but with a wide shield (72). It passes on towards the east to succeeding civilizations. Since of all these regions, the Jenissei valley is the nearest intermediary to China, examples from there deserve our particular attention.

There has been but little written about the Minussinsk clasps. They are found in that district of about the beginning of our era, sometimes formed of a simple hook that changes into a bird-head ornamentation at about the centre (Pl. XVIII no. 1). After the bird comes the head of a horse following in the direction of the hook, and at the opposite end is a ring-shaped opening. In another example (Pl. XVIII no. 2) the hook remains smooth while at the heavier