

HARD DE CHARDIN in 1931 travelled along the highroads connecting Hami, Turfan, Urumchi, Qara-shahr and Aqsu as a member of the CITROËN-HAARDT Expedition. This famous student of geology, palaeontology and archaeology came across three different localities with what he describes as neolithic stone artifacts. The first place is situated at San-tao-lin-tze (usually called Taranchi) 81 km. WNW of Hami, the second near Ch'i-chio-ching-tze at the bifurcation of the road from Hami, one branch going to Turfan and the other to Ku-ch'eng-tze.¹ Both of these localities lie in the T'ien-shan mountains. His third place was at Aqsu, on the southern edge of western T'ien-shan bordering the Tarim Basin, from where he reports a series of prehistoric dwelling places with numerous broken stones, fragments of hand-made pottery and also small patches of ashes. The inventory from here differs from those of the other places and has no connection with known cultures. The age of the Aqsu sites is of course hard to determine. The two places in T'ien-shan seem to belong to the same neolithic cultural complex as the one so widely distributed throughout Mongolia and Manchuria.

One of the Chinese students, Mr. Y. H. LIU, who accompanied our expedition in 1928, found flint implements at Ch'i-chio-ching-tze of a type very much resembling those from Inner Mongolia. It is possible, though not absolutely certain, that TEILHARD came across the same locality as LIU.

Even with the addition of these new facts our knowledge of the cultural conditions in Sinkiang in prehistoric time remains imperfect.

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In describing now my own discoveries of prehistoric remains in the province of Sinkiang I must point out from the beginning that the arrangement is not strictly chronological. With a few exceptions I have followed a topographical grouping, which partly coincides with the order in which the sites were found.

2. SITES WITH PAINTED POTTERY.

A. MIAO-ERH-KU.

The first site with archaeological remains which I came across in Sinkiang was in the tiny oasis of Miao-erh-ku, the first real settlement one reaches when coming from the east along the northern caravan route through The Black Gobi. This small Turkish village, which probably also bears a Turki name though we never heard of it, is situated about 85 km. ESE of Hami on the southern side of the easternmost

¹ As to the curious type of tool from here which Père TEILHARD depicts in his Fig. 13, I have found a similar one in Inner Mongolia, at Bayen-bogdo about 130 km. N of Pao-t'ou. It has not the small beak which Père TEILHARD believes to be the real 'point' of these objects. I cannot see why these tools should have such a fine and special finish with one bifacial cutting edge and one 'scraper edge' formed by the flaked-off 'core-side', if they were intended to serve only as burins. My belief is that they were a combination of knife and scraper.

