

pected outside the clay desert. The true implements existing point to a pretty late prehistoric facies.

As to the distribution of these remains it seems as if they occurred in a somewhat larger quantity in the region south of the present delta than elsewhere. Nevertheless, with our present knowledge we can only state that the flint artifacts cover about the same area as do the finds from the time of Lou-lan. It thus seems likely that there can be no long interval between the time of the stone age occupation and that of Lou-lan. Nothing contradicts an assumption that flint implements were still used by the autochthon population when they first got into contact with the Chinese about 2,000 years ago though they probably had passed the stage of true stone age already at that time.

There are instances when stone implements of neolithic types have been found in ruins from the time of Lou-lan (e. g. the axe Pl. 5: 11 in the fortress L. K.). But the implements may have been deposited there before the construction of the fortifications, and no definite chronological criteria can be reached in this way. The four stone arrow-heads from Cemetery 5 which are depicted on Pl. 12: 3—6, on the other hand, are apparently contemporaneous with the burial place. Their obviously inferior workmanship as compared with other arrow-heads from the Lop-nor region makes it appropriate to characterize them as survivals of a true stone age.

Until we have discovered a site with full inventory and the finds resting in situ we had better postpone further discussion of the Lop-nor stone age. The hope of finding such a site is extremely small. Only lucky circumstances would account for the preservation of such ancient strata in this desert where wind erosion is more powerful than in almost any other place.

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When in July 1928 HASLUND and I approached Charchan from the upper sources of Charchan-darya we followed the ordinary road which skirts the western extremity of Astin-tagh at Chuqur-davan. In the valley of Chiqin-sai and not very far from the northern foot of the mountain a few worked flints and a couple of potsherds were found on a small open space in the valley. The place is situated about 65 km. south-east of Charchan. Cf. the map Fig. 4.

Three of the potsherds recall the plain pottery from the Singer site in Quruq-tagh, whereas another two show traces of incised lines made with a dentated tool.

There are forty-seven diminutive flint flakes, some of which have retouched edges, two small cores from which such flakes have been struck off, and eight very small scrapers.

The objects are of the same types as those common in Inner Mongolia, which are ascribed to the neolithic age.