

to the Han dynasty. From South Manchuria we know of a clay tray with holes in the corners, apparently to receive short legs (Mori, Pl. XXXI), and in the same tomb the fresco paintings on a wall show a kneeling man in front of whom a cylindrical vessel with a ladle is standing on a low table or tray of the type in question, showing that they were used in the burial ceremonies among the Chinese. A sacrificial table of pottery depicted by LAUFER (1909, Pl. XXIV) also points in this direction.

A parallel from a region west of Lop-nor is furnished by a bronze table from near Verni (Alma-ata) along the road from there to Kulja in the Ili valley (Tallgren 1937 a, Fig. 3) "probably a case of a sacral object used for religious rites, as a stand or altar for holy vessels, idols or sacrifices". It is rather large, 1.25 × 1.12 m., and on the edge are standing thirty winged quadrupeds, probably lions, sculptured in the round. In the same paper TALLGREN also deals with stone sacrificial "vessels" or altars (Fig. 4—16) from the latter half of the last millenium B.C. from the region between the Ural mountains and the Volga, belonging to a Scytho-Sarmatian civilization, and all originating from graves. I do not believe that the Chinese wooden tables or trays must necessarily have been developed out of these stone altars; the comparison, however, is interesting.

As far as I am aware, the Chinese trays are mostly known from grave finds. That the Lop-nor specimens were used also by the living is evident from the many knife-cuts on both sides of them. I find it less likely that these knife-marks should originate from the cutting up of some sacrificed animal at the burial ceremony. STEIN also found a specimen in a ruin (Stein 1928, L.M.I.i.017). One of his wooden trays has originally been coated with some kind of polish; it is possible that some of the Lop-nor trays have been lacquered, as were those found in Korea.

The oval board Pl. 32:4 has possibly been suspended horizontally in leather strings, and if so the picture shows the lower side. The other side is much worn.

Bows.

Two bows were found in this mass-grave. The one shown in Pl. 32:1 is nearly complete, and made of a single branch of tamarisk wood, i. e. it is a self bow. The original length was about 112 cm. This first bow is of little interest when compared with the second one, a compound bow, which, unfortunately, is now in a very bad state of preservation, but nevertheless the most complete specimen from Chinese Turkistan.¹

¹ From the Tibetan fortress of Mazar-tagh at Khotan-darya STEIN has three end-pieces of composite bows all of the same shape (Stein 1921, Pl. LI, and 1928, Pl. VI). During the Sino-Swedish Expedition the Chinese archaeologist HUANG WEN-PI found two pairs of bone-tips from a compound bow near Yar-khoto west of Turfan (Huang 1933, Vol. II, Pl. 2) their length being 20.1, 19.6, 19.8 and 19.1 cm. The unequal length may be due to their being in a fragmentary state. According to Mr. HUANG (who by the way regards them as weaving tools!) they date from the Former Han dynasty. This dating is based only on the construction of the tomb from where they originate. Any European archaeologist would prefer to place them somewhat later and regard them as Avarian.