



Fig. 31. A Scythian stringing his bow. From an electron vase from Kul Oba.

Among the oracle bone inscriptions from Anyang there is a character denoting composite bow, apparently made of bone, wood and tendon. This is the oldest record of this bow type in China, but its origin is non-Chinese.¹ CHILDE believes that the Sumerian bow "was probably already of the variety known as composite; in any case some bows were bound with gold and the ends were tipped with carved pieces of copper to which the string was attached" (Childe 1928, p. 181). This Sumerian form seems to me to be an artistic development of the composite bow of "natural" materials,

the Central Asian form being more true to the original type.

These compound bows were highly effective in use, and also very valuable. It is said that it takes between five and ten years to manufacture a first-class compound bow in our days, and the procedure can hardly have been quicker in ancient times. Therefore, when such bows were deposited in the graves it must have been in order to pay special honour to archers of high distinction.

These powerful bows were the main weapon of the Huns and allied Inner Asiatic horse-nomads of the wide steppes. With them the Huns attained their fame as mounted archers, and we may be convinced that this fame was not due merely to a long and thorough training of the warriors but also to bows of the highest perfection. The Mongols carried the same bow, which is since known as the "Tartar" bow, when they conquered half of the Old World under CHINGGHIS KHAN and his successors; and it may still be seen in use at some princely court in Mongolia at archery competitions. Its use as a weapon came to an end only about the end of last century.

Various small articles.

Three wooden combs, two of which are depicted on Pl. 20: 3—4, are of the common Han type known from the Limes at Edsen-gol and Tun-huang as well as from different parts of Eastern Turkistan. Many have been found in Chinese tombs in Korea, and WHITE publishes several as coming from the old Lo-yang. They have a high rounded back and very fine teeth.

Two long hair-pins of black-lacquered bamboo, Pl. 20: 1—2, have adorned the high coiffure of a lady. The type is known from Han dynasty tombs in Korea. Bronze was also used for this type of hair-pins.

Other items of women's outfit from this grave are three wooden spindles, more or less fragmentary, Pl. 20: 7—8, and a loose spindle whorl of wood.

¹ The inscription can indeed be dated to the time of Wu Ting, 1324—1266 B.C. (Creel, p. 195).