

of this sort of rings with incised linear designs on the oval bezel, probably used as signets, both at the Lou-lan station and at Niya. Their appearance is non-Chinese. Finger rings in general are rare in China until much later periods.

Other round or square "rings" such as Pl. 30: 21 and 30: 26 have probably been fastened to straps or ropes. The square specimen may have been a buckle.

A hemispherical boss with a central pin, Pl. 30: 25, is one of the supports of some case or vessel, probably of wood. Many objects of this kind are known from the Lop-nor region, but this one is pretty large. STEIN found a rectangular basket with such bosses as supports (Stein 1928, Pl. XXV, L. M. I. 01—4). On lacquer boxes from tombs at Lo-lang in Korea there are in some cases similar bosses on the lids.

Four identical specimens of the hooked tube Pl. 30: 6 were found together with the fine arrow-head Pl. 30: 15 above the high shore cliff to the east of the ancient lake Lop-nor; the spot is marked 434 on the map Fig. 36. They are in fact the only objects in this collection that have been found in this region, and they have most likely been lost there by travellers. The four bronze tubes or sockets are of special interest. The function of these hooked tubes has until recently been obscure — as a rule they have been associated with arrows — which of course is absurd, as they are unsymmetrical. Finds in the tombs at Noyan-ola show that they have been fixed to the ends of wooden canopy ribs, the hooks having served to fasten the cover of cloth or hide. In the case of Noyan-ola it has apparently been an umbrella or canopy of such chariots as are depicted on the famous Shantung tomb reliefs. We cannot be absolutely sure that all tubes of this kind were used on chariot canopies or "umbrellas" — there were probably other kinds of "umbrellas" with such fittings — but if our tubes belonged to a chariot it is not unlikely that this had to be abandoned at the place where the bronze tubes were found. In any case the finding place of these objects is worth particular consideration. It lies about 40 km. from the present shore of the lake, and about 83 km. due east of the Lou-lan station. The position becomes of the utmost importance when we find that it lies in a straight line from the south-western promontory of the Pei-shan ridges and the easternmost outpost of the Lou-lan ruins, i. e. that of STEIN'S tower L. J. It therefore seems likely that a direct road existed straight across the salt-crust, which according to HÖRNER'S surveys seems to have a much more limited expanse here than is shown on STEIN'S maps, and there were apparently several "islands" of better ground in the salt-crust. It is doubtful whether the more northerly route found by STEIN was easier to negotiate than this direct one, and it was at least 30 km. longer; but it was less liable to inundation.

Another fragmentary tube with lost hook, Pl. 30: 5, has been mentioned already in connection with the ruins of T'u-ken.

A small bronze scoop Pl. 30: 18 has an exact parallel in Dr. HEDIN'S old collection from Khotan. It has just been published by MONTELL (1938, Pl. IV: 13), and he supposes that it has had some function in Buddhist ritual. Otherwise there are no