

of intaglios and the relief design on a slab in Gandhara style from Panjab (Stein 1937, Pl. II, B. A. 047).

One of the other two signets, Pl. 33: 22, has four engraved scrolls, also recalling Khotan signets (Stein 1921, Pl. V, Khot, 06. s.)

The three silver objects Pl. 34: 12—14, one pendant and two fragments of finger rings, are nicely polished by wear. The shape of the pendant reminds one of an Oriental object found in the Swedish Viking Age city of Birka (Arne 1914, Fig. 105).

A bronze mirror with handle, Pl. 33: 23, is of clear Chinese origin. The decorated side depicts in low, flat relief a scene which is rather popular on charms and amulet coins during the Sung and later dynasties. Under a fir tree is seated a man with a halo. He is clad in a garment with rich folds. Before him stands a smaller figure carrying something on his hands. Between them, in the foreground, there are a crane and a tortoise. The two animals as well as the fir tree are emblematic of longevity, but it is uncertain whom the human figures are meant to represent. They have been interpreted as representing the Taoist immortal MA KU offering a cup of wine to the Star of Happiness,¹ an interpretation that does not seem conclusive, as the smaller figure has none of MA KU's common attributes. In Chinese numismatic works² the scene is said to show *Hsing kuan* or Mandarin of the Stars being attended by a servant. CHAVANNES³ interprets the sitting figure in the same scene as the divinity presiding over human life and the other figure as a young boy offering him some sort of object. One of these explanations appears to be more justified than the first one given above. The closest parallel as to the outline of the mirror is afforded by a specimen from Turfan (Stein 1928, Pl. LXXI, Kao. III. oi). The Charchan mirror can hardly be older than the Sung dynasty for stylistical reasons; it may be still younger.

Shells with suspension holes as well as beads and other small articles made of shells have been examined microscopically by Dr. BERGENHAYN and found to belong partly to a freshwater bivalve *Quadrula* living in East Asia and North America, partly to various marine shells such as *Cyprea moneta*, *Strombus floridus* and *Columbaria mendicaria*. The latter have thus been brought overland to Charchan from the far off sea. Some of them are shown in Pl. 34: 55—59. Pl. 34: 39 is a small pendant in the shape of an animal(?), and Pl. 34: 36 has two small engraved circles with central dot just as has the bronze object Pl. 33: 8. It is indeed remarkable to find how the people in the Tarim Basin used marine shells, apparently to be carried as charms and ornaments, as they lived farther from the sea than any other people in the world. Cowries, and probably also other shells, were sometimes used as

¹ Lockhardt: *The Currency of the Farther East*, No. 1652.

² E. g. *Ku-chüan-huei*, by Li Ch'u-peng.

³ *Le cycle Turc des douze animaux* (TP 7) Fig. X.