

that in spite of considerable erosion they have not lost the outlines of their original form, nor have they acquired so old an appearance as the kurgans at Anau, near Askhabad, for instance. The Merv kurgans vary in shape from heptagonal in the case of Munon Tepe, to square, although the latter is the prevailing shape, and the variation may be due to erosion. Those of the primitive type seem to have been built without special reference to the points of the compass. The only work of human hands that is found on the surface is pottery, the commonest red and green wheel-made varieties for the most part, without a trace of ornament. Occasionally a finer gray variety, also unornamented, is found; and at one place, Yaz Tepe (No. 6 in the table and No. 4 on plate 57), three pieces of painted pottery were secured. These latter may be of significance as aids in the dating of the kurgans, and will be referred to again. Each kurgan appears to have been originally surrounded by a moat, but in most cases this is largely filled up.

CLASS II. KURGANS OF THE TRANSITION TYPE.

The kurgans of the transition type are often indistinguishable in outward form from their primitive prototypes, yet on the whole they are larger and more steep-sided. Most of them were originally rectangular, and several have their sides or axes oriented north and south. More generally than in Class I the remains of moats surround the eminences. Outer walls, too, are an occasional feature, either hemming in the whole of the summit of the hill, as at Ersar Tepe (No. 13), or surrounding an inclosure in the center of which rises a higher square, as at Guibekli Tepe (Navel Hill, No. 17 in the table and Nos. 6 and 7 on plate 57), and at Kuzi Tepe (No. 8), a kurgan of the primitive class. The pottery is of the same common sorts as in the preceding type, but in the gray variety there is less of the fine-grained type and more that is coarse and common. One great difference distinguishes the transition pottery from its predecessor. The older sort is without incised ornament; its successor of the transition type is characterized by it. In the oldest mounds of the second class incised ornamentation is rare and consists chiefly of vertical lines, either parallel on the sides of a jar, or radiating out and down from the base of the neck. In the more highly developed mounds ornamented pottery is exceedingly abundant. In addition to the simple designs just mentioned there are various others, such as parallel horizontal lines, oblique lines or scallops around the neck, the wave ornament in various designs made with implements of from five to ten teeth, and lastly the criss-cross pattern. In some places the ground is almost covered with pottery bearing this last design, and invariably the pieces are fragments of large, thick jars like those that bear the same ornament in the old city of Ghiaur Kala. In this connection it is interesting to note that among the modern Turkomans of the Merv Oasis the most common form of large jar bears an incised ornament of the same character. The modern jars are covered with a crude green glaze and the design is smaller and closer in pattern, more generally vertical, and far less ornamental and less carefully made than in former times, but nevertheless it may be a degenerate descendant.

In addition to the art of ornamenting pottery the people of the transition period had learned another, that of burning bricks with straw. At first the bricks