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SACRED ANIMALS AND FANTASTIC CREATURES OF URARTIAN BELTS – MYTHOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS OF URARTIAN CIVILIZATION

Saak TARONTSI*

Abstract

In this article the fundamental aspects of the Urartian belt's mythological iconography are discussed. The main purpose of the article is the detailed investigation of key figures, spiritual personages, sacred animals, fantastic creatures, as well as connected with them scenes, motives and decorations of Urartian belts. Those objects depicted many sacred symbols and images that were parts of religious beliefs and sacral values of ancient Urartians. Among excellently ornamented images of Sacred Tree, Winged Sun, holy plants, stars, planets, sacral signs, scenes of hunt, figures of horse riders, soldiers and priests, the most significant parts of presented iconography comprised the principally important key pictures of Sacred Animals and Fantastic Creatures. Their outlines and compositions with other main iconographic elements created the mythological content of Urartian belts, thus, making those objects sacred and having a special meaning and significance. As our investigation suggests, bronze belts were considered as sacred talismans or "mini-temples" serving the purpose of carrying Divine Forces and the images of Gods, Genies, Sacred Animals and Fantastic Creatures in one given amulet-object, that inspired Urartians in their war or piece activities, and, according to their beliefs, helped them to achieve the victory and success in all undertakings.

* Corresponding Author's Institution – Yerevan State University, Faculty of History, Department of Archaeology and Ethnography, and, Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography. E-mail – saaktaro@gmail.com, phone – (374) 99-71-91-22 – cell., (374)51-91-22 – home.

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The land of Anatolia is a progenitor of many remarkable civilizations of ancient past that made a greatest history of ancient world¹. Truly, for the archeologists or ordinary people, the name of a land of Anatolia is associated with the Land of Wonders. Here, in one geographical area the diverse traces of many ancient civilizations can be found². The History of entire Civilization was written in the land of Anatolia. Among many profound Anatolian Civilizations that flourished in the past, Urartu represents a very special chapter with unique cultural traits that made the wholesome treasury of Anatolian culture significantly richer. Urartian civilization created its own cultural heritage, opulent in forms and meaningful by contents, something unique and unrepeatably that makes us truly appreciate its splendor, grandeur and affluence. When we make an estimation of the overall contribution of Urartian civilization to the cultural treasury of ancient world, we find out that such contribution is indeed remarkable. Being based on the cultural richness of their direct predecessors – Hurrians³, Urartians subsequently inherited their affluent, sophisticated culture and were able to enrich it significantly. Urartians created the civilizations unique in its way, not found anywhere in the globe. Urartian artifacts are widely attested in the best museum and private collections around the world, comprising a category of extraordinary items that have no analogues and equals around in world history of art by all means of their ingenuity and originality⁴. Among many abundant artifacts of Urartian culture, probably, the most profound and noteworthy are productions of metalwork⁵. True representations of ancient Urartian art, the metalworking products of Urartian culture are also the mostly decorated, elaborated and brought to overall perfection. These wonderful creations of ancient Urartian metalworking traditions constituted significant parts of religious beliefs and sacral values of ancient Urartians. Among excellently ornamented images of Sacred Tree, holy plants, stars, planets, sun, sacral signs, scenes of hunt, figures of horse riders, soldiers and priests, the most significant parts of Urartian bronze belts' iconography

¹ Steadman, S., McMahon, G. 2011 *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Anatolia: (10,000 – 323 BCE)*, New York, Oxford University Press, Inc., p. 3.

² Steadman, S., McMahon, G. 2011 *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Anatolia: (10,000 – 323 BCE)*, New York, Oxford University Press, Inc., p.4.

³ Hooker, J.T. 1990 *Reading the Past: Ancient Writing from Cuneiform to the Alphabet*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press / Trustees of British Museum, p. 54.

⁴ Azarpay, G. 1990 *Urartian Art and Artifacts: a Chronological Study*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, p. 2

⁵ Darke, D. 2011 *Eastern Turkey – 2-nd Edition*, Connecticut USA, The Globe Pequot Press Inc., p. 323.

comprised the principally important key pictures of Sacred Animals and Fantastic Creatures⁶. Their outlines and compositions with other main iconographic elements created the mythological content of Urartian belts, thus, making those objects sacred and having a special meaning and significance. Fantastic Creatures of Urartian belts were quite numerous by types, various by compositional parts and diverse by mythological functions⁷. Their different bodily parts were belonging to humans, demi-gods or gods and to animals, birds and fishes. Each and every Fantastic Animal had a very special mythological function, functional value, worshiping category and hierarchical place in Urartian religious pantheon. The most hierarchically important Fantastic Creatures had human heads as the main sign of humane identity. After them were the mythological characters having composite human and animalistic parts, after which were fantastic creatures with various animal, fish and bird parts. Urartian bronze belts were important parts of Urartian garments, adorning with various ornaments and figures costumes of Urartians, and, thus, adding special meaning and significance to them⁸. Due to their compositional particularities the Fantastic Creatures of Urartian belts are often called Sphinx-Type Creatures or Sphinxical Mythological Personages. Sacred Animals and Fantastic Creatures of Urartian belts are actually the key components and main elements for further investigation and more thorough understanding of Urartian religion, mythological beliefs, and cultural aspects of their worshipping traditions of sacred personages, creatures, gods, demi-gods, deities, kings and heroes⁹.

Urartian Belts – Special Objects depicting Holy Signs, Sacred Symbols, Plants, Animals, Figures, Personages, Fantastic Creatures, Sphinxes and Deities.

Almost all existing examples of Urartian belts today whether they are preserved in the form of whole belts or their fragments, contain images of Holy Signs, Sacred Symbols, Plants, Animals, Figures, Personages, Fantastic Creatures, Sphinxes and Deities¹⁰. The depiction of Sacred Animals in Urartian belts became a remarkable tradition of artful mastery of metalwork which, in its turn, was truly dedicated to depiction of Heavenly Values in Materials Objects. For ancient Urartians belts were much more than only integral parts of their garment or nicely decorated items. For them, belts were special

⁶ Taşyürek, O.A.

1977 “The Urartian Bronze hoard from Giyimli”, *Philadelphia University Museum Expedition Summer 1977*, 19/4:18

⁷ Curtis, J.

1996 “Urartian Bronze Belts”, *A Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie* 86/1:119

⁸ Esayan, S., Hmayakyan, S.

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⁹ Hmayakyan S.G.

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¹⁰ Salvatori, S.

1976 “An Urartian Bronze Strip in a Private Collection”, *East and West* 26/1/2: 99

objects of Sacral Values that, according to their beliefs, being depicted in the belt were directly connecting them directly to World of Gods and Dwelling of Deities.

Urartian Bronze Belts - Sacred Talismans, Holy Amulets and “Mini-Temples” of Urartian Religion.

Ancient Urartians gave a very special meaning to their bronze belts. Besides using them as parts of their garments, they attributed to them a special significance. They believed that bronze belts had the following functions:

1. Served as the most Reliable Connection to the Dwelling of Gods and Divine Forces, being a Holy Link between the World of Humans and Divine Worlds.

Ancient Urartians believed that Gods, Godly Forces and Divine Representations can clearly observe all happenings and events that are taking place on Earth from the Heights of Celestial Heaven, and, when deem necessary, could actually intervene and grant to the righteous people the ultimate luck in their endeavors, advancement in their affairs and victories in battle. By carrying their belts, Urartians hoped to earn the favor of Deities and Divine Spirits.

2. Serving as Divine Worlds themselves on a Miniature Scale – as Sacred Talismans, Holy Amulets and “Mini-Temples” of Urartian Religion. Ancient Urartians always paid a great deal of respect to their belts as to the objects of Sacred Significance. Their paid big attention in adorning their bronze belts with elaborate designs and iconographical motives because they were truly convinced that all images of Divine Images, Sacral Signs, Holy Plants, Sacred Animals and Fantastic Creatures were actually existing inside the physical structure of the belt, thus making those simple utilitarian objects to special articles of supernatural significance, carrier of Divine Forces and Supernatural Powers¹¹. Being able to carry the belts on their waists, Urartians also used their religious motives to worship the images and powers of Sacral Elements depicted on their belts, thus making the simple process of wearing them accompanied by devotional worship that proved their ultimate allegiance to Higher Forces. Truly, Urartians affirmatively believed that having some very special model of Universal Divine Existence they could revive, revitalize and reincarnate their Extraordinary Powers within themselves, thus proving the Absolute allegiance to their Gods and faithfulness to their religious faith.

3. Serving as Ultimate Tools of Adamantine Belief to Forces of their Divine Faith and Holy Religion. Besides being the Universal Tools of Divine Connection and Spiritual Recreation, the bronze belts served also one very important purpose – Tools of Inspirational Believe. Because the ancient Urartians primarily considered all their Deities and other Sacred Elements of their religion actually existent and well alive, they

¹¹ Salvatori. S.

1976 “Notes on the Chronology of Some Urartian Artifacts”, *East and West* 26/½:92

often found so much needed energy to rage a battle or build their civilized life by igniting the inspirational energy of devotional believing. Urartians not only were carrying their belts as Sacred Talismans and Holy Amulets of their Supreme Faith, but also were well aware about the Mythological Figures and Divine Personages passed from one generation to another through stories, eposes, poetry and literature, as well as ritual practices and prayers in Urartian pagan temples. Therefore, each and every Urartian knew about the existence of Divine World and its Holy Personages.

For ancient Urartians the Religion was not just a set practices or a package of wishes to be tried to be fulfilled. Urartians believed about their Gods, Deities and Divine Forces to be very much alive, to be integral parts of their real lives, and, therefore, they treated Godly Forces as Realistic Figures. Such an attitude towards Higher Forces left a great impact to all conceptual realizations of Urartian art, especially connected to those of metalworking production and directly related to manufacturing of Urartian bronze belts. Urartians didn't see Mythology just as Abstraction, but, rather, they had a higher regard for Mythology as Real Action strongly interconnected with the main aspects of their everyday life. Urartians inspiringly believed in many ways on everything that were depicted on their belts, because those great holy depictions were not only symbolically represented as art, but also Realistically Depicted All that Urartians Believed in. Such passionate displays of inspirational believing we can call by the special term **Mythologisms**, with specially attached term meanings called as **Mythological Representations of Real Life Eventualities** or **Realistic Interpretations of Mythological Events**. Such interpretations of Mythological content were producing the **Conceptual Intertwining of Mythology and Realism** by the usage of term **Mythologisms**, as well as by introducing specific style representing **Mythology in Realism** and **Realism in Mythology** that directly leads to concretization and formulation of two related term formulations – **Mythological Realism** and **Realistic Mythologism**. It is possibly quite hard to affirmatively state that from two equally introduced elements – **Mythology** and **Reality**, which one dominated over the other in the art of Urartian belts. Nevertheless, what is obvious from the aesthetics and ethics visions of the Divine Elements in the art of Urartian belts is that those very important key components – **Mythology** and **Reality** don't reject, estrange, alienate or contradict each other. Rather, those elements truly coincide as **Composite Parts of Whole**; something that makes the Urartian art unique and unlike to any other art in the history of ancient civilizations. In contrast to principles of Assyrian art where all Divine Characters are depicted with certain style with severe rules of representation and command of elements' presentation that must be made in distinctive manner in order to underline the really striking difference of Celestial before Earthly and to affirm the Exclusive Supremacy of Assyrian Gods and Kings, the applicable principles of Urartian art don't express any significantly feasible distinctions between the phenomena of Real

and Surreal. On the contrary, the very unique and superb style of many distinguished masters of Urartian metalworking tradition was primarily and solely based on the Primeval, Primitive and Simplistic depiction of objects and scrupulous delineation of their details. Yet, at the same time, the objects and subjects of Urartian belts strangely, by the way of “Magical Simplification” are getting the traits and details of the Mythological Beginning. Sometimes the objects and subjects depicted on Urartian belts often seem too primitive, so the impression of “lacking the stylistic details” is created, and that is only the superficial impression. In reality, each and every detail of the Urartian belts’ art is absolutely measured, delineated and expressed with certain artistic style that combines both the grand Urartian artistic tradition and the mastery of the particular skillful metalworker artist who created the Urartian belt masterpiece. The true matter is that the Urartian Artistic tradition that pre-existed since Hurrian times, and got developed for hundreds of years during the period of existence of Urartian civilization, perfected to such a blossoming degree of artful certitude that the mastery of impressions achieved its heights of true proficiency. That very remarkable artistic traditions of Urartian iconography also proved to be enable Urartian masters to successfully avoid artificial clichés of Mythology, and, by accepting simple lines and realistic approaches to the rules of artistic representations, even sometimes break the stylistic boundaries between the rules of division of the Simple and Divine, make a breach those severe rules of well prescribed canonization and achieve a great variety of presentations, effects and clichés that are signs of true mastery – the picturesque and wonderful Art of Combining the Mythological and the Real, the Human and Divine, the Story and the Legend, the Natural and the Supernatural, the Real and Unreal, Real Animals and Mythological Beasts, Life of Earth and Elements of Celestial Existence and Subsistence of Godly Deities with Life of Humans¹².

In Urartian iconography each and every element is well known and highly traditional – it has its true classification definition, own mythological value, certain hierarchical place and the certain degree of significance – **it is well standardized and easy to classify by its elements**. Although Urartian belts are relatively small in size, the artistic depictions of Divine Elements in each and every in them are done with great deal of detailed description, thorough portrayal of main parts and characters and simplistic, but very comprehensive delineation of objects, subjects and their composite parts¹³.

¹² Bonacossi, D.

1995 “Una cintura di bronzo Urartea nel Monastero della Congregazione Mechitarista Armena dell’isola di San Lazzaro – Venezia”, *Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici* 35:139

¹³ Bonacossi, D.

2009 “Urartian Bronze Belts in the National Museum of Aleppo”, *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie* 89/1:94

Urartian bronze belts are manufactured with special techniques that allowed preserving the main depictions with great amount of details on them after thousands of years of deteriorating conditions of being abandoned inside earth soil layers with adherence to soak the water and become mud, then dry after that; in bad weather conditions changing every year from hot summers to cold winters that are typical to Anatolian landscape. Most of the Urartian bronze belts display not only the greatest artistic values of its art, but also great ways of manufacturing technique and usage of quality metalworking materials. All those factors combined allowed the main collections of world renowned museums to display many wonderful pieces of Urartian belts – some of them fully preserved and some of them in fragments, displaying the great artistic traditions with amazing techniques and unique styles of mastery that put the Urartian art aside from art traditions of many similar cultures of the same time period, and makes its distinctively unique and recognizably Urartian.

The availability of many types of metalworking items (including examples of Urartian bronze belts) in the territory adjacent to temples and adjoining urban structures directly suggests that the Urartian metalworking art tradition which displayed the remarkable knowledge and expertise of essential elements of Urartian Religion, Cosmogony and Mythological Tradition, was strongly influenced by Urartian Temple Traditions and related Teaching of Cosmogonical nature. It was quite obvious that the painstakingly detailed description of many Mythological Elements in the art of adorning Urartian bronze belts was not possible to realize without having the absolutely concrete knowledge of Mythology, Cosmogony and Religious Model of the Universal Existence. Therefore, each and every Urartian bronze belt or its partial fragment represent from itself very precious source of information about the Philosophical Concepts and Universal World Views of ancient Urartians, as well as their inmost conceptual approaches to the Art of Recreating their Mythological Conceptions into the materialized evidence of their artful principles that throughout the historical periods gradually transformed to the phenomenon that we can call Urartian Art Tradition. By conducting the systematic studies of that very Traditionalism we will be able to uncover many secrets of Urartian Mythological Model of Universal Existence and unlock many mysteries of Urartian Cultural Heritage that otherwise would be lost for our generations forever.

The Essential Mythological Elements of Urartian Bronze Belts.

The Urartian bronze belts have the following basic Essential Mythological Elements –

Holy Signs, Sacred Symbols, Plants, Animals, Figures, Personages, Fantastic Creatures or Sphinxes and Deities. All those elements constitute the Urartian Mythological Models of Universal Existence that is based on the Mythology, Cosmogony and Religion of Urartians, meanwhile, reflecting their Philosophical Concepts and Universal Views of the World.

Sacred Animals of Urartian bronze belts. Sacred animals of the Urartian bronze belts were retaining all features of real animals and **they were not composite**. However, due to stylistic particularities of Urartian art that were highly adherent to the foundational principles of **Mythological Realism** and **Realistic Mythologism**, many depictions of real animals were artificially altered to emphasize either the hidden mentality of the artist or conceptual content of its ideological expression that used be in accordance with the dominating paradigms of ancient Urartian tradition that dictated to follow to typical examples on the basis of early accepted laws of aesthetical and ethical content. Possibly, each and every Urartian master of artistic reproduction had in his mind the significance of Holy Animals and Mythological Figures¹⁴. Sometimes, a single Urartian belt contained a whole array of those animals and Figures¹⁵.

Lion – This particular animal was considered Sacred among Urartians and was worshipped as a King of Beasts. At the times of Urartu lions were abundant in Anatolia, Asia Minor and Near East. Possibly, they were domesticated and used by kings and nobility as pets. The subject of Lions was the favorite one in Urartu and lots of art items were either dedicated to these noble animals or had portrayals of those magnificent beasts. Lions were considered Sacred Animals for their power, force, fierceness and beauty. The lions actually were the mostly depicted animalistic subjects of the Urartian bronze belts. **See – Photo 1.**

Bull – After the lion, bull is the second Sacred Animal that was mostly portrayed in Urartian bronze belts. Bulls were worshipped in Urartu as extraordinary animals and were largely admired for their incredible force, resilience, power, strength and beauty. At the epochal time of Urartu there were both wild and domesticated varieties of the bull. **See – Photos 2, 3.**

Lions and Bulls as standing platforms for Urartian Deities and Heroes.

Because ancient Urartians greatly admired and worshipped lions and bulls as Sacred Animals, they often portrayed them as living standing platforms for Gods, Deities and Mythological and Historical Heroes, considering that the **Holy Union of Sacred Animal with Divine Personality would create a Bond of Incredible Powers and Symbolic Reunion of Sacral Characters**. It is quite hard to speculate now whether there were ceremonies in the past involving the real action of standing on the actual lion or bull. **See – Photo 4.**

¹⁴ Hamilton, R.W.

1965 “The Decorated Bronze Strip from Gushchi”, *Anatolian Studies* 15:43

¹⁵ Taşyürek, O.

1977 “Adana Bölge Müzesindeki “Dedeli” Bronz Urartu Kemer – The “Dedeli” Bronze Urartian Belt in the Adana Regional Museum”, *Türk Arkeoloji Dergisi* 24/2:157

Fantastic Creatures of Urartian Belts.

Fantastic Creatures depicted on Urartian bronze belts are displaying a great variety of types and kinds that only can be finally classified if theoretically it would be possible to thoroughly study all existing Urartian belts and their fragments available in museums and private collections, as well as those samples of Urartian belts that might come out as a result of future excavations of Urartian sites. Nevertheless, based on the iconographical data of many available fine examples of Urartian bronze belts and their fragments it is possible to determine the main types of Fantastic Creatures and basic principles of their classification. Fantastic Creatures can be divided on two main types or kinds – 1. **Simple Composite Fantastic Creatures– consisting from the figure of one whole animal or entire human character and an attached wing or only one other combined composite part; 2. Compound Composite Fantastic Creatures – consisting from the combination of one animal or human character and many other parts, more than one.**

1. Simple Composite Fantastic Creatures –

a) Simple Composite Fantastic Creatures – Winged Lions – See Photo 5.

Winged lions appear in the artful representations of Urartian bronze belts with the whole body of a lion and attached wings that display power, dynamic force and motion. Those creatures have many incredible details and displays very energetic, vivid character. Just as counterparts – sacred lions, winged lions symbolize royal power, manifestation of urartian godly force and tremendous display of supernatural abilities that may had been a subject of many legendary stories and mythological tales of distant past.

b) Simple Composite Fantastic Creatures – Winged Bulls – See Photo 6.

c) Winged bulls have two specific varieties – simple winged bulls and winged bulls with dragon-shaped snouts. In case of winged bulls with dragon-shaped snouts they still classify as Simple Composite Fantastic Creatures because they facial features are highly stylized, but not wholesomely expressed as separate item. Therefore, with obvious differences in snout part, nevertheless, those creatures remain as subclass of Simple Composite Creatures.

d) Simple Composite Fantastic Creatures – Winged Horses –See Photo 7.

Winged horses had been known in historical mythology since the Dawn of Civilization. Being one of the first domesticated animals in the world, horses were the only means of reliable and fast means of transportation. They could drive forward carriages full of goods, military chariots with soldiers, weapons

and ammunition, carry hefty weights by carts and take human passengers riding them to distances inaccessible by feet. The early wild imaginations of humans created fantastic creatures with the body of horse and wings of a bird that could fly much faster to places much farther than ordinary horses. There were many mythological stories connected with winged horses, and always those extraordinary creatures were loved by people for being on a side of positive heroes.

e) Simple Composite Fantastic Creatures – Winged Goats.

f) Simple Composite Fantastic Creatures – Winged Human Characters – See Photo 8.

Among many types of Fantastic Creatures the portraying of Angels, Winged Genii or Winged Deities are quite common. Due to the lack of writing evidence that use to be attached with those remarkable images we don't know their exact names and ranks of identification. However, their images are quite nicely preserved and by studying the manners and ways of their artistic creation we can find out the mythological roots of their origin.

g) Compound Composite Fantastic Creatures –

a) Compound Composite Fantastic Creatures with Lion's Face. See Photo 9.

Contrary to a constructive definition of a simple composite fantastic creatures in form of winged lions that consists from body of a whole lion and attached symbolical wings, the compound composite fantastic creatures with lions face may have various, non-lion parts attached to lion's face – that could be horns added to lion's head, or fish tail added to a composite body. In this type of a fantastic creature we observe more variety of composite parts, and, as we may suppose, their mythological significance in the sacral traditions of ancient urartians could have been somewhat different.

b) Compound Composite Fantastic Creatures with Bulls's Face. See Photo 10.

Just as any composite fantastic creature of urartian mythology expressed in the art of Urartian bronze belts, the image of composite fantastic creatures with bull's face has much more variety of constructive parts in its disposal. As it is shown in the photo example presented, the long body of a bull could

become somewhat shorter, as well as stylized fish tail may add to a creature, giving him some kind of special mythological significance.

Afterwards, it must be noted that the above-presented types of mythological creatures, both simple and composite by their creative-constructive nature, are not limited to this list of creatures presented. As the research for the mythological content of the Urartian bronze belts continues, new types of fantastic creatures are being discovered throughout the entirety of the research process, thus, making this topic very actual for further studies. Therefore, the scientific investigation of the iconography of Urartian bronze belts with all their composite elements with putting of specific emphasis on the mythological animals, creatures and personages of religious significance is a topic of a special scientific interest and it will continue in the foreseeable future. Hopefully, the results of further scientific research of this specific topic will yield a big plentitude of results, both iconographical and mythological in nature that will allow the field of Urartology or Urartian Studies will significantly enrich the overall knowledge of urartian culture, religion, philosophical views of the world and bases of mythological tradition.

The overall Significance of Urartian belt's Sacred Animals and Fantastic Creatures research for Urartology or Science of Urartian Studies.

Although lots of studies are conducted on Urartian subjects, many significant aspects of the remarkable Urartian civilizations still remain in shadow. Only by applying new approaches and advanced scientific technologies, modern archeologists and historians could come much closer for unlocking mysteries of Urartian civilization. By trying to fully understand the Philosophical Views, key World Concepts, Mythological Models of Universal Existence and basic Principles of Divine Cosmology of ancient Urartians, the modern science can find many comprehensive answers to still unanswered questions. Therefore, many pieces of archaeological evidence need to be thoroughly studied in order to classify them in a proper manner, with the exposure of as many essential details as it would be possible. Also, all previously done investigations in that particular field need to be restudied and previously published works need to be reviewed. Each and every sample of those remarkable productions of Urartian art and culture – Urartian belts and their fragments constitute a precious piece of a World History Puzzle that would enable us to penetrate inside the creative essence of Urartian culture and significantly enrich the Urartology or the Science of Urartian Studies with newer information and better knowledge about the life and cultural aspects of one the most interesting and sophisticated civilizations of ancient Anatolia – the Kingdom of Urartu.

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Photos



Photo 1 – Beautifully adorned lion is marching with full gracefulness, with open mouth and friendly attitude. The lion's bodily details are nicely delineated and exposed; he is proudly parading forward with raised tail and the display of a good mood, perhaps a celebration of victory, as portrayed on the Urartian bronze belt.



Photo 2 – Superior portrait of a mighty running bull with excellent bodily details, in great dynamical action and charging forward position from the Urartian bronze belt. This bull shows wildness, courage, vigor, energy and willingness to proceed towards ultimate victory and imminent success.



Photo 3 – Remarkable scene of bull hunt from the Urartian bronze belt fragment, nicely outlining two horse battle carriages with two hunters in each shooting arrows with bows while on a speedily motion and two running bulls that are trying to escape a chase. One of the bulls is portrayed wounded with an arrow. Both hunters and bulls are in the wild run, displaying an energetic stance and excellent hunt scene.



Photo 4– Symbolic compositions of a Hero or Deity standing on a Sacred Lion Bull from Urartian bronze belt. The God or Deity is in a peaceful stance, in a praying position and the lion is not running, but staying still in a quiet and gracious pose.



Photo 5 – Unique depiction of a Simple Composite Fantastic Creature, Winged Lion with the whole body of a lion and attached wings, from the Uartian bronze belt. This creature has many incredible details and displays very energetic, vivid character.

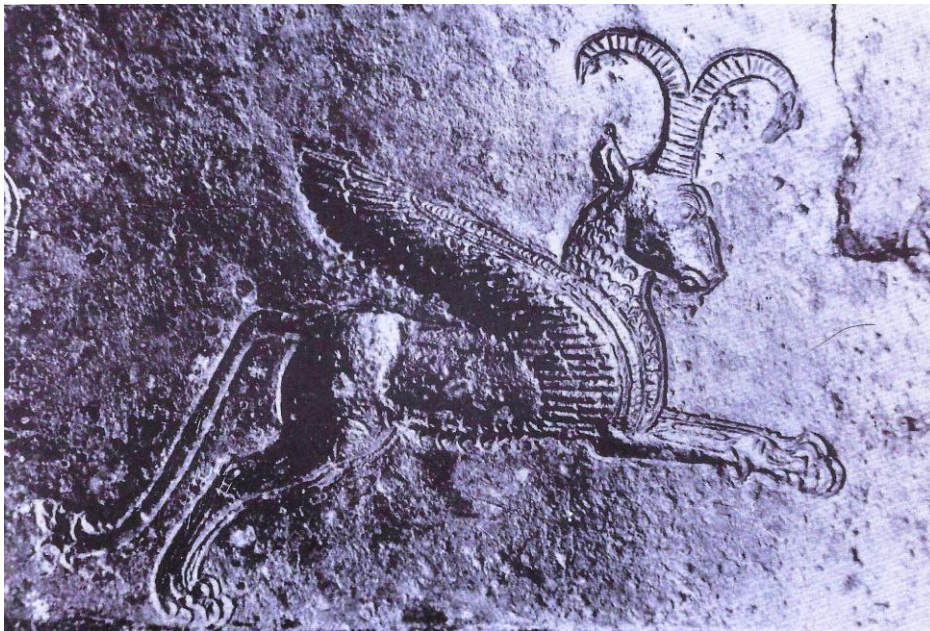


Photo 6 – Remarkable depictions of winged bull from one Uartian bronze belt. This bull is portrayed leaping and charging forward. There are many nice bodily details of this animal with excellent art techniques used.



Photo 7 – Alluring picture of a winged horse from the Urartian bronze belt. This horse got very concrete features and picturesque outline and represent a very fine example of mythological depiction of a fantastic creature.



Photo 8 – Splendid portrait of Winged Deity or Divine God with the composite body of fantastic creature with the bodily elements of bull and raised flapped wings from the Urartian bronze belt. The creature is in running position, graciously moving forward.



Photo 9 – Magnificent portrait of a Compound Fantastic Creature with Lion's Face, Lion's Body, Abstract Fantastic Horns and Straight Large Wings – scarcely rare example of its unexceptional kind of artistic interpretation depicted in one Urartian bronze belt.



Photo 10 – Striking image of a Compound Fantastic Creature with Bull's Face, Fish's Body and Raised Large Wings in a simple walking position from the Urartian belt. Very good example of this particular type of a Compound Fantastic Creature.