



Asya Studies

Akademik Sosyal Arařtırmalar / Academic Social Studies
Year: 9, Number: 34, p. 201-230, Winter 2025

Typological Periodization of Animal Style in Scythian Art* *İskit Sanatında Hayvan Üslubunun Tipolojik Dönemlendirilmesi*

ISSN: 2602-2877 / E-ISSN: 2602-263X

Arařtırma Makalesi
Research Article

Makale Geliř Tarihi
Article Arrival Date
06 / 09 / 2025

Makale Kabul Tarihi
Article Accepted Date
27 / 12 / 2025

Makale Yayım Tarihi
Article Publication Date
31 / 12 / 2025

Asya Studies

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Abstract

After examining the archaeological findings of the Scythians in both the Northern Black Sea region, Siberia and Kazakhstan, it was seen that the change and development in Scythian art showed regional differences. It has become clear within the scope of this study that Scythian art has three main phases. When archaeological elements belonging to pre-cultures such as Khirigsuur culture and Tagar culture are compared with Scythian finds in the early period, it is understood that Scythian art has an origin based on early Ural-Altai art, such as the Khirigsuur culture. Later, towards the end of the early period, Urartu interacted with Assyrian art, and Mesopotamian elements such as winged goddesses, drop-shaped tree of life and lions appeared in its art. It is seen that there was a short intermediate period, and it is understood that this period was experienced only in the Caucasus and the Black Sea region. Towards the end of this period, elements of Achaemenid and Greek art begin to find a place in Scythian art. It can be seen that the animal figures found on objects belonging to late Achaemenid and Greek elements have almost moved away from the art used by the Scythians in the steppe. However, it has been determined that this change occurred only in the Trans Caucasus and the north of the Black Sea, and that the development based on the early origins of Scythian art continued as it was in Siberia. As a result, it has been determined that Scythian art was initially formed in the Minusinsk and Altai regions of Siberia, and over time it moved west and was influenced by the cultures and arts in those regions.

Keywords: Scythian Art, Animal Style, Deer, Leopard, Eagle

Öz

Kuzey Karadeniz bölgesi, Sibirya ve Kazakistan'daki İskitlerin arkeolojik buluntuları incelendikten sonra, İskit sanatındaki deęişim ve gelişimin bölgesel farklılıklar gösterdiği görülmüştür. Bu çalışma kapsamında, İskit sanatının üç ana aşaması olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Khirigsuur Kültürü ve Tagar Kültürü gibi ön kültürlere ait arkeolojik unsurlar, erken dönemdeki İskit buluntuları ile karşılaştırıldığında, İskit sanatının Khirigsuur kültürü gibi erken Ural-Altay sanatına dayanan bir kökeni olduğu anlaşılmaktadır. Daha sonra, erken dönemin sonlarına doğru Urartu, Asur sanatı ile etkileşime girmiş ve kanatlı tanrıçalar, damla şeklindeki hayat ağacı ve aslanlar gibi Mezopotamya unsurları sanatında yer almıştır. Kısa bir ara dönem olduğu görülmekte ve bu dönemin sadece Kafkasya ve Karadeniz bölgesinde yaşandığı anlaşılmaktadır. Bu dönemin sonlarına doğru, Ahameniş ve Yunan sanatının unsurları İskit sanatında yer bulmaya başlar. Geç Ahameniş ve Yunan unsurlarına ait nesnelere bulunan hayvan figürlerinin, İskitlerin bozkırda kullandıkları sanattan neredeyse uzaklaştığı görülmektedir. Ancak, bu deęişimin sadece Transkafkasya ve Karadeniz'in kuzeyinde meydana geldiği ve İskit sanatının erken kökenlerine dayanan gelişimin Sibirya'da olduğu gibi devam ettiği tespit edilmiştir. Sonuç olarak, İskit sanatının ilk olarak Sibirya'nın Minusinsk ve Altay bölgelerinde olduğu, zamanla batıya doğru yayılıp bu bölgelerin kültür ve sanatlarından etkilendiği tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İskit Sanatı, Hayvan Üslubu, Geyik, Leopar, Kartal

Atf Bilgisi / Citation Information

Hüseyinov, E. (2025). Typological periodization of animal style in scythian art. *Asya Studies*, 9(34), 201-230.
<https://doi.org/10.31455/asya.1779188>

INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that the westward incursion of the Scythians into Siberia and Central Asia in 1000 BC changed the historical and artistic landscape. By the 8th century BC, these nomadic elements were showing power in Mesopotamia, the Caucasus, Eastern Anatolia and the northern Black Sea region. Their art was quite advanced. Not only the origin of the Scythians, but also their art was the subject of controversy and different hypotheses. Because their art and origins connected them with Siberia. In this case, the main problem is the origin, beginning and development of Scythian art. This is because scientists such as A.Y. Alekseyev, M.I. Artamonov, S.I. Rudenko, B.N. Grakow, who studied the Scythians, did not typologize and periodize the Asian Animal Style seen in objects dated to this period. The reason for this is the regional work of the scholars. S.I. Rudenko has mostly uncovered and analyzed a large part of the Pazyryk phase. A.Y. Alekseyev focused more on the objects found in the North of the Black Sea. B.N. Grakow, on the other hand, made a broad evaluation, but did not make a typology, but stated that there was an intermediate period in Scythian art and that it consisted of three periods. However, he did not go into much detail about their characteristics. M.I. Artamonov, on the other hand, focused more on the history and cultures and mentioned possible cultures in the early formation phase. Not many scholars have addressed the issue of typological distinction and periodization. However, he also had difficulty in identifying some elements due to the scientific limitations of his time. This is both because he did not have access to enough data and because he studied only one region. However, we think that it is correct to correct this situation and to make a periodic typological distinction of the Animal Style, which was seen in the Scythian field and then used in all Turkish Empires. In the article, we will try to reveal both the art and its effects by taking objects from each period and region and making a comparative analysis. While introducing the article, it is obvious that we cannot understand Scythian art without knowing history, geography and culture. For this reason, we need to enter a brief Scythian history.

The results of geochemical and pollen research on 1 thousand BC are important for us to understand this period. Because it was revealed that in the Minusinsk and Tuva valleys during the period when the Tagar culture was formed, the humidity reached its maximum and there was a cool period before the increasing heat (Bokovenko, 2006: 861). This helps us to understand why the Scythians headed westward. It is known from the objects recovered from the kurgans that the Scythians, as a high culture that developed in the Altai mountains, were an advanced tribe in the production of materials such as wood, leather, especially metal and weaving products. This clearly reveals the reason why such a warrior tribe on horseback and drawing a bow raided the Mesopotamian and Greek lands, which were far behind in military terms in this period, and why they were successful. The region, consisting entirely of infantry and chariots, was not in a position to resist the Scythians. The first ancient source about the Scythians is found in the Prism (B) of the Assyrian Emperor Asarhaddon (Durmuş, 2007: 80). According to this information, the Assyrian Emperor allied with the Scythian ruler Bartatua against the Cimmerians and Mannaites who threatened the northern borders of his country and gave him his daughter (Luckenbill, 1968: 207). In this Prism, Gimmirrai and Ashguzai are mentioned as tribal names and it is thought that Ashguzai are Scythians and Gimmirrai are Cimmerians (Durmuş, 2007:38). The name Saka is mentioned in Persian sources. In the Behistun inscription of Dareios, the Sakas are divided into three as Saka Tigrakhauda (Pointed-Hooded Sakas), Saka Tiay Para Daray (Sakas Beyond the Sea) and Saka Haumavarga (Hermann, 1933: 158). In Chinese sources, it is shown as Sai or Sai-Wang (Durmuş, 2007: 40). The Assyrians mentioned the Scythians in 770 BC and the Medes in 653-52 BC, after the end of King Phraortes' rule. Sulimirski, on the other hand, argues that Scythians raided here in the 9th century BC based on the horsemen in the Nimrud reliefs, which he attributes to the time of Assurnasirapli (Gershevitch, 2007: 97). However, we understand from the sources of the period that the Scythians were dominant in the South Caucasus. In the city of Ziwiyeh, the former Izzibia (Zibia or Uzbia) in the territory of Manna, dated to the end of the VII century BC, a Scythian leader was found (Gershevitch, 2007: 100). Gershevitch, who provides this information, argues that the Scythians were not neighbors of the Mannaites state and that they came to these lands as raiders or allies. We are also of this opinion. However, by the 7th century BC, the North of the Black Sea, the Caucasus and Eastern Anatolia were in

the hands of the Scythians, a nomadic empire located in central Siberia. Strabo gives the information that they raided Anatolia in the 8th century BC. Strabo informs us that the Cimmerians attacked Anatolia through the Bosphorus Strait during Homer's time and even earlier (Starbon, I;2,9/III:2,12). Based on this information, we understand that the Cimmerians raided Anatolia in the 8th century BC. Strabo, later on, while giving information about the Cimmerians, writes that they settled in a part of Phrygia east of Abydos (Strabo, XIII: 1,8). In this situation, it is a visible fact that the Scythians raided the region with unstoppable power. This steppe tribe, which Mesopotamia called Cimmerian (Gmirra - Nomadic), Greeks called Skythai (Scythian) and Persians called Saka (Saka), was making decisions as the political authority in the region in the 7th century BC, making marriages and even pitting countries against each other as a sovereign power in the region, showing their power by making alliances. This situation also manifested itself in art. In the 7th century BC, the Greeks were in contact with the trade cities established by the Ionian immigrants in the North of the Black Sea. In the 5th century BC, against the Persian danger, some parts of the disintegrating Scythian state were even negotiating an alliance with the Greeks. In this case, it is inevitable to talk about Greek interaction in the 5th century BC. However, the fact that they dominated the Median geography in the 6th-7th centuries BC and were the biggest factor in the collapse of the Assyrian and Urartian kingdoms shows how effective the Scythians were in the region. He died in 529 BC in the lower Oxos region (Demirağ, 2003: 99). Another view on the death of Cyrus is that he crossed the Araxes River, not the Oxus (Ceyhun), during his campaign against the Saka's and was defeated and killed by Queen Tomris (Gershevitch, 2007: 213). Although the Araxes river here is thought to be today's Aras river, it is thought that this river could also be the Volga river. But we think that this situation will be understood in more detail when we look at the Scythian campaigns of Darius I. Because there are several campaigns of Darius I on Scythians/Saka. These are mentioned from Sakas in different regions. It is already clear that the Scythians were disintegrated in the 5th century BC. Because the Scythians, who were a power from the North of the Black Sea to Siberia, could not stand united against the Achaemenid danger in the 5th century BC. Therefore, Darius I had to make separate campaigns against the Sakas in different regions. Herodotus tells this story at length. Later, Darius I. writes in the Behistun inscription that he defeated the Central Asian Sakas in 518-517 BC, killed some of them and captured some of them and their leader Sakunkha (Demirağ, 2003: 99). Information about this campaign, which started in 519 BC, is described in the Bisitun inscription and by Polyaeus. It is said that the expedition was against the Saka Tigrakahanda (Pointed Hat Scythians) (Francroft, 2006:173). Apart from this information, we know how the soldiers dressed up as Saka soldiers and defeated them by deception, and that he lost his way in the desert when he went after the Saka chieftains in the desert, misled by a shepherd named Sirak. We think that Darius I. Dareios I. went on an expedition in 517-512 regarding the Scythian-Saka campaigns, using the Scythian invasion of Upper Asia as an excuse and occupied some regions. This was probably a common narrative of two different campaigns. Darius I crossed the Hellespontus to Thrace in 514 B.C. and made some unsuccessful campaigns against the Scythians (Freeman, 2010: 92). A.M. Mansel gives the year 513 BC for this campaign (Mansel, 1971: 266). This expedition of Dareios ended in failure. According to the information written on the tomb of the Persian king, "He marched on the Sakas beyond the sea" (Mansel, 1971:255). The Persian army crossed the Danube and reached the Dniestr River, but the Scythians, or Saka's as the Persians called them, burned the fields, destroyed the wells and retreated, and every once in a while they demoralized the Persian army with the "Hit and Run" tactic that the Turks had done for many years. When disease and famine struck, the Persian army retreated. It seems that even though Dareios I defeated the Saka, he could not completely occupy their country. However, we understand that the Scythians who remained in Mesopotamia came under Achaemenid rule, the Caucasus and Black Sea Sakas resisted him, but the Sakas of Central Asia and Siberia did not come under Achaemenid rule even if they were defeated. It is known that by the time of Alexander the Great, the Scythians were already fragmented in the Black Sea region and had turned into an element consisting of regional kings and lords. But the Scythians Alexander encountered in Asia had both established political ties and fought with him. In this case, it is seen that the Scythians transformed from a state as a sovereign power into an expanded nomadic confederation empire in 1000-600 BC, and became a power in the region by raiding to the West. However, it is understood that they were divided into three parts in the 6th-5th centuries B.C., and in the 4th century B.C., the ones north of the Black Sea came under Greek and Mesopotamian influence and became fragmented. Those in the Caucasus are thought to have come under the rule of Achaemenid and then Alexander and remained in the region. The most important part remained in Siberia and Central Asia. Although they came into contact with Alexander in the 4th century BC, it is

clear that they were a weakened confederation at this time. Arrian's account is the most important evidence for this. They were probably replaced by the Hun Empire in the 3rd century BC. In this case, the art of the Scythians, who had such a political environment, was both influenced by regional cultures and influenced the region. We understand this from the objects recovered from the kurgans.

EARLY PERIOD

As it is understood from the above, Scythians were both a regional and a universal power on the stage of history. In this case, the Scythians both exchanged art in the region and placed elements of their own art in the region, and the finds from the kurgans discovered in the North of the Black Sea in the 8th-7th centuries BC are the best proof of this. Kelermes and Melgunovsky kurgan finds are noteworthy.

Figure 1. North-Western Caucasus, Kuban Region, Sword from Kelermes Kurgani I. 8-7 century BC. (Hermitage Museum, n.d.)¹



Figure 2. Northern Black Sea, Dnieper Region, Melgunovsky Kurgani Sword. 7th century BC. (Hermitage Museum, n.d.)



¹ The museum has been informed about the use of the photographs, and the required contract form has been sent.

These two swords are now our earliest examples of Scythian grave goods from the northern Black Sea and Caucasus regions. They are dated to the 8th-7th century BC. The Kelermes sword is thought to have been made earlier. The reason is that both the part of the sword and the figures on the part connected to the belt have more Asian characteristics. In fact, the predator heads surrounding the perforated part of the sword attached to the belt in the Kelermes kurgan are more vegetal in the Melgunovsky kurgan. While Mesopotamian winged god figures and tree depictions are much more scattered, they are more symmetrically placed in the Melgunovsky kurgan. It is already accepted by many scientists that the swords were made one after the other. When we look at the figures seen on the swords, especially on the perforated part of both swords found in the Kelermes and Melgunovsky kurgans, the figure of a deer with its head facing up in the air, its horns curved backwards and exaggeratedly depicted, and its feet closed inward is seen. This is one of the most beautiful and earliest examples of the Asian Animal Style, which we see in the early stage of Scythian art. The bird of prey with a curled beak that we see in this section is also a figure that Scythian art brought from Asia. Figure 3. If you look here, you will see one of the early examples of Scythian art. The deer seen here were initially thought to be depicted in archaic form, but it was later revealed that this was not the case at all. Early examples of Scythian art are thought to have emerged around Siberia, in the area of the High Altai Culture. These depictions of deer, leopards and birds of prey are actually related to the Khirigsuur culture.

Figure 3. Russia, Altai Region, Pazyryk Culture. 8-7 BC. Century (Hermitage Museum n.d.)



These depictions of deer and birds of prey are identical to the figures of the so-called “Deer Stone” culture, the Khirigsuur culture, which we see in Siberia and Central Asia. The early periods of Scythian art emerged in Siberia and the Altai region just after the Khirigsuur culture or in its final period. In order to understand the early period of Scythian art, it is undoubtedly necessary to know the “Khirigsuur” culture well: Figure 4. If you look at it, you will see that many of the figures of early Scythian art are found here. In addition, the horse skull bones found next to the Ulan Tolgoi Deer Stone were dated by radio carbon dating to 2800-3250 years before the present, and the horse skulls found next to the deer stones in the Tsatstain region were dated to 3330-3060 years ago (Fitzhugh, 2005: 23). These dates coincide with the era of our Scythian rule. However, the fact that those in the Tsatstain region coincide with 1300-1000 BC shows that some of these stones with deer were erected before the Scythians. According to research, by 1300-700 BC, the archaeological remains consisted of Khirigsuur

(stone-fenced burial mounds) and ceremonial and commemorative structures known as anthropomorphic deer stones (Fitzhugh, 2017: 157). When we look at Figure 4, we see that almost all of the figures belonging to Scythian art are similar to this place. The similarity with Scythian art has been noticed by many scientists.² Why the stones were erected is a matter of great debate. The fact that there are no graves nearby further strengthens the idea that they were erected for cult and ritual purposes. Okladnikov's idea that the stones depict ancestors, mythological or fertility cult figures is more popular and different versions have been expressed (Kubarev, 1979: 86).

Figure 4. 3 types of Deer Stones and the figures seen on them. (Novgorodova, 1989)

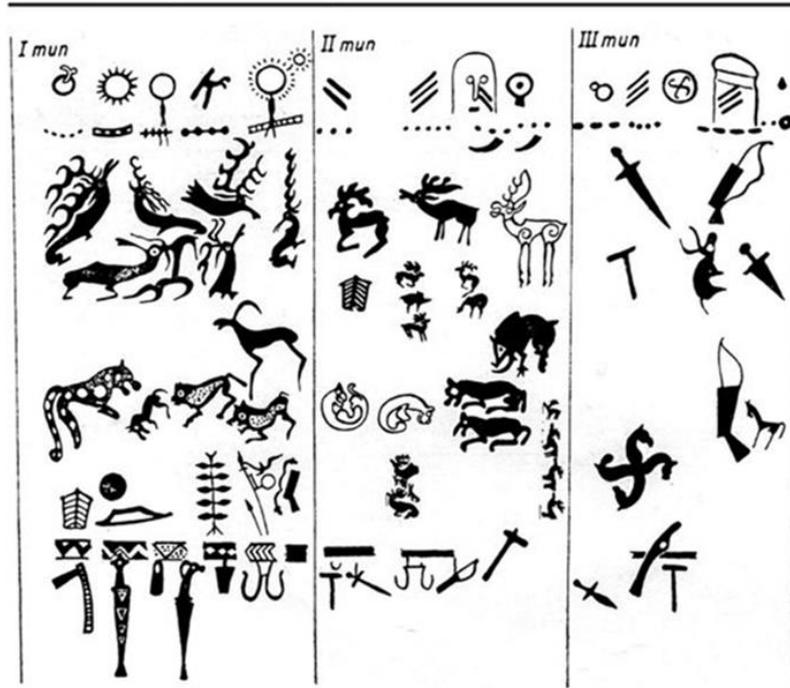


Figure 5. Svastika with bird of prey head from Teukta kurgan. 6th century B. (Hermitage Museum, n.d.)



² Radloff, Okladnikov and Dikov were among the first to recognize the similarities with the Scythian animal style, while more recently Volkov, Novgorodova, Kubarev and Savinov have joined them.

For example, the deer in Figure 3 corresponds to Type II, while the predatory bird-headed svastika motif in Type III is found in the kurgans of Taksay in Kazakhstan and Tuekta in Russia (Figure 5). These similarities in terms of figure, composition and region undoubtedly indicate that Khirigsuur and Scythians belonged to the same culture. Another thing that makes this even clearer is the depictions of axes, swords or daggers that we see on the stones with deer. These depictions are identical in form to our Scythian swords. It is already a well-known fact that the swords known as Akinakai in the literature and wrongly known as Achaemenid swords are not Achaemenid swords. The reason for this is that the earliest example of the oldest Achaemenid Akinakai sword found to date is dated to the 5th century BC and this find was found among the Oxus treasures in today's Tajikistan in the Scythian area. Another reason why the sword is called Achaemenid is that these swords appear on the wall reliefs of Persepolis. The fact that more than 30 nations are depicted on the wall reliefs of Persepolis, and that 14 peoples are depicted in the same clothes and with this type of sword reveals that this view has not been substantiated. The fact that there are also Armenian and Georgian groups among these nations and that many researchers call them all Iranians or Persians shows that this is wrong from the beginning. Apart from this, some Akinakai dated to the Achaemenid period are quite simple. They are not as elaborate and decorated as our Scythian akinakai. However, the earliest Scythian daggers are dated to the 8th-7th century BC. The earliest Scythian daggers are dated to the 8th-7th century BC. The daggers of the Tagar culture, which lived in its early period in 900-800 BC, are similar to the Scythian Akinakai in terms of form and decoration with animal figures. Therefore, these examples may indicate the chronological priority of the Asian version of the Akinaka (Topal, 2021: 51). However, the fact that these types of swords are more common in and around the Tagar culture suggests this. Terenozhkin attributed the origin of these swords to the Minusinsk basin in the late Bronze and early Iron Age (Terenozhkin, 1975). This is evident when we look at Figure 6. However, identical depictions of Scythian deer were also discovered in the Tagar culture. Just like the Scythian deer, the heads are depicted upwards, the horns are exaggerated towards the back and the feet are curled inwards.

Figure 6. Tagar Culture. Southern Siberia, north of Minusinsk. 6th-5th century BC.
(Hermitage Museum, n.d.)



Figure 7. Tagar Culture Deer Plaque. Southern Siberia, Khakass-Minusinsk Basin. 7th-6th BC. Centuries.
(Hermitage Museum, n.d.)



Figure 8. Golden Deer Plaques. Kazakhstan, Chilikt Cemetery, Kurgan No. 5. 7th century BC.
(Hermitage Museum, n.d.)



Figure 7-8. It is clear that the early Scythian art was born in the high Altai region. It is clear that they were members or relatives of Tagar and Khirigsuur cultures. However, it is also clear from the finds from the Kelermes and Mengulovsky kurgans that the early period ended with the Assyrian-Urartu interaction in the North of the Black Sea in the 7th century BC. The Assyrian-Urartian winged gods, drop-shaped trees of life and bull heads of griffons are evidence of this. The Kelermes kurgan is perhaps the earliest example of the change in Scythian art. The Kelermes axe found in this kurgan is the most important evidence of this. The axe is similar in form to the axes of the Tagar Culture. However, both Scythian and Mesopotamian depictions are seen on it. Especially the figures on the handle depict deer species, wild boar, elephant, pars and wolves. The usual Scythian deer we see on the top is in a medallion formed by a motif called interlacing or knot motif, which is popularly used in Scythian art. This shows the continuation of the Altai tradition.

Figure 9. Top of Kelermes axe. 7th century BC.
(Hermitage Museum, n.d.)



Figure 10. Depictions on the Kelermes axe.
(Aleksyev, 2012)

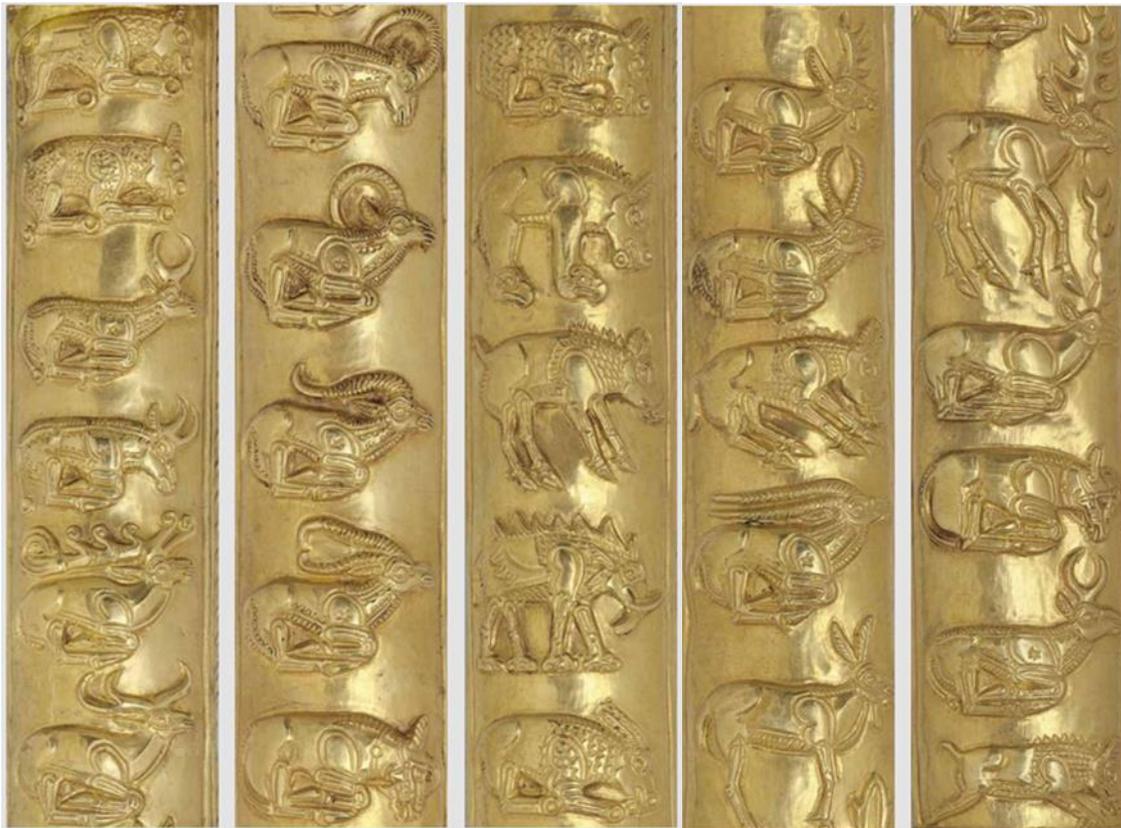


Figure 10 shows that the Scythians depict their traditional figures in the traditional form. The feet are depicted as closed, walking or dangling. Heads are usually depicted looking

up or down. But what is noteworthy here is that the animals known in the steppe are depicted in the traditional form, but the antlers of the deer species seen for the first time in the unknown region are not depicted. This suggests that this axe was probably produced by a Scythian craftsman. In the third row, the animal with the second spiny back from the bottom is probably an elephant. However, since this animal is not found in the steppe, it is natural for a Scythian craftsman to depict an animal he saw for the first time in this way. The spiny back is probably related to the fact that they saw this animal on the battlefield, and there is an impression that a cover is depicted behind its back. This also proves our view. Both here and in the examples given above, it is seen that towards the end of the early period, other animals are depicted on animal limbs, and another animal is placed on the limb of an animal. We see this both in this axe and in the above examples where the griffons on the scabbards of the swords have wings made of predatory fish. This shows a development in steppe art. As for the griffons, S.I. Rudenko attributes them to Assyrians and Persians (Rudenko, 1970: 257). However, it is noteworthy that these griffons were used in Scythian art in very different forms. However, it is noteworthy that these griffons were used in Scythian art in very different forms. The fact that the Scythians had their own tradition of such fantastic depictions shows that the griffon entered Scythian art in the last phase of the early period and had an important place. In Mesopotamia, there are no depictions of more than one predatory animal, i.e. creatures with a bull's body, eagle's neck or lion's head, body and hind legs (Loon, 1966: 97). This shows that this griffin, which is a combination of more than one animal, developed simultaneously in Scythian and Assyrian art, and therefore proves that Scythian griffins have a unique characteristic, even if they are culturally similar. At the end of the early phase of Scythian art, the Assyrian-Urartian influence is already evident, while the same situation shows itself in Assyrian-Urartian art. The depictions of birds with ears spreading their wings to the side and figures with bird bodies drawing composite bows reveal that Assyrian and Urartian art was also influenced by Scythian art. Animal and bird paintings were primarily executed during the Scythian-Sarmatian period in the applied art style of the animal style, which is characteristic of Eurasian rock paintings (Vishnevskaya, 1973: 112). However, the early period of Scythian art in Central Asia and Southern Siberia continued to be characterized in the 6th century BC. This shows us that Mesopotamian influence was just beginning to enter the region of centralized administration in this period. Archaeological finds dated to the 6th century BC and attributed to the Saka culture are proof of this.

Figure 11. Belt Buckle 6th century BC.
(Hermitage Museum, n.d.)



The most important Animal Struggle scenes continue and the animal limbs end with eared, predatory bird heads. In the early Altai Animal Style, it is seen that animal struggle scenes are at the forefront, some of the limbs of the animals are exaggerated, and there are predatory bird heads with ears on the animals or at the end of their limbs. In this period, it is felt that animals are depicted vividly, realistically and decoratively, and that they are emotional and mobile. This is one of the earliest and most important features of the Altai Animal Style of Proto Turkic-Mongolian origin in Asia.

MIDDLE TERM (Intermediate term)

There is no doubt that the most important period of Scythian art was during their political golden age. During this period, the Scythians, who were the dominant power in Mesopotamia, the North of the Black Sea, the Caucasus and Anatolia with their beliefs, military power and art, also ruled over the Median sovereignty that they destroyed in Iran for a short period. During this period, as we mentioned in the history section, they frequently established bilateral relations with the Urartu-Assyrian empires, often fought with them and even caused the collapse of both states. Their struggles with the Achamenids and their trade and relations with the Greek colonies also affected their art. This is evident from the objects from this period. The Cimmerians and their successors, the Scythians, Saka and Sarmatians, could not resist the Ionian migrants because they did not attach importance to navigation (Mansel 1971: 169). The places where the Ionian migrations took place were rich in fishing, agriculture, animal husbandry and mining. Scythian lands were quite rich in this respect. At the beginning of the 7th century BC, the Greeks started to move north of the Black Sea and Miletian merchants established the first trade center at the mouth of the Dnepr-Bug. This development in the first half of the 7th century BC led to the development of important trade activities with the Scythians (Jacobson, 1995: 41). From the 6th century BC onwards, this trade was with the entire Greek mainland and islands. The main reason why this period cannot be dated is that it is not clear when it began and when it ended. According to us, during this period, the Turko-Mongolian confederation nomadic empire of the Scythians was divided into 3 parts. We think that the Scythian state in the North of the Black Sea entered into relations with the Greeks due to the attacks of the Achamenids, the Scythian state in the Caucasus and Anatolia came under the Achamenid influence after a period of struggle, and the Royal Scythians in Central Siberia and Central Asia were again struggling with the Achamenids. Grakow refers to this period as the "Intermediate Period". Therefore, we consider the period between the 6th century BC and the middle of the 5th century BC to be appropriate for this period. However, this dating is not valid for the Siberian region. Because the Hellenic influence never passed into the art of Central Asia, which we will refer to as the "Late Period".

If we look at the Middle Period, we see that the Asian Animal Style began to dissolve in this period. The finds found in the North of the Black Sea, which contain rich finds of Scythian art, show that while the elements of Mesopotamian art are now used more and more, they gradually interacted with Greek art due to the rapprochement with Greek city-states. In order to understand this Middle Period, we will show another Scythian dagger that can be attributed to the end of this period.

Figure 12. Chertomlyk Kurgan Sword. 5th century BC.
(Hermitage Museum, n.d.)



If you look carefully at the picture above, this dagger from the Chertomlyk kurgan of Scythian art was made in the Middle Period. The heads of the daggers no longer show the typical Asiatic Animal Style animal, but the heads of two bulls standing back to back, a composition often seen in Achaemenid art. But the handle of the sword shows Scythians chasing fleeing ibexes. The tails of the horses are knotted and the composition of these horsemen drawing composite bows shows that the elements of Scythian art are still present. But the scabbard part of the sword (dagger) shows that the art is about to change. Because elements of Greek art are now seen here. In the part of the scabbard attached to the belt, a griffon and a deer head are seen, but this griffon does not resemble Scythian griffons and the deer does not resemble Scythian deer. On the base of the scabbard, Scythians are seen fighting with the Greeks. While the Greeks are depicted with their unique helmets and clothes, the Scythians are depicted with their cloth clothes (Figure 13). It is seen that the tradition of detailed depiction continues and that the vividness has been replaced by dullness in this period, when the mobility preserved itself, albeit to a lesser extent.

Figure 13. Chertomlyk Kurgan Sword.
(Hermitage Museum, n.d.)



The large number of late finds from the Chertomlyk kurgans indicates that this sword was made in the last phase of the intermediate period. Alekseyev, who also examined the sword, stated that there is a deep relief technique on the sword, which is not seen in Greek art, and that

this work was probably made by Eastern masters (Alekseyev, Murzin, Rolle, 1991: 381). This strengthens our hypothesis. The sword was probably made by Scythian craftsmen with elements of both Mesopotamian and Greek art. In order to argue the Middle Period characteristics in more detail, we think it would be correct to demonstrate this with another example. In this example found in the Kul Oba kurgan, we see a deer plaque belonging to Scythian art (Figure 14). Here again, the horns are depicted in an exaggerated, rearward and enlarged form.

Figure 14. Kul(1) Oba Kurgan Plaque. Kerch Peninsula, Crimea. 5th Century BC.
(Hermitage Museum, n.d.)



Here, a lion, rabbit and griffon are depicted on the deer. Below its neck is a pars, its tail is cubed and its horn ends with the head of a mountain goat. Although the early period features are preserved in terms of type, the dullness of expression, the Mesopotamian griffon and lion depicted in a seated form indicate that the distinctive features of Scythian art have dissolved. However, as we mentioned above, this dissolution is seen in the North of the Black Sea, Trans-Caucasus, where the political authority has changed. New developments were taking place in Central Asia during this period. Animals are depicted with their limbs curled and turned upside down. Diversification is seen in animal struggle scenes. The use of inlaid stone in Scythian art in Far Asia began to be seen in art during this period.

Figure 15. Siberia Region. Saka Culture. 6th century BC.
(Hermitage Museum, n.d.)



If Picture 15 is carefully examined, it is seen that animals are still depicted realistically as they are in nature, and vitality in expression is at the forefront. The wings and tail of the eagle, and the tail of the leopard are depicted curved, and the lines of the animals are separated from each other with a deep aesthetic sensitivity. The use of inlaid stone emerged at the very beginning of the Scythian intermediate period and influenced the Achaemenid art. We see this on Achaemenid artifacts, albeit in very small numbers. This shows that Scythian art preserved itself in the Siberian region, had little Mesopotamian influence, and developed and renewed entirely within itself. Only among the Oxus finds from Tajikistan is this Mesopotamian influence evident. The similarity seen here is on certain objects. For example, bracelets are similar. However, these bracelets ending with animal heads are seen in Uratu, Assyrian and Scythian art in almost the same period. This is perhaps the most similarity between the Oxus clouds. However, the bracelets seen here are more similar to Asian Scythian art. This is perhaps the most similarity between the Oxus clouds.

LATE PERIOD

The intermediate period, in our opinion, was not very long. It probably lasted for a little over 100 years and ended when the political events and wars became clear. This is already evident in many finds from the Scythian sovereignty. By the end of the 5th century BC, the late period had clearly emerged with its own characteristics. In the 5th-3rd centuries BC, the Scythian state in the northern part of the Black Sea began to disintegrate politically and culturally due to its deep relations with the Greeks. Greek Ionian immigrants deeply influenced the art of the Scythians and were themselves deeply influenced by Scythian art. The well tombs found in the castle of Mikenai resembled Scythian tombs and were filled with embroidered metal objects, horses and slaves, and what distinguished these tombs from the empty tombs of Greece was that they were filled with objects and some sacrificed creatures (Mansel, 1971: 68). It was in such an environment that the Scythian state lost power politically and witnessed great changes in its art. However, this situation is valid for the North of the Black Sea and the Caucasus. Because in Asia in the 5th-4th century BC, nomads were about to lay the foundations of a new confederation. It was none other than the so-called Xiongnu, a confederation state of Turkic origin. The similarity between Huns and Scythians, which we will reveal below with archaeological artifacts, needs to be explained with a few historical examples. Herodotus tells that the Scythian kingdom was divided into three (Herodotus: IV. 7). Strangely enough, in the information given about the Xiongnu, the Huns, it was written that the Huns were ruled by three clans or tribes (Kim, 2016: 17). In Scythia, the power over all Scythians was in the hands of a group or tribe called the Royal Scythians. These were the highest and elite part of the whole Scythian confederation. But a similar situation existed in the entire Hun Empire. There was a hierarchical supreme Xulianti, the tribe of Teoman's Modu, who ruled the Hun tribes (Kim, 2016: 17). Even this is an important example of the Scythian-Hun connection in cultural terms. The fact that the funeral rituals and objects of Scythians and Huns are very similar to Scythian objects suggests that these two states may have been a single nation. Probably the nation called Scythian/Saka/Kimmer was the ancestors of the Huns and a member of the Altaic culture. For this reason, we believe that it would be correct to deal with the late period in two parts. First, the specimens found north of the Black Sea and their characteristics, and then the characteristics of the objects found in Siberia and Central Asia. In this way, we believe that it will be easier to make typological distinctions in the evaluation.

Among the objects found north of the Black Sea, the most important are undoubtedly those found in the Chertomlyk kurgan. The objects found in this kurgan are dated to the 5th-4th century BC. An amphora found in the Chertomlyk kurgan and dated to the 4th century BC is one of the best examples of the late period. On the amphora, the depiction of the hippocampus, intense Hellenistic floral ornamentation and lion heads placed on both sides just above the base

are noteworthy. Where the two plants on the front rise, the Scythian god Tagimasada is seen in the form of a protoma of a winged horse, which is argued to be the tree of life (Alekseev, 2012: 194). These lion heads were also transferred to Greek art from Assyrian art. The scene of griffons with thorns on their backs attacking the horse just below the neck shows that the animal struggle scenes continue, but the Greek influence is now predominant in terms of stylistic art. Although it was initially thought that the amphora was made by the Greeks, the horse training scene and the depiction of Scythians in the section from the body to the neck show that this is not the case at all.

Figure 16. Chetomlyk Kurgan Amphora. North of the Black Sea, 4th century BC.
(Hermitage Museum, n.d.)



Figure 17. Chetomlyk Kurgan Amphora.
(Hermitage Museum, n.d.)



Here, the clothing and the training of the horse are consistent with the information given by Herodotus and similar authors about the Scythian cult, as well as the Scythian tradition of depiction. This indicates that the object was probably made by a Scythian craftsman. In addition, the fact that the lion heads reflect Mesopotamian art, the griffins and floral ornamentation reflect Greek art, the animal struggle scene lives on in the depiction tradition, and the horse training and taming philosophy of the Scythian culture is transformed into a depiction from a single object shows that art has now reached a different high dimension. Scythians started to be depicted with beards in this period. According to Minns, the change in the depictions of nomads found at Kul Oba was probably due to the disappearance of old ethnic characteristics as a result of intermarriage with indigenous peoples (Minns, 1913: 46). We also agree with this view.

The transformation of Scythian art north of the Black Sea and in the Transcaucasus was fully visible in the 4th century BC. There is a simplification in the depiction of animals, which are most commonly used in art, and the use of Hellenistic elements. While the animal is again depicted with its feet inward, the splendid elements and vitality have completely disappeared, replaced by a dull and sculptural characteristic. The way animals are used has also changed; the pars was replaced by the lion figure, which was transferred from Assyrian art to Greek and Achaemenid art; the Scythian deer “Alces- Alces Caucasian”, “Reindeer” and “Red Deer” were replaced by Mesopotamian gazelles. . The depiction of the mountain goat has become as simple as in Greek art. It is worth repeating that this was only the case in the Western Scythian geography. The most important element of Western Scythian art, the Animal Style, has started to change strongly, although it retains some of its characteristics. The best evidence of this change is undoubtedly the finds from the Solokha kurgan.

Figure 18. Solokha Kurgan Deer Plaques. Northern Black Sea, Dnieper Region, Solokha Kurgan, Side Grave. Early 4th century BC.
(Hermitage Museum, n.d.)



If you look carefully at Figure 18, the deer depiction that we are used to has disappeared here. The depiction has become quite simple and sculptural. Although the deer is still depicted with its feet curled inward, it has lost its exaggerated, magnificent horns extending to the back and its vitality. The wings have become completely Hellenistic. Since this was the period when the Scythian sovereignty was about to end and the Sarmatian sovereignty was about to begin, it is quite natural for the Scythians to interact with Greek art, with which they had lived together for four centuries and with which they had become close in the last two centuries. As we have mentioned before, the change in animal depictions and the development in metal art in Greek art in this period are thanks to their interaction with the Scythians. The sword found in the Kul Oba kurgan and the sword found in the Solokha kurgan show that Scythian art has now been dissolved in this region and that they had difficulties in depicting their old elements while using them. The deer are completely replaced by elements of Achaemenid art. While the lions are depicted quite simply, the elements in their manes resembling the stylized form of a bird's head of prey are in fact features of past art. Probably, since the art in this region has now taken a completely different dimension, an attempt was made to imitate and resemble the examples from Siberia. Because art in that region has reached a different dimension as we will express in a moment.

Figure 19. Kul Oba Kurgan Sword. Crimean peninsula, Crimean Yarmada. 4th century BC.
(Alekseev, 2012)



Figure 20. Solokha Kurgan Sword. Northern Black Sea, Dnieper region. 4th century BC.
(Alekseev, 2012)



The sword you see above, dated to the same century, has the same form. However, the griffon on the Kul oba is entirely Greek/Achamenid, the hippocampus belongs to ancient Greek art, while the depictions of the lion and deer have changed considerably. The detailed depiction of the animal struggle has disappeared. In the Solokha sword we see below, the lions are depicted quite simply. The resemblance to figures resembling bird heads with curled beaks in their manes indicates that this sword was made by a Scythian master, but that it was about to break away from Scythian art in terms of art and tradition. The simplicity of the deer heads captured by the lions and the change in the use of the interlacing motif that we see in Scythian art is visible. But the most important element is that animal combat scenes are still in the foreground and the interest in traditional animal species continues. The element resembling a human face at the end of the scabbard of the Solokha sword is similar to what we see in rock paintings. We can talk about the evolution of these features in hundreds of finds. But one of the most important elements for us is to see how the Eastern branch of the Scythians changed while this was happening in the West.

The most important clouds of Eastern Scythian art can be seen in the finds from the kurgans such as Pazyryk and Esik/Issik. The Pazyryk and Esik finds are dated to the 6th-3rd century BC. The late period of Scythian art actually evolved in accordance with Asian shamanism and the belief in Sky God. The late period of Scythian art actually developed and changed in accordance with Asian shamanism and the belief in the Sky God. The most important element seen here is that there is a spectacular development in this period of Scythian art. The Scythian art of this period, in which the Hellenic influence is completely absent in animal depictions and the Assyrian influence is seen very little, will lead the art of the later nomadic Turkish empires. The most important thing seen in this period is the continuation of

the tradition of realistic and vivid depictions of animals found in nature. In many areas such as metal, wood, leather and weaving, the Animal Style of art is seen to have reached its peak. However, the depictions on the metal artifacts attributed to the Saka culture draw attention. Hunting scenes on belt buckles are good examples showing that the Scythians both lived in accordance with the traditional Altai culture and preserved their art. The exquisite natural stone inlays on belt buckles dated to the 5th-3rd century BC reveal the aesthetic taste of art.

Figure 21. Saka Culture Belt Buckle. Siberia. 5-4 century BC.
(Hermitage Museum, n.d.)



The harmony and symmetry of the upper belt buckle, the mobility and liveliness of the figures, as well as the realistic depiction of the Scythian horseman are clearly visible. The composite bow, the horse's saddle and the warrior's sword are the same as in the finds. The trees in the background, which are placed in accordance with nature, show that the artist wanted to depict the landscape. The depiction of a mountain goat on the dap created with colored inlays on the right side is just like in petroflig and early Scythian art. The other example below is dated to the 3rd century BC, which is an important element showing that this art continued. The similar vividness and composition indicates that the Scythian art of metalsmithing was developed, probably using the technique of mold casting to produce these and similar artifacts. We also understand this situation from the plaques found in the North of the Black Sea.

Figure 22. Saka Culture Belt Buckle. Siberia. 3rd-2nd century BC.
(Hermitage Museum, n.d.)



Figure 23. Carpet fragment from Noyon Uul Kurgan. 2-1 BC.
(Turbat, 2013: 79)



We can understand from the example that the elements seen on these belt buckles continued in the Hun period, and even their exact replicas were used. This composition seen in Figure 23 is also seen in Figure 15. A similar composition is seen on a carpet fragment from the Noyon Uul Kurgan dated to the 2nd-1st centuries BC. The wing and form of the bird are exactly the same as our belt buckles. The curving and posture of the wing and the depictions of deer are exactly the same with Pazyryk and other finds from this period. This shows that art continued in the region. As seen so far, the most common types of metal artifacts in Scythian art are plaques and gold weapons. It is obvious that the remaining ornaments were produced to be placed in the

graves of these great leaders. In fact, while the purpose of these plaques was initially debated, it was solved with the discovery of the clothes of the Man in the Golden Robe. These plaques probably decorated the clothes and headdresses of the Scythian leaders. Especially these pointed long headdresses are a unique type of Scythian attire, which is also evidenced by the other clothes unearthed during the excavations and dated to the last period. Especially the plaques made in animal style decorating these headdresses attract attention. These finds from the Esik/Issyk kurgan and some similar headdresses made in animal style prove this hypothesis.

Figure 24. Golden Plaque Siberian Region. 4-3 BC. Century.
(Hermitage Museum, n.d.)



Figure 24. shows a bird of prey with its head tilted forward catching a mountain goat. It has been suggested by the museum that this plaque adorns the headdress of a warrior or a ruler. The bird of prey has its head tilted forward and its wings spread to the right and left. Behind the head there is a crest up to the end of the neck. The beak has a rounded beak that is hollow. The tail rises behind the body. The tail is quite large and consists of five large feathers. The details of the feathers were tried to be given by putting lines on the feathers. The tail feathers end in three rounded cavities. The feathers on the abdomen, neck, and the upper part of the wing of this bird of prey are very realistically rendered, and the feathers are empty. The feathers on the legs of the winter bird, which catches the ibex with both feet, are given with thin lines, while the two holes on the claws are also empty. The small, cylindrical pieces on the tail indicate that something was probably attached to it. The resemblance to the animals found in the Pazyryk

kurgan makes it possible to date this artifact to the IV-III century. If this artifact was indeed attached to the headdress, the tail was probably decorated with pointed ornaments like the feathers found on the hat of the Man in the Golden Robe. There is already a similar plaque on the head of the Man in the Golden Robe. On the back, there are cylindrical pieces that we see on other plaques to attach the plaque.

Figure 25. The headdress of the Man in the Golden Robe. 5th-4th century BC. Esik/Issyk



Another similar artifact is the headdress made of wood found in the 2nd Kurgan of Pazyryk. It was discovered by S.I.Rudenko. The most important element of this griffon-headed artifact is the wood carving. The relief of a bird of prey catching a goose-like bird on the neck of the griffon is very detailed. The head and wings of this bird of prey, which is a predator, are protruding outwards, transforming the depiction from two to three dimensions. The wing of the bird is made of leather. The head is made of wood. Behind the head are deeply barbed feathers. Probably this was also a fantasy figure. If you look carefully at the drawing, you will see a fantastic eagle catching the traditional Scythian deer under the headdress. We can see that the figures were not only carved, but certain elements were attached in the form of plaques. On the upper part of this fantastic figural headdress, the griffon's head has feathers on its cheek and nose. The eye lines are carved down to the finest detail. The facial features of the deer head held in its beak are also quite realistic. The horn is made of leather. This headdress decorated with scenes of animal struggle shows the extent of Scythian art.

Figure 26. Altai Mountains, Great Ulagan valley, Pazyryk 2nd Kurgan. 5th century BC
(Hermitage Museum n.d.; Stepanova, 2017)



The objects seen above show that the Scythians lived in Central Asia and Siberia in accordance with their ancient traditions and that art developed accordingly. We also see this in the wooden and woven artifacts. The presence of these headdresses and such important artifacts in this region probably leads us to think that the “Royal Scythians” who ruled the Scythian Empire lived in this region. Because these headdresses and these magnificent kurgans can only belong to Scythian rulers or important statesmen.

The presence of finds belonging to the art of weaving in this period shows that the Scythians were at the peak of the art of weaving as we understand from ancient sources. The color and vividness of the felt swan depicted in the Pazırık kurgan is remarkable in that it reflects reality. In this period, many animals of nature started to be depicted one-to-one (Figure 27).

Figure 27. Swan Depiction from Pazyryk 5th Kurgan. Altai Mountains. 5-4 Century BC.
(Hermitage Museum, n.d.)



However, the carpet found in the Pazırık kurgan and referred to in the literature as the Pazırık Carpet is the most important find from the High Altai culture. Although the carpet is attributed to Iran and Mesopotamia by Western and Iranian scholars, no such weaving has ever been found in the region. However, many Scythian objects show that Scythian horsemen had such horse coverings. In addition, it is a fact accepted by the museum and many scientists that the carpet was woven in a technique known as Turkish knotting. In a later laboratory test, a sample from the Pazyryk rug and a sample from the 18th century Konya carpet were tested and it was found that the wool material was fermented in a similar way (Spath, 2021:5). The deer depictions seen on the Pazyryk carpet were discussed at length by S.I.Rudenko, who conducted the archaeological excavation. Rudenko attributed the Pazyryk carpet to the Mesopotamian tradition based on its resemblance to “Dama Dama Mesopotamica” and the importance of weavings in ancient Iran. However, the deer on the carpet is similar to the “Red Deer”. This is because the antlers of the deer are more reminiscent of the Sığır species, most notably the subspecies “Alces- Alces Caucasian” and other subspecies of Sığır living in Siberia. Some of these deer species are known to have spots at certain times of the year. However, the fact that the horse's tails are depicted with knots, the griffons seen here are not seen in any other culture, and the fact that it reflects the Ural-Altai tradition in terms of technique clearly reveals that the carpet belongs to Scythian-Saka art. The fact that the deer on the carpet are in the form of moving deer and the griffons are depicted with their heads turned backwards shows that they have the characteristics of the Altai Animal Style. The presence of a predatory bird's head on the heart and lungs of the deer and the signs resembling “(0)” on the back of the deer led us to think that it would indicate the sex and spirit of the deer. This sign resembling sex in this period may be based on the fact that in Altai Mythology every living creature is sacred and is associated with procreation in mythological stories. In addition, the presence of figures with the “Hun Rose” or “Scythian Motif” in the 24³ cartouches in the center of the carpet connects this carpet to Scythian art. This motif is seen in many places in Scythian art.

³ The number 24 is very important among the Altaic peoples. To illustrate with an example, the Turks believe that their ancestor Oghuz Kaghan descended from 24 descendants. 24 male descendants from 6 males, here the similar division of the cartouche is noteworthy.

Figure 28. Depiction of Swan in Pazyryk 5th Kurgan. Altai Mountains 5-4 Century BC.
(Hermitage Museum, n.d.)



During this period of peak Scythian art, the number of deer species increased and their horns were depicted in a normal and realistic manner, while in some examples, these exaggerated limbs continued. In addition, the tips of the exaggerated deer antlers seen on horse saddle caps have faded, as have the bird heads with distinctive ears. Many archaeological finds, such as the Man in the Golden Robe, also show that the headdresses are in animal form or decorated with plaques depicting animals. This shows that the animal style was increasingly used in each phase of Scythian art. In addition, the realistic depiction of a Saiga head on wood found in the Pazyryk 5th Kurgan shows that Scythian art was based on the observation of nature. There is no doubt that the Pazyryk phase coincided with the last moments of the last era of Scythian domination in Asia. The struggle with Alexander the Great and his successors in this region in the 4th-3rd century BC led to the dissolution of this confederation. The Huns, another state with a similar culture and possibly similar ethnicity, replaced the Scythians in this period.

EVALUATION

The examples we have discussed above are a limited number of examples that we can select and understand both the formation of Scythian art, its development and change. There is no doubt that we can add hundreds more to these finds selected among nearly a thousand examples. However, our aim is to categorize the Scythian art within a historical typology and to prepare the ground for the dating of future finds according to this periodization. There is no doubt that a community with such a high level of art as the Scythians has been claimed by many nations throughout history. Scholars who initially argued for an Iranian origin, when they analyzed the accounts of ancient sources and their art, they realized that both the culture and art of the Scythians had a Ural-Altai origin and expressed this. In fact, the confusing situation is understood from the finds. The Assyrian-Urartian similarities in some of the finds found in the North of the Black Sea and the Greek influence in others have revealed these different opinions. However, Tagar and Karasuk finds, finds belonging to Khirigsuur culture, Pazyryk finds, Issyk finds reveal the beginning and development of Scythian art. There is no doubt that the mutual interaction with Urartian and Assyrian art is a visible fact on the metal artifacts belonging to these arts. The fact that Scythian and Urartian bracelets end with animal heads, lion heads on some of the Scythian bracelets and dragon heads on some of the Assyrian-Urartian bracelets is the best example of this.

1. EARLY PERIOD (9-7 centuries BC) (6th century BC Siberia)
 - a. Animal struggle scenes are seen in which steppe animals such as Deer, Leopard, Bird of Prey, Mountain Goat, Wolf, Bear, Pig, Rabbit are used primarily.
 - b. Vitality, three-dimensionality and mobility.
 - c. Deep carving or high relief technique is seen.
 - d. The legs of the animals are curled inward or rarely even drooping.
 - e. Their heads are in an upward-facing position.
 - f. Exaggeration of any of the limbs.
 - g. Another animal on or on the limb of an animal.
 - h. Depictions of birds of prey with ears appear.
 - i. Use of the style of rock paintings.
 - j. In many instances, animal scenes are delimited by what we might call interlacing or knot motifs.
 - k. The reappropriation of Mesopotamian influenced griffons in the Scythian animal style.
 - l. At the end of the period, winged Assyrian-Urartu Tarns and drop-shaped trees of life began to be used.
2. MIDDLE PERIOD (6-5 centuries BC)
 - a. Continuation of early period characteristics.
 - b. Mesopotamian influences continue to increase.
 - c. Mesopotamian bull heads and different types of deer are seen.
 - d. Elaboration of animal struggle scenes.
 - e. Curling of the hind legs of animals is seen.
 - f. The emergence of inlaid ornaments in the 6th century BC in Siberia.
 - g. Gradually, Hellenistic influences are seen.
3. LATE PERIOD (4-3 centuries BC)

Northern Black Sea Region

- a. The characteristics of the Early-Middle Period continue to a small extent.
- b. Interaction with Greek art is observed.
- c. Greek influenced hippocampuses and griffins begin to take their place in art.
- d. Greek naturalistic ornaments surround animal figures.
- e. Achaemenid figures and motifs are used more in art.
- f. Deer horns become simpler, and lions replace pars and similar animals.
- g. While trying to depict old figures, it is seen that they are handled in an archaic and primitive style.
- h. Figures belonging to more than one different culture are found in a single object.
- i. In the last period, it is understood that the Original Scythian art has moved away.
- j. The animal depictions, which have turned into vitality and sculptural features, are seen as dull.

Siberia-Central Asia Region

- a. Early-Middle period characteristics persist.
- b. Eagle, Deer, Pars and Mountain Goat, Horse, Fish, Griffon figures become more prominent.
- c. Among the animals in the region, Saiga, white swan, goose, as well as reindeer and red deer increase in diversity. The figure of the rooster appears.
- d. Diversity in art increases.
- e. More realistic expression is seen.
- f. Mesopotamic and Greek influences are not seen.
- g. Animals have the heads of birds of prey on the tips of their horns, necks or backs.
- h. The variety of colored stone inlays increases.

The view that Scythian art consists of two phases and an intermediate period is held by many scholars, such as myself. The animal and bird paintings were made primarily during the Scythian-Sarmatian period in the applied art style of the animal style, which is characteristic of Eurasian rock paintings (Vishnevskaya, 1973: 112). While the first phase shows more realistic expression and decorative processing, in the second phase the three-dimensionality is lost and the figures are surrounded by thick lines (Artamonov, 1970: 90). During the research on the objects recovered from the kurgans, Russian scientists described the development of Scythian art as follows. Elements brought from the depths of the Eurasian steppes, local Cimmerian elements and influences of West Asian cultures formed the Scythian art (Alekseev et al., 1991: 133). In fact, Alekseev's statement was too short-sighted for the early history of Scythian archaeology. However, the new finds obtained over time and the fact that the Scythian area spread over a wide geography changed this information a little more. While Hellenization was quite intense in the Kuban region, it did not occur at all in the Volga region (Grakow, 1980: 151). While Scythian art in the Northern Black Sea region declined and Greek motifs and figures became more prominent, realistic expression and emotional depiction continued to flourish in Siberia (Artamonov, 1970: 91). Scythian-Siberian art had originated in China in the early ages, and the style crystallized in Eurasia suddenly penetrated both east and west, serving as the starting point for multiple new fashions in the decorative arts of very different countries (Rice, 1957: 196). Tamara Rice's statement is quite realistic. According to the comparisons we made above, this determination is quite realistic. The place called China here is actually the geography of today's South Siberia and Turkestan. Researchers adhering to the Eurasian concept (V. A. Ilyinskaya, A. I. Tsenozhn, S. S. Chernikov, etc.) try to prove that the Scythian animal style developed in the steppe and mountainous regions of Siberia and Central Asia and spread northward from there. It developed in the steppe and mountainous regions of Siberia and

Central Asia, from where it spread to the Northern Black Sea region and the Caucasus (Vishnevskaya, 1973: 119).

CONCLUSION

The Cimmerian, Scythian and Saka groups, which emerged in the first millennium BC, made raids from Southern Siberia to the Iranian basin through Central Asia and from the north of the Caspian Sea to the South Caucasus, Anatolia and the North of the Black Sea in a short time. The reason for these raids is thought to be the climate change and increased humidity in Southern Siberia. These tribes, who drew bows on horseback and used swords well, soon descended like a storm on states such as Urartu, Assyria, Manna, Lydia and the Median formation and influenced both the history and culture of the entire region. From the North of the Black Sea to Gallipoli, they attacked Anatolia from two directions, almost performing a high military maneuver and revealing their military origins. Our research showed that the Scythian culture emerged as a Ural-Altai culture as a continuation of the Khrisguur culture and as a member or heir of the Karasuk-Tagar culture. Initially, Scythian art was a continuation of the art of these cultures, producing good metalwork, mastering weaving, and the animal figures were the same. But the greatest wealth of these nomadic and good warriors was the rich artworks they could equip their graves (kurgan) with. They probably produced these artifacts both through looting and by themselves. However, it seems that the Scythians were initially influenced by the Assyrian-Urartian art they encountered, and towards the end of the early period they took elements of this culture and used them in their own works. The Tree of Life and the Winged Gods are particularly important, while the lion figure is more popular. However, the Scythians were also able to influence Urartu and Assyrian art by incorporating mixed animal depictions and depictions of people with long hats drawing bows. Moreover, the Scythians were a more advanced tribe in the production of metal artifacts during this period. The Scythians were influenced by the art and cultural environment of the Achaemenid Empire, a cosmopolitan empire that emerged later, and took some floral ornaments and bull depictions from there. The Scythians were also able to add their own elements to Achaemenid art. In addition, the discovery in the last century of swords no longer belonging to the Achaemenids, but to the Scythians and their forerunners, the Karasuk and Tagar cultures, shows that the Scythians had influenced Iran in terms of weapons, just as they had previously influenced Assyria and Urartu. Developing circumstances over time, the Achaemenid threat and the Scythians' high trade with Greek colonies led to the introduction of Greek elements into Scythian art. In addition, the Scythians' high intermarriage policy in the region caused a change in Scythian physiology. It is thought that the difference between the bearded Scythians seen in late Scythian objects and the Scythians with simple mustache in early-middle period Siberian finds is caused by these marriages. The continuation of Scythian art in Central Asia and Siberia with its lively, vibrant and characteristic development process is the best proof that Scythians showed regional variations. Over time, the Scythians north of the Black Sea were assimilated into the Greeks, while the Scythians in the South Caucasus had a say in Achaemenid and later Albanian rule. As for the Scythians in Central Asia, it is understood that they were Huns from the similarities in Hun art mentioned above.

It is seen that Scythian art changed with the influence of multiple cultures as a result of regional influences over time and lost its former lively and vibrant characteristic. In the beginning, animals such as Eagle, Deer, Pars, Mountain Goat, Bear, Wolf, Wolf, Horse, which are in accordance with the Ural-Altai mythology and culture, were used, but in time, it is seen that the Lion, Mesopotamian influenced Bull, Herbal ornamentation and Drop-shaped Tree of Life from the surrounding cultures were also used. Animals are usually depicted with their heads curled up or inward, feet usually closed inward or hanging down, exaggerated depictions of elements such as horns and teeth, and fantastic depictions in which another animal starts from

one limb. The fantastic griffons, on the other hand, do not resemble the Assyrian-Urartu field at first. Then we see that these griffons and sirens are Mesopotamically influenced and later Greek influenced.

In the transition seen in the interim period, elements of Mesopotamian and Greek art gradually shaped the art in a different dimension. It is obvious that political events are clearly in question here. The hind legs of animals are mostly seen to be curved backwards during this period. In Siberia, the colored stone inlay technique emerges from this period.

In the late period, in the North of the Black Sea, in the Transcaucasian region, elements that clearly resemble Greek art, more Hellenic influenced elements, elements of Achaemenid art began to be used, three-dimensionality and vitality disappeared, and depictions that broke away from tradition began to be seen. Naturalistic elements and fantastic figures belonging to Greek art emerged. Ram heads took a Hellenistic characteristic. In the depictions of mountain goats, on the other hand, a clear difference began to be observed.

In the late period, the Animal style continued to develop and rise in Siberia. While vividness and three-dimensionality continued, elements such as swans, saiga, different deer species, roosters were included in the art. Here, in the animal scenes, especially the placement of signs resembling the sex of animals reveals the connection of animals with the sacred and derivative in Altai culture and beliefs. In addition, the ending of the limbs of the animals with predatory bird heads with ears is the origin of some naturalistic floral ornaments in the future.

As the Scythians of the Minusinsk basin, the ancestors of the majority Turks-Mongols, moved westward from Central Asia, whether south or north around the Caspian Sea, their traditions changed over time, new elements were added, some elements were lost or merged into new forms. Feared warriors of the battlefields, this High Altaic culture produced powerful bows, different arrowheads, highly maneuvered battle tactics and well-crafted swords, which not only destroyed enemy positions on horseback but also taught them these elements of warfare. However, they also influenced the societies they visited with their cultural and artistic characteristics and played an important role in their history and art.

Authorship Contribution

The study was produced as a single author.

Declaration Of The Ethics Committee

If the research is based on document review, it does not require the approval of the ethics committee.

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