

A Study on the Scythian Torque

Moon-Ja Kim

Professor, Dept. of Clothing & Textiles, Suwon University

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Abstract

The Scythians had a veritable passion for adornment, delighting in decorating themselves no less than their horses and belongings. Their love of jewellery was expressed at every turn. The most magnificent pieces naturally come from the royal tombs. In the area of the neck and chest the Scythian had a massive gold Torques, a symbol of power, made of gold, turquoise, cornelian coral and even amber. The entire surface of the torque, like that of many of the other artefacts, is decorated with depictions of animals. Scythian Torques are worn with the decorative terminals to the front. It was put a Torque on, grasped both terminals and placed the opening at the back of the neck. It is possible the Torque signified its wearer's religious leadership responsibilities. Scythian Torques were divided into several types according to the shape. Torque with Terminal style, Spiral style, Layers style, Crown style, Crescent-shaped pectoral style.

Key words : Crescent-shaped pectoral style, Layers style, Scythian Torque, Spiral style, Terminal style

I. Introduction

The Scythians originated in the central Asian steppes sometime in the early first millennium, BC. After migrating into what is present-day Ukraine, they flourished, from the seventh to the third centuries, BC, over a vast expanse of the steppe that stretched from the Danube, east across what is modern Ukraine and east of the Black Sea into Russia. Invincible for nearly four centuries, the Scythians were a people of great military skill and unrelenting ferocity. They were also extremely influential patrons of the arts, and left behind an extraordinary legacy of both ruthless conquest and lavish artifacts.

The culture of the Scythian period was created and existed in an era when the leading

role in the Scythian kingdom belonged to nomads and it conformed to nomadic life. A vivid description of the burial of the Scythian kings and of ordinary members of the Scythian community is contained in Herodotus' History. The basic characteristics of the Scythian funeral ritual (burials beneath Kurgans according to a rite for laying body in its grave) remained unchanged throughout the entire Scythian period.¹⁾

No less remarkable are the articles from the burial mounds of Scythian chiefs (5th to 4th centuries BC), executed in the Greco-Scythian style and decorated with scenes from a Scythian heroic epic.

All these objects were lavishly decorated, though the finest ornamentation was carried out on valuable metal vessels, articles of personal adornment and the gold plaques intended as

E-mail : mjkim@mail.suwon.ac.kr

¹ Sinor Denis, *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia*, (Cambridge University Press, 1990), 108-109.

dress trimming, as well as on weapons and horse trappings.²⁾

Many of the works of art are in the animal style associated with the central Asian steppes, while others reflect influence from ancient Near Eastern cultures. Still other objects reveal a fusion of the animal style with Near Eastern motifs and Greek iconography and style. Rich evidence of this sophisticated, artistic dialogue constitutes an intriguing new frontier in archaeological research.

Since Scythians on the whole were not a settled people they did not leave their art in architecture or on monuments. Their art is primarily ornamental. In a nomadic society where wealth must be easily portable the craftsman's efforts were put into small items such as gold jewelry, bridle ornaments, horse gear, hand mirrors, arrow cases, swords and battle axes.

The purpose of this study is reviewing and researching the symbolic meaning and classifying the types of the art style of the Torque from the burial mounds of Scythian chiefs.

The method of this research is through the antique records and tombs bequests hereby deals with the characteristics of Scythian Torque was divided into the types according to the shapes.

II. Scythian Torque Culture

1. Buried Treasures of Scythian Torque

A race of warriors with no written language of their own, the Scythians carried their treasures from place to place, on horseback or in pulled wagons. Their history, carved in gold and silver, was buried in the graves of their elite.

Idanthyrsus claims that the Scythians had no cities or cultivated, for the loss of which they would fear and they have therefore no reason for involving in a fight. the only solid thing

they possess is the graves of the forefathers. The royal burials are situated, according to Herodotus, in an area called Gerri. Even though it is in the uttermost north, it is not described as particularly mysterious. The fact that we have not been able to establish the location with any certainty is a problem without any bearing to the narrative of Herodotus itself. Nothing in the text allows the assumption that it is mere fairytale, and the rituals described do seem to agree accurately with the testimony of archaeology and ethnography. The so-called Kurgan graves are scattered all over the Scythian cultural sphere, and all these sites have probable been considered the centre of the territory of the local Scythian community.³⁾

Much of what is known about the Scythians has been uncovered through archaeological excavations of their burial mounds, known as kurhany. Ongoing explorations of kurhany continue to recover an astonishing wealth of gold and silver objects, ranging from horse trappings to armor, weaponry, jewelry and ceremonial adornment. Early finds of Scythian gold artifacts in the 1700s were so stunning that Catherine the Great ordered their systematic study, launching what became the field of Scythian archaeology. Some of the most extraordinary finds were uncovered only in the last two decades, and excavations continue on an ongoing basis to explore some of the more than 40,000 kurhany still unexcavated in Ukraine.

Of the jewelry from graves around the Northern Black Sea coast, most interest is to be found in polychrome articles of the time of the great migration of peoples. Various adornments for clothing have been found. Most have colored inlays of semiprecious stones, mainly in shades of red, such as almandine, garnet and sard, and less frequently amber and glass, against a gold ground. These articles show a combination of

² T. T Rice, "Introduction", M. I. Artamonov, *Treasures from Scythian Tombs*, trans. Kupriyanova, (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 1966), 11.

³ George Hinge, *Scythian nomadism in the narrative of Herodotus*, (Centre for Black Sea Studies: 1993), 4.53.4.

new forms unknown to jewelers of the Northern Black Sea littoral, who tended to use the jewelry techniques traditional around the Bosphorus during the previous era, and they vary in style and technique.

The story of the Scythians and Scythian art is also a story of interaction with the Greek world, which eagerly purchased grain, furs and amber from the Scythians. Profits from this trade brought Scythians the wealth to indulge their taste for elaborate objects ranging from torques to horse decorations.

When the Scythians at last abandoned their nomadic lifestyle for the prosperous, settled life which trade had brought them, the door was opened for the invasion of a hardier nomadic tribe, the Sarmatians. The exhibition will close with several superb Sarmatian gold objects, including a torque, a dolphin brooch and a pendant, as a reminder of how intriguing and how still little known are the cultures, objects, and artistic styles of this part of the world.⁴

In the forest steppe zone between Dnieper and Don, archaeologists have excavated numerous fortifications and settlements, and they seem to have depended largely on crops. As archaeology cannot of course determine ethnicity, which is after all a matter of linguistically framed construction, it is impossible to say if those fortifications were in fact inhabited by Scythians. Some researchers claim that only the grass steppe in the south was the home of Iranian-speaking Scythians, and that another population, perhaps Proto-Slavs, inhabited the northern forest steppe. Others focus on the unity of the culture in both areas. A probable scenario is that mounted nomads of Iranian origin settled amongst an agricultural population in the forest steppe zone, and that the two populations formed a cultural and economic symbiosis, which must be called Scythian.⁵

The most magnificent pieces naturally come

from the royal tombs, where the skeletons were invariably bedecked with golden diadems, head-dresses, necklaces, belts, bracelets, ear and finger-rings, torques, pendants, amulets, beads, buttons, buckles and paste locket but even the less important burials provide an abundance of jewellery and precious materials.⁶

Fertile soils and generous nature along the Black Sea coast and the Dnieper riverside attracted Hellenes as long ago as in the Iron Age. At the same time, Scythians, who had come from Asia and replaced Cimmerians, appeared on the territory, which lay farther to the North. They resided here for a long time and appeared to be suitable trade partners and rich customers for the Greeks. Many masterpieces created by Greek and Scythian goldsmiths are widely known. For body, armament and harness ornaments, they employed all of metalwork techniques common at the time. These consisted of casting, coinage, engraving, gilding, inlaying, stone setting and others.

The Hermitage collection of Scythian antiquities is renowned worldwide, its nucleus consisting of finds from burial complexes in the Crimea, Kuban basin and in the valleys of the Dnieper and Don rivers.

Across the flat grasslands of Ukraine, ancient burial mounds stretch up to 100 feet high, preserving the gold treasures of the nomadic Scythian warriors.

The gold, bronze and clay items have been preserved in the Scythian tombs, called kurhans, which rest from 6 to 45 feet beneath the ground and are covered by up to 100 feet of topsoil. The mounds span 300 feet in diameter at the base.

"While other nomadic tribes that at one time dominated this region, such as the Huns and the Mongols, survive primarily through tales of their ruthless conquests, the Scythians also left lavishly provisioned tombs that have preserved

⁴ <http://www.brama.com/news/press/000301scythiangold.html>

⁵ <http://herodot.georgehinge.com/nomadism.html>

⁶ T. T. Rice. *The Scythians*, (London: Thames & Hudson, 1957), 144-45.

one of the most complete and stunning material records of any nomadic people," said Dr. Gerry Scott III, curator of ancient art at the San Antonio Museum of Art in Texas, where the exhibit made its U. S. debut in November.

The nomads buried their dead with an elaborate combination of ritual and ceremony, which varied based on the importance of the deceased.

Archaeologists have found that the writings of 5th-century BC historian Herodotus accurately describe the embalming, human and animal sacrifice, and burial process reserved for group leaders.

The ceremonies were less elaborate for common men and women, but they were often buried with an arsenal of weapons, helmets, shields, and cooking and storage pots.

The Scythians prospered through trade with the Greeks, and commissioned Greek and Scythian artists to craft gold jewelry and plaques for battle and personal adornment during ceremonial occasions.

Although the figures are influenced by Greek art and mythology, they are adapted by the Scythians. For example, the "prudish" Scythians have clothed figures that would be naked in Greek art, Reeder said. The scenes do not depict Greek stories; rather, the Scythians have borrowed Greek figures to tell their own stories.⁷

The tombs of the Scythian kings and chiefs have long been famous in archaeology. In construction they have much in common with the far older barrows of the Kuban, while in contents they show an analogous mixture of northern and Near Eastern objects and styles. This continuity in idea cannot be traced on the steppes, and should probably be sought in Western Asia, which now provides a new impulse.

The most notable groups of tombs are in the Kuban basin, often in the same places as the first great barrows, in the Taman Peninsula, in the Crimea, and on the Dnieper where they

extend to the neighbourhood of Kiev. Other burials occur in the Danubian plain, and outlying single graves even in North Germany; there are more on the Don and Donetz and farther east by the Volga to the Urals.⁸

The Scythians had a veritable passion for adornment, delighting in decorating themselves no less than their horses and belongings. Their love of jewellery was expressed at every turn. The most magnificent pieces naturally come from the royal tombs, where the skeletons were invariably bedecked with golden diadems, head-dresses, necklaces, belts, bracelets, ear and fingerings, torques, pendants, amulets, beads, buttons, buckles and paste locket but even the less important burials provide an abundance of jewellery and precious materials.

The most important and impressive of the Scythian burials are the royal tombs of southern Russia, and of them all Chertomyk is perhaps the richest, both in the variety and artistic quality of the objects found in it and also in the well nigh fabulous intrinsic value of the gold work.

In the chamber a dead man lay on his back, facing east. The setting in which he took leave of this world was of extraordinary opulence. A fine bronze torque encircled his neck, a gold earring had been placed in one ear and there were gold rings on all his fingers. In the third small chamber lay two bodies, each adorned with a gold torque, gold bracelets and rings.⁹

By approximately 450 BC the Saka had developed a powerful confederacy as indicated by the occurrence of immense kurgans throughout an expansive territory. The portable treasures recovered from the Pazyryk, Ukok and Issyk burials reveals that these populations had acquired considerable wealth, and that they had also developed a complex religious and ceremonial system.

Since their burials contained the most diverse

⁷ Theresa Bowen, "Scythian gold tells ancient story of nomadic warriors", *SouthCoastToday*, 2002.3.

⁸ E. D. Phillips, *The Royal Hordes*, (London: Thames & Hudson, 1965), 66, 68.

⁹ T. T. Rice, *op. cit.*, 92-94.

array of artifacts, the Pokrovka women presented the most vivid and compelling statuses. Hearth woman, in many cases, controlled considerable wealth in the form of jewelry in their own right. Perhaps a special status of spinners and weavers performed their art as part of magical rituals. Priestesses of varying levels of status maintained equilibrium within the family, clan and tribe, and divined on a more personal level. Warrior-priestesses would also have divined and performed oracles but additionally they could have bestowed sanctification, or even sovereignty, upon the chieftain. The results obtained from the burials of these Pokrovka women have enabled the analysis of other high status burials including the Pazyryk and Ukok burials from southern Siberia, the Issyk burial of southern Kazakhstan, and two mummies from a Taklimakan Desert oasis. Archaeological data revealed that all of these women had been of high status, and with the exception of the Issyk individual who appears to have been a warrior-priestess, they were priestesses.

Within the Sauromatian, the Sarmatian, and the Saka cultures, compelling evidence exists for strong female hierarchical structures, more diverse in nature than those of their male counterparts. Within nomadic Early Iron Age cultures, feminine power in the social, political, and cultural spheres would have undoubtedly been extremely effectual.¹⁰⁾

The pattern of the weapons permit us to date the Issyk kurgan to the Saks period—the fifth-fourth or fourth-third centuries BC. The excellent state of preservation made it possible to undertake a sufficiently trustworthy reconstruction of the chieftain's dress. Despite all the splendour of the clothing and weapon ornaments, one cannot help noticing intentional or forced camouflage.¹¹⁾ The "Issyk chieftain" was

buried in gala or ritual attire. He wore a thin, evidently silk shirt, a short coat (kamzol), narrow breeches of red suede and high boots without heels. His heavy belt was composed of cast plaques in the shape of a fantastic stag and elks' heads. On his head, the chieftain wore a high conical three-sided hat (kulakh). It is exactly in such hats that the noble Saks-tigrakhaudy (literally—"in hats with pointed tops") are depicted in relief on the staircase in Persepolis. Round his neck he had a gold torque with three loops, its ends fashioned in the form of tigers' heads.¹²⁾

The greatest scientific resonance was caused by the excavation of the famous Arzhan burial mound under the direction of the outstanding Leningrad scholar Mikhail Petrovich Griaznov and the Tuva archaeologist Mongush Khurgui-oolovich Mannai-ool. The material obtained from the investigation of this monument of colossal dimensions made it possible to examine anew many questions in the archaeology of the Scythian period. All the hitherto investigated graves in the burial mounds of the "Valley of the Kings" had been plundered back in ancient times.

The unexpected and exceptionally important result of the work in the 2001 season was the discovery of an undisturbed grave of the 6th–5th century BC. The burial was made in a deep square pit in the bottom of which stood the burial chamber of a framework with double walls of Siberian larch. The wood is splendidly preserved and it proved possible to establish all the constructional feature of the structure. The bodies of a man and a woman were laid on the carefully prepared floor. They were lying on their left sides with their legs bent at the knees, the heads towards the north-west which is characteristic of Tuva burials of the Scythian

¹⁰⁾ Jeannine Davis-Kimball, "Statuses of eastern early iron age nomads", (Berkeley, California:Center for the Study of Eurasian Nomads, 2002), 16-17.

¹¹⁾ Boris Piotrovsky, Liudmila Galanina, Nonna Grach, *Scythian Art*, (Phaidon · Oxford · Aurora · Leningrad, 1987), 18.

¹²⁾ <http://www.kz/usr/ale/eng/intro1.html>

period. The richness of the burial attire and the articles accompanying the dead indicate that they belonged to the upper echelon of the nomad nobility. Both the bodies were dressed in costumes decorated with small sewn-on gold plaques in the form of a predator of the cat family. There were some 5,000 of these in total. In the area of the neck and chest the archaeologists found earrings and numerous pendants and beads made of gold, turquoise, cornelian and even amber. The man had a massive gold torque, a symbol of power, around his neck. The entire surface of the torque, like that of many of the other artefacts, is decorated with depictions of animals, deer, wild boar, camels, snow leopards, and wolves, representing a sort of encyclopaedia of the art produced by the nomads of Central Asia.¹³⁾

Rich Scythian-Sarmatian burial has been discovered near the town of Ipatovo, in southern Russia, containing gold necklets and spiral bracelets, an akinakes (dagger) in a gold-covered scabbard, ceramic vessels, and other offerings. The burial probably dates from the early third century BC, when the Scythian culture that had occupied the southern Russian steppes was giving way to the Sarmatian culture. Whether the Scythians were assimilated into the Sarmatians, who were moving into the area, or the Sarmatians replaced the Scythians but borrowed heavily from their culture, is not clear, and a burial of this date could help clarify the nature of the transition.

Discovered during a survey in advance of the construction of an oil pipeline, the burial was excavated by a rescue mission from the regional ministry of culture. The occupant, an adult female, lay on her back with her head to the west and her left leg flexed. Six gold necklets, each weighing about nine ounces, have green glass or stone Sarmatian-style inlay and terminals in the

shape of fantastic, wolf-like animals. Three bracelets are also carved with images of animals, possibly including a griffin head, in the Scythian animal style. Close to her right hand were the remains of a wooden cup covered with sheet gold embossed with animals. Other artifacts included a belt decorated with small bone plates engraved with geometric patterns, a gold buckle, a gold-covered wooden cosmetics container (with some surviving organic matter inside), a Greek red-figure cup, a local ceramic vessel, and a Bosphoran amphora (from Kerch, ancient Pantikapaion, on the strait between the Black Sea and the sea of Azov). A large bronze or silver hair pin with a gold head was found in her left eye socket; this may indicate that she was sacrificed, or it may simply have fallen into her eye as the flesh decayed after burial.¹⁴⁾

Richest grave of the Sarmatian times in the Crimea was discovered under direction of the Soviet archaeologist Askold Schepinsky in May 1974. The barrow was named after the locality Nogaychik, which situated nearby the place of excavations.

In the sarcophagus was buried a woman in age of 35-40, 1m 70cm in height. Her head was covered by gold appliques-perhaps it was a head-dress. A pair of earrings laid nearby. A torque was placed on the neck. The endings of the torque with images of animals were at the back and facing the earth. Another necklace and a brooch-pin were placed on top of it. The chest of the dead was ornamented with beads of stone, glass and gold. Two dresses of the dead were made of silk of different quality. Both hands of the dead with massive armlets were inserted into silver cups. The feet were ornamented with bracelets of gold wire and tiny beads of black glass and jet.¹⁵⁾

Sarmatian and Huns Period- Sarmatian art is best represented by artifacts from the burial

¹³ http://www.hermitagemuseum.org/html_En/11/hm11_1_38.html

¹⁴ <http://www.archaeology.org/magazine.php?page=9903/newsbriefs/ipatovo>

¹⁵ V. Mordvintseva, *The royal grave, of the times of mithridates eupator in the Crimea*(Centre for Black Sea Studies, 2002).

mound at Khoklach, discovered by chance in 1864 near Novocherkassk. Gold articles found there torques, perfume flasks, diadems and plaques were executed in the Sarmatian animal style: these objects are notable for their stylization and the use of ornamentation formed of the heads and bodies of animals, as well as colored inlay of turquoise or different shades of blue smalt paste to represent the eyes, ears, paws or hooves, ribs and muscles.

(Fig. 1) is the Finno-Scythic that is the figure on a tombstone from Ananyino wearing trousers and peculiar conical hat and large Torque round the neck is also distinctive.¹⁶⁾

2. The Symbolic Meaning of Scythian Torque

Deep burial chambers hid the remains of the deceased (of both sexes) and, as Herodotus wrote in *Histories*, "When their king dies...they lay the dead man in his grave on a bed...they bury one of his concubines, killing her by strangling, and his cup-bearer, cook, groom, lackey, and messen-



(Fig. 1) Finno-Scythic Figure. BC 600-400, Ananyino.

ger. Also his horses...and golden cups... Having done this, they raise a vast mound of earth..." These massive kurhany were frequently crowned with a monumental stone sculpture of a warrior, symbolizing the importance of the deceased elite aristocracy.¹⁷⁾

If we disregard the elements and motifs in Scythian art that are obvious borrowings from West Asia and in part from Greek art, adapted to scythian tradition, we shall still see a huge number of other elements peculiar to that people alone, and the product of their own creativity. Despite differences in local features, the existence of which was natural in view of the extensive area inhabited by the Scythians, the common features were obviously predominant. These stemmed from the fact that their art was adapted to the ornamentation of various articles of everyday use, and was stylized in a way all its own.¹⁸⁾

The images of fantastic animals (griffins, sphinxes, winged animals, and often beasts with human heads) that were depicted in their Scythian Torques, came to be known as the peculiar "Scythian animal" style. Techniques, which had once been rather primitive, improved considerably during the prosperous times of the Scythian State. Stylization of images developed into a realistic method of interpreting complicated zoomorphic compositions.¹⁹⁾

Mortuary objects also verified the transmission over immense distances of not only actual objects, but also cultural and innovative concepts. Therefore, homogeneity occurred in symbolic, visual and probably audible effects throughout a wide geographical area. The most attractive feature of the collection is the abundance of articles of applied art from a variety of schools and trends, with objects created in the Scythian Animal style, and items made by

¹⁶ E. D. Phillips, *The Roral Hordes*, (London: Thames & Hudson, 1965), 50.

¹⁷ <http://www.rom.on.ca/news/releases/public.php3?mediakey=xu2nhqg2zp>

¹⁸ S. I. Rudenko, "The gold-guarding griffins", (Tokyo: Sinsidaesa, 1970), 45.

¹⁹ http://www.ukrartjewellery.com/OLEHSITE/UI_engl.htm

Greek craftsmen or imported from Oriental countries and the nearby Classical centers to the North of Black Sea and intended for Scythian noblemen.

Many of the Scythian torques of art are in the animal style associated with the central Asian steppes, while others reflect influence from ancient Near Eastern cultures. Still other objects reveal a fusion of the animal style with Near Eastern motifs and Greek iconography and style. Rich evidence of this sophisticated, artistic dialogue constitutes an intriguing new frontier in archaeological research.

III. Scythian Torque Style

Scythian Torques are worn with the decorative terminals to the front. It was put a Torque on, grasped both terminals and placed the opening at the back of the neck. It was stretched the Torque open just enough to clear the neck and pulled it on and reversed the process to take it off. It is possible the Torque signified its wearer's religious leadership responsibilities.

Scythian Torque were divided into 5 styles according to the shape. Torque with Terminal style, Spiral style, Layers style, Crescent-shaped pectoral style, Crown style.

- 1) Torque with Terminal style that is formed by a thick hoop with disconnected ends decorated with the heads of a beast.
- 2) Spiral style is that is made of long golden wires twisted into rings.
- 3) Layers style handed forge this piece from a single bar of gold, working it hot to create a striking pattern of layered may be worn with the opening either to the front or the back.
- 4) Crown style is consisted of two hinged parts made of curved wires soldered together.
- 5) Crescent-shaped pectoral style is the crescent shaped pectoral with openwork de-

sign, done in relief, of different animal and tree.

1. Torque with Terminal Style

〈Fig. 2〉 is gold Torque with terminals in the shape of a Tiger. This torque is formed by a thick gold hoop with disconnected ends decorated with the heads of a feline beast of prey (lion or tiger). The animal's ears and cheek-bones are inlayed with turquoise. Both in form and style the torque differs from those from Peter I's Siberian Collection. It is attributed to the late Achaemenid art.

Diam. 19.2cm, Sakae Culture. 4th century BC, South-Western Siberia, area between the Rivers Irtysh and Ob Russia.

〈Fig. 3〉 is a gold Torque with lion-head terminal.²⁰⁾ This torque is forged, stamped, soldered, filigreed. 20.5×23.5 cm, Scythian culture. Late 4th century BC.

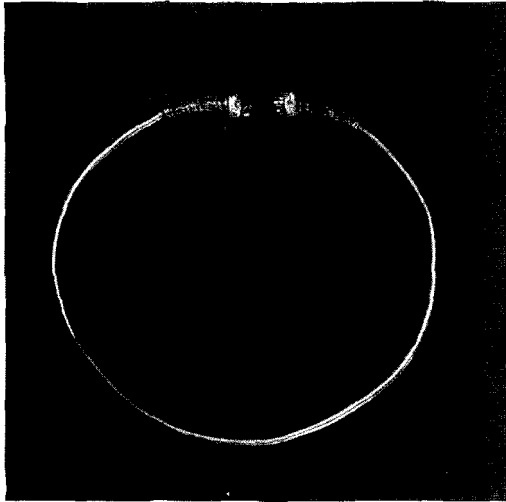
Talaevsky Barrow No. 1, Crimea Russia (now Ukraine)

〈Fig. 4〉 is Gold Torque of thick plaited wire with sculptural figures of Scythian horse-



〈Fig. 2〉 Torque with Terminal Style. 4th Century BC. Sakae Culture South-Western Siberia.

²⁰ M. I. Artamonov, *Treasures from Scythian Tombs*, trans. Kupriyanova, (London: Thames & Hudson, 1969), 63.



〈Fig. 3〉 Torque with Terminal Style. Late 4th Century BC. Talaevsky Barrow No. 1.

men as final.²¹⁾ This torque is inlaid with enamel, cast, chased, enameled. 400~350 BC Kul Oba Barrow, Kerch Bosphoran Kingdom.

〈Fig. 5〉 is gold Torque with the zoomorphic termination. This torque is casted. Diam. 24.5 cm. Sarmatian Culture. 4th century BC. Stavropol Region, the Village of Kazinskoye Russia.²²⁾



〈Fig. 4〉 Torque with Terminal Style. BC 400~350. Kul Oba Barrow.



〈Fig. 5〉 Torque with Terminal Style 4th Century BC. Sarmatian Culture, Stavropol Region.

〈Fig. 6〉 is Bronze cast torque consists of two mobile parts. The longer front part is decorated with two relief figures of tigers, which are executed in the manner similar to the objects found in the frozen barrows in the mountainous region of the Altai.

Diam. 17.5cm. 5th century BC Siberia Russia.

2. Spiral Style Torque

〈Fig. 7〉 is spiral gold Torque with lion attacking a boar. This torque is cast, forged, chased.



〈Fig. 6〉 Torque with Terminal Style. 5th Century BC. Altai.

²¹ M. I. Artamonov, *op. cit.*, plate 201.

²² National Museum of Korea(ed), *The Scythian Gold from the Hermitage*,(Seoul: Chosun Ilbo, 1991), 262.



〈Fig. 7〉 Spiral Style Torque. Late 4th Century BC. Karagodeuashkh Barrow.

ced. Diam. 17.3~19cm. Meotian Culture. Late 4th century BC. Karagodeuashkh Barrow, Kuban, Krasnodar Region (formerly Giaghinsky District of Kuban Region) Russia (now Ukraine).

〈Fig. 8〉 is spiral gold Torque with lion. There are Torques made of long golden wires twisted into rings, with cast figures of lions at the ends of the wires.²³⁾ This torque is cast, forged, chased. Diam. 14~15.2 cm. Scythian culture. 4th century BC. Chertomlyk Barrow, Dnieper Area, near Nikopol Russia (now Ukraine).

3. Layers Style Torque

〈Fig. 9〉 is 3 layered gold Torque is handed forge this piece from a single bar of gold, working it hot to create a striking pattern of layered may be worn with the opening either to the front or the back. This torque is cast, soldered. Diam. 12cm.



〈Fig. 8〉 Spiral Style Torque. 4th Century BC. Chertomlyk Barrow.

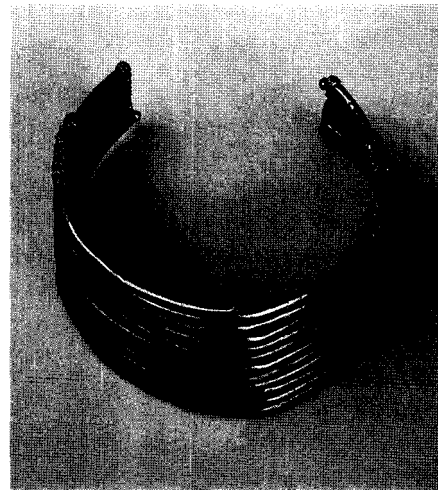


〈Fig. 9〉 Layers Style Torque. 3rd Century BC. Sakae Culture, Western Siberia Russia.

Sakae Culture. 3rd century BC. Western Siberia Russia.

〈Fig. 10〉 is 10 layered gold Torque. This torque is cast, soldered. Diam. 13cm.

Sakae Culture. 3rd century BC. Western Siberia Russia.



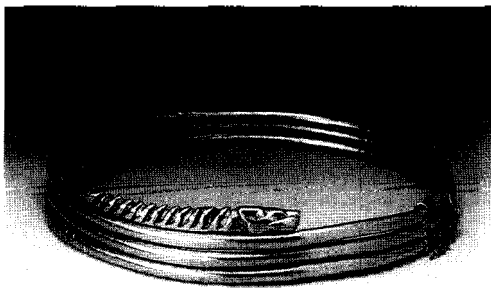
〈Fig. 10〉 Layers Style Torque. 3rd Century BC. Sakae Culture, Western Siberia Russia.

²³⁾ S. I. Rudenko, *op. cit.*, 8.

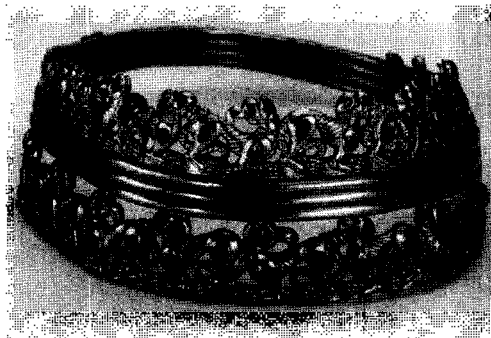
〈Fig. 11〉 is 3 layered gold Torque. This torque is hammered, stamped, engraved, cast. Diam. 21.4 cm. Sakae Culture. 5th~4th century BC South-Western Siberia, area between the Rivers Irtysh and Ob Russia.

4. Crown Style Torque

〈Fig. 12〉 is gold Torque. The torque consists of two hinged parts made of curved wires soldered together (one part of four wires, the other of three). Top and bottom, the front is decorated with a repeating frieze, which shows one monster attacking another. The muscles of the legs and shoulders and the ears of these



〈Fig. 11〉 Layers Style Torque. 5~4th Century BC. Sakae Culture, South-Western Siberia.



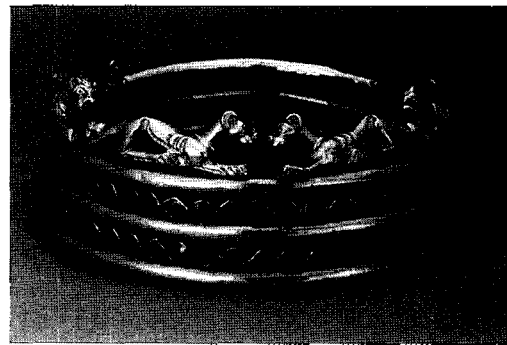
〈Fig. 12〉 Crown Style Torque. 1st Century AD. Khokhlach Burial Mound, near Novochoerkassk.

fabulous monsters are picked out with inlays of turquoise or coral; the deep eyes are inlaid with glass. The friezes have been cast in single-piece moulds and subsequently chased. This torque is a typical example of the Sarmatian Animal Style. Khokhlach Burial Mound, near Novochoerkassk. 1st century AD. Diam. 17.8cm, height 6.3cm.

〈Fig. 13〉 is gold Torque. The torque consists of two hinged parts made of curved three wires soldered together. In these the front part is larger than the back. One Torque consists of a number of hollow golden tubes soldered together, while another is made up of three hollow rings with a number of round and diamond shaped meshes between the rings and four reposing lions upon the upper rim.²⁴⁾ This torque is turquoise and corals; cast, chased, inlaid. Diam. 14.8cm; height 5.3cm Sakae Culture. 5th~ 4th century BC. Karasuk Burial Mound II, Barrow 1, Grave 3, Republic of Komi, on the River Podcheryoma Russia.²⁵⁾

5. Crescent-shaped Pectoral Style Torque

〈Fig. 14〉 is the crescent shaped pectoral with lion head finals and openwork design, done in relief, of different animal and tree. Gold, enamel.²⁶⁾ Diam. 18.4cm.

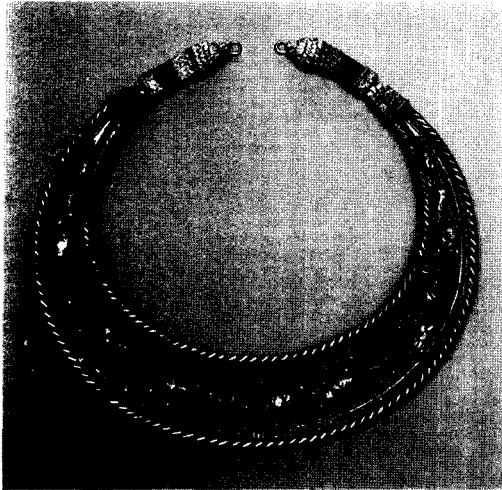


〈Fig. 13〉 Crown Style Torque. 5~4th Century BC. Sakae Culture, Karasuk Burial Mound II, Barrow 1.

²⁴ S. I. Rudenko, *op. cit.*, 8.

²⁵ <http://www.hermitagemuseum.org/cgi-bin/db2www/quickSearch.mac/gallery?selLang=English&tmCond=torque>

²⁶ M. I. Artamonov, *op. cit.*, plate 295.



〈Fig. 14〉 Crescent-shaped Pectoral Style Torque.
First Half of the 4th Century BC. Bolshaya Bliznitsa Kurgan.



〈Fig. 15〉 Crescent-shaped pectoral Style Torque.
5~4th Century BC. or Older. Tolstaya Mogila Burial.

This Torque, of original form, technique and decoration, was found during excavations of the Bolshaya Bliznitsa burial mound in 1868. It is part of the attire of a Bosphoran priestess to Demeter, goddess of fertility. The open work frieze, consisting of a row of rams, goats, dogs and hares soldered together, is inserted between two bands of egg and dart ornament and twisted wires. The necklace ends in lions' heads, and the details are finished with granulations and engraving; the leaves and flowers are encrusted with blue enamel. Each of the figures, executed almost in the round, was fashioned separately and mounted on transverse bars. The pectoral was probably created by a Bosphoran goldsmith in the late Greek Classical tradition. First half of the 4th century BC. Found at the Bolshaya Bliznitsa kurgan in the Kuban area. From the collection of the Hermitage.

〈Fig. 15〉 is the crescent-shaped pectoral is a highly-balanced work without being rigidly symmetrical. It is both exquisitely ornamental and representational in the sense that it tells a story of the world rich in imagery. The ends of the crescent that come very close together are decorated with stylized heads of lions holding

rings in their mouths which served as clasps. The Pectoral is divided into three tiers or bands by gold braids both inside and on the outer and inner edges. The central band is the most decorative in the sense that it has but a few representations of realistically portrayed birds, pruning their feathers or pecking at the gold beads, and stylized and realistic flowers.

The remaining space of the central band is filled with coiled flower stems and leaves. Some of the smaller flowers definitely look like what we would call today bluebells. The outer band, the widest, carries representations of winged griffins attacking horses, lions and panthers pouncing on a wild boar and a deer, and dogs and hares scampering away, and grasshoppers in the corners where the gold crescent tapers to its ends. The inner band is a departure from the violence of the outer and unfolds before the viewer peaceful scenes of domestic life. Right in the centre one sees two human figures holding what looks like a fleece.

Two long-haired bearded men, naked to the waist, wearing typically Scythian trousers and boots, one of them with a headband around his head, are doing something which can be inter-

preted as mending or making a short sheepskin coat. But other interpretations suggest that it is indeed the Golden Fleece that they have in their hands, the Golden Fleece that figures so prominently in the ancient Greek mythology. The creator of the Pectoral was so amazingly careful in portraying the living creatures and inanimate objects that he has not only put two quivers (one of them is actually hanging above the fleece) with bows inside, close to the two Scythians but also adorned the quivers with decorative designs.

On both sides of these two amazing figures we see two horses portrayed in a stunningly realistic manner. One of the horses is a mare suckling an evidently new-born foal, still wobbly on its unsure legs. In contrast to the horse being devoured by the griffins in the scene below, in whose eyes you can see horror and pain, the mare looks so full of care and tenderness towards her foal. In the same band with the two Scythians holding the fleece one can see two more human figures, one of whom is milking a sheep. This crouching man wears a sort of a shirt. By the look of him, he is in no great hurry to get the milking done. His movements are deliberate, he is not new to the job. Goats and cows with calves wander to the very end of the band.²⁷

5~4th century BC or older one is Tolstaya Mogila burial near Ordzhonikid-ze B. N. Mozolevsky.

IV. Conclusion

Scythian Torques are worn with the decorative terminals to the front. It was put a Torque on, grasped both terminals and placed the opening at the back of the neck. It was stretched the Torque open just enough to clear the neck and pulled it on and reversed the process to take it off. It is possible the Torque signified its wearer's religious leadership responsibilities.

Scythian Torque were divided into 5 styles

according to the shape, Torque with Terminal style, Spiral style, Layers style, Crescent-shaped pectoral style, Crown style.

These Scythian Torques are notable for their stylization and the use of ornamentation formed of the heads and bodies of animals, as well as colored inlay of turquoise or different shades of blue smalt paste to represent the eyes, ears, paws or hooves, ribs and muscles. From time to time it is both exquisitely ornamental and representational in the sense that it tells a story of the world rich in imagery.

Many of the Scythian Torques of art are in the animal style associated with the central Asian steppes, while others reflect influence from ancient Near Eastern cultures. Still other objects reveal a fusion of the animal style with Near Eastern motifs and Greek iconography and style. Rich evidence of this sophisticated, artistic dialogue constitutes an intriguing new frontier in archaeological research.

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²⁷ <http://www.artukraine.com/historical/pectoral.htm>

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